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Slowing Down, So Close to Home: Cedar Creek Review & Travel Plan

Posted by [Melody Meiners](#) on June 27, 2014



St. Louis families traveling to Cedar Creek can enjoy fishing at their stocked pond. They'll even provide supplies.

The last few summers have been dominated by staycations, but more St. Louis families are trying to find options little bit further from home to get in some serious quality and play time without breaking the vacation day or financial banks. While there are a few regional, family travel staples that come immediately to mind, and all have their merits, our family was recently invited to visit a newer place not on that quick list. One that is close to home, but feels miles away – [Cedar Creek](#) in New Haven, MO.

Situated in the rolling hills of Missouri wine country – just between Hermann and Washington, MO – Cedar Creek Lodge has a solid reputation as a retreat center, but in 2011 opened their activities and lodgings to individual bookings and to day-trippers who wish to enjoy their activities. The location is far enough from St. Louis to truly have that laid-back, country vibe. But, adding points to the relaxing family vacation factor, the 1-hour drive doesn't require a road-trip travel plan to undertake, and makes Cedar Creek an ideal spot for a weekend getaway that doesn't require time off work.



Onsite dining options include dinner and craft

brews, a continental breakfast, and a full kitchen for cooking.

Eat

We all know the two-headed monster of family travel is food and sleep, especially when traveling with the under five set. But let's start with food, since that's a little more exciting.

A cornerstone of [Cedar Creek's](#) property is an old western town that houses a craft brewery and scratch cooking restaurant – 2nd Shift Brewery and the Town Hall. Originally constructed only as facades for old west inspired play and then built out as actual building, these buildings are straight out of a dime novel and were fun to explore with the kids. The Chalet, located next to registration, is where they host a complimentary continental breakfast each morning starting at 8am. The breakfast included a couple of gluten-free options, plenty of fresh fruit, and a cereal selection fit for even the pickiest of kids.

Perhaps due to their roots as a retreat center and the only recent expansion to private reservations, on-site dining is limited to weekends. So if you're heading down on a Friday, plan to head into Hermann or Washington for dinner. We hit Hermann and the kids loved watching the trains charge past the Amtrak station, and my four-year-old loved all of the unique, German inspired buildings. Cedar Creek is currently undergoing an expansion to add more special event space, and includes the addition of a new kitchen at the Town Hall.

There is a limited, set menu released each Friday for the weekend and the food was delicious – fresh baked flatbread highlighted the menu and complimented many of the dishes, and served as the base for a roasted beef sandwich reminiscent of the thick cut beef sandwiches found on The Hill. Ideally with their kitchen expansion their menu and selections for kids will grow, but during our visit there was only a cold-cut sandwich on the menu for kids, so we ordered some hummus and sharables lest our children revolt.

However, staying in a house goes a long way in rounding out food options during your stay at [Cedar Creek](#). They recently changed their policy so individuals staying in houses are able to bring in food and prepare a full meal, while retreats and large groups are asked to use their catering services. (The catering menu online looks pretty impressive.) With a full kitchen and dining space in the Little Lodge, Manor House, and Rock House you could prep and enjoy meals with the family easily. The full fridge was a highlight for us since we stopped in Hermann at the grocery store and picked up some whole milk, cupcakes, and wine to enjoy that weekend.

The craft brewery onsite, 2nd Shift Brewery, was started by a member of Vatterot family (owners and operators of Cedar Creek). The brand is picking up some regional and national recognition for their fresh, unique small batches. The selection varies by day, but I can only hope you get a chance to try the Hibiscus Wit. You can purchase their brew in a growler or by the glass for consumption at the Saloon or in your lodgings. They also serve Missouri wines if that is more your speed.



The Little Lodge boasts 3 beds, 2 full baths, a full kitchen, this cozy living room, and an amazing screened porch.

Sleep

We were treated to a weekend at the Little Lodge – a three bedroom house complete with a screened front porch facing the hills, two bathrooms, a full kitchen, TV's in each room, and WIFI. Having toured the other accommodations on site, this is the ideal place to stay as a single family. I can imagine the larger Manor House, a cornerstone building on the property, would be the ideal location for a few families, and Thistle and Rock Houses for a small family or even a girl's weekend.

Individual guest rooms are available in a hotel-style building called Cedar Lodge, but they struck me as ideal for either a couple, individuals traveling for golfing, and the retreat business that is the core of Cedar Creek. The individual rooms are undergoing renovations currently, so I am interested to see how those rooms will be impacted.

