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WHERE CEOS MEET

A sampling of special mountain places where executive and board retreats can foster thoughtful discussion, enjoy privacy and savor exceptional experiences.

By Beth Buehler

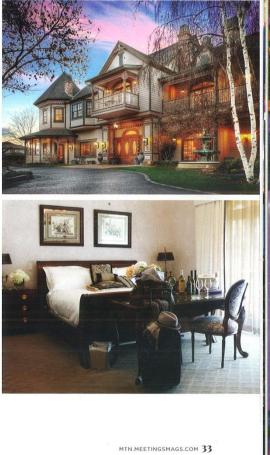
It's hard enough to schedule busy executives or boards of directors for travel together. Give them an extra reason to set aside time for strategy sessions by selecting a dynamic meeting place in the U.S. Mountain West that delivers atmosphere, outstanding service and a touch of adventure and relaxation

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CALIFORNIA

An executive retreat at the 20-room Santa Ynez Inn in Santa Ynez artfully combines getting serious about meetings and free time with popular options such as spa treatments, wine tastings and golf matches. Located in the heart of Santa Barbara Wine Country, the inn has conference space and can host a plated dinner for up to 50 and buffets for a maximum of 100. A full gourmet breakfast is offered daily, along with complimentary hors d'oeuvres around the fire each evening with samplings of local wines followed by desserts later in the evening. santaynezinn.com;



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In Ketchum, the 29 newly renovated guest rooms and suites at **Knob Hill Inn** offer a variety of lodging options for small groups, all with a wet bar, marbletiled bathrooms with oversized tubs, and balconies featuring amazing Sun Valley-area views. The Sawtooth Room is perfect for small groups of up to 14, while the Fireplace Room can accommodate 25 to 60 guests. An indoor heated pool, hot tub and sauna and iPads available for use on property are sure to be big hits for visiting execs. *knobhillinn.com; 208.726.8010*



At the more secluded River Dance Lodge, along the Middle Fork of the Clearwater River in Kooskia, CEOs and leadership teams can relax in a tranquil and beautiful wilderness setting. Highlights of this unique property include eight handcrafted log cabins that can hold up to 56 guests, three glamping tents, and Syringa Café with its West Dining Room that is usable as meeting space. Situated in the Wild & Scenic River Corridor, River Dance Lodge is the perfect launching point for hiking, biking and whitewater rafting, and trails nearby lead to hot springs, horseback riding in the Bitterroot Mountains and fly fishing.

Selway-Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation hosted a board retreat at River Dance Lodge in early June, renting two large cabins to lodge the 14 people in attendance. "The cabins are cozy, comfortable and clean, and the lodge is located in a beautiful setting with easy access," says Communication & Membership Coordinator Sue Webster.

The group found the hospitality "personable and welcoming," she says, noting they didn't have muchtime to take advantage of outdoor activities."I wished we'd had time to take advantage of a river trip. We saw several groups come in from a day of rafting, and they had a fantastic time. Our two days were 100 percent work." *riverdancelodge.com*; 800.451.6034



Completely renovated only two years ago, the 77-room **Shore Lodge** in McCall is a lakeside sanctuary that also has easy access to Brundage Ski Mountain. Since 1948, the resort has been a favorite of groups and guests visiting the area and sits on 5,330 acres at an elevation of 5,000 feet. Shore Lodge has a fine-dining restaurant, two casual culinary options, a variety of window-laden meeting and private dining rooms, and The Core spa for free time. *shorelodge.com*; 800.657.6464