I couldn't have been happier with our accommodations, and am already making plans to return and stay at the Little Lodge. We were right by the pool and food, and central on the property which made getting back for naps and bedtimes a breeze. Being a certified weather nerd I just can't get over how cool it was to watch a storm roll in over the hills from the porch, craft beer from 2nd Shift in hand, and the kids playing with cards and crayons. The old fashioned tub was a delight to soak in as well.



Cedar Creek provides the supplies for fishing, golfing, tennis, and has a few pool tables on site as well. Bring your own hiking shoes & swimsuit.

Play

You either fall into one camp or another when on vacation: relax and veg, or go and do. As a typical go and doer married to a relax and vegeer, it was great to find a place that offered just enough activities for both of our travel styles. The property boasts a stocked pond, tennis courts, a 9-hole golf course that is family friendly – supplies for all of these activities can be brought from home or borrowed from the main building. They also have two hiking trails, an outstanding salt water pool, and live music in the town hall on Saturday & Sunday. We ended up doing plenty, but relaxing and talking much more in part, I think, due to the porch and living room of the Little Lodge being so appealing.

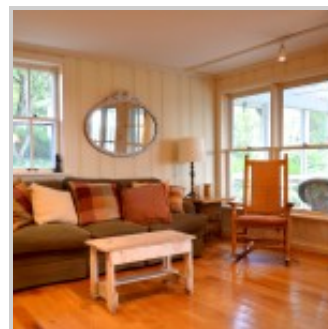
The WIFI can be turned on or off for the resort at a group's request, but with a slow signal on Sprint services we ended up enjoying an unplugged weekend. We had enough access to get what we needed done, but not enough to suck us into our Facebook feeds. The particular phone and carrier we have (iPhone and Sprint) had our phones searching for signal the whole trip so it was hard to keep a charge though. I recommend charging when you stop in your room.



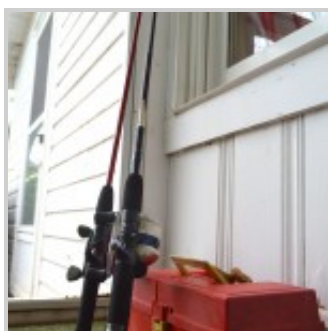
The Manor House is the largest home on site and greets visitors on check-in



St. Louis families traveling to Cedar Creek can enjoy fishing at their stocked pond. They'll even provide supplies.



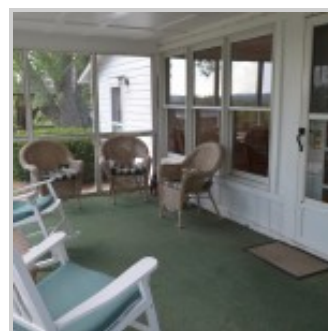
The Little Lodge boasts 3 beds, 2 full baths, a full kitchen, this cozy living room, and an amazing screened porch.



Cedar Creek provided us with a tackle box and poles.



Cedar Creek provides the supplies for fishing, golfing, tennis, and has a few pool tables on site as well. Bring your own hiking shoes & swimsuit.



The incredible front porch attached to the Little Lodge



Onsite dining options include dinner and craft brews, a continental breakfast, and a full kitchen for cooking.

Recommended Family Travel Plans

Packing List:

- Swimsuits
- Pool Toys
- Beach towels
- Sunscreen
- Bubbles
- Playing cards
- Board games
- Golf clubs
- Golf balls
- Shorts
- T-shirts
- Blue jeans
- Sandals
- Athletic shoes
- Socks
- Boat shoes/Crocs
- Play n Go coloring packs or busy bags
- Toiletries
- Snacks
- Lunch meat, bread, PB&J's
- Groceries for dinner
- Camera
- Chargers for phones, e-readers, tablets
- Phone
- E-reader/tablet
- Books for kids and adults

When & Where to Stay & Eat

This is the ideal trip for families looking to leave right after work on a Friday evening, returning on Sunday afternoon. Plan to stay in the weekend in the Little Lodge or another house on site. Friday night drive into Hermann or Wahsington for dinner, breakfast at the Chalet, lunch at the Town Hall, make dinner at the house and grab a growler of beer to accompany. Breakfast at the Chalet, with check out at 11 am on Sunday. Plan for a lunch again at town hall or on the way home.

****Disclosure:** The reviewer was provided a complimentary two-night stay to experience Cedar Creek first hand. All opinions are the reviewer's and were not provided by or impacted by Cedar Creek Lodge or their affiliates.**

For more information and to book your stay, visit www.cedarcreekcenter.com



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