



Fall Under Sedona's Spell at Enchantment Resort and Mii amo Spa

BY JANICE NEIDER

After a very hectic couple of weeks, I was sooo looking forward to flying into Phoenix, where I was going to be picked up by my friend, Joan, (who recently lost her beloved father and was in dire need of a restorative retreat) and then take the scenic, two hour drive to the Enchantment Resort/ Mii amo in spiritual Sedona.

As an avid spa-goer, visiting Enchantment/ Mii amo, had been on my short list for quite some time. After all, you don't rack up a laundry list of accolades ranging from the #1 destination spa in the world by Travel + Leisure, 10 Best Destination Spas by Conde Nast Traveler, as well as Best Boutique Hotel, Best Cuisine, Best For Hiking, Best For Mind-Body-Spirit, Best for Yoga, and yadayadayada by big hitters such as Spa Finder, Andrew Harper, Travel Channel, etc. if you're not doing pretty much everything right.

After our all-to-brief stay, my only complaint is the name. Maybe it's just me, but I was totally confused trying to figure out the difference between Enchantment Resort and Mii amo, and where I should make reservations. I'll try to clarify below but while I'm on a roll, there is one more thing I'd change. I also felt the name is a bit of a misnomer. Mii amo, means, "to continue one's journey" in the Yuman Indian language. However, only minutes after we arrived, (and received a sincerely gracious welcome) dropped off the luggage in our spacious, casual/chic casita, and then headed outside, we were almost struck dumb (so not my usual state of being) by the singular, raw beauty of the majestic, red-rock cliffs. Forget about "continuing one's journey", we would have been thrilled to simply "end our journey" here, or at least extend our stay to a full week.

The best way to explain the difference between the two is that the

mother property, Enchantment Resort, sprawls over 70 acres of gorgeously rugged terrain. It's the gateway to Boynton Canyon and is surrounded by the Coconino National Forest and Red Rock Secret Mountain Wilderness. You are totally secluded yet still only five miles from the touristy town of Sedona.

Luxury accommodations come in a myriad of blend-into-the-mountainside adobe offerings ranging from deluxe studios casitas, one or two-bedroom suites, suites with private pools or full haciendas. Each room offers an outdoor deck for enjoying the views of Sedona's magnificent red-rock mountains, and inside you'll find a bee-hive fireplace, mini-bar, coffee maker, complimentary high-speed internet, in-room movies, twice-daily housekeeping service. Complimentary bottled water, a newspaper and orange juice are delivered daily.

Tucked into a corner of the property, right across the path from the resort, you'll find Mii amo, a world-class a 24,000-square-foot destination spa. As a guest of Enchantment, you'll have full run of the Mii amo facilities, including locker rooms, steam, sauna and whirlpool, fitness room, indoor pool with fireplace, the crystal grotto meditation space, outdoor lap pool, exercise classes, art lessons, cooking demos, and programs by visiting experts.

Ok, now this is where it gets a little tricky. If however, you're in the mood for some serious cocooning, don't play nicely with others or just never want to change out of your gym clothes, Mii amo also offers a separate all-inclusive package. for guests following 3, 4, and 7 night programs called Journeys. Journeys are inclusive of accommodations at one of their 14 guest rooms and 2 suites, three daily meals at Mii amo Café, two spa treatments each day, consultations, fitness classes, lectures, and use of spa facilities.

In a nutshell, think of a stay at Enchantment as an à la Carte proposal while the all-inclusive Mii Amo package means you can totally turn off your brain since your meals, activities and spa services are all covered.

“Our dinner at Che-Ah-Chi, which means Red Rocks, rocked!”

There is a nice variety of restaurants at Enchantment. You can enjoy a sophisticated, gourmet meal at their signature restaurant, Che-Ah-Chi, watch the sunset over drinks at the stylish Wine Bar, or for a more casual bite, stop in for Southwestern food at Tii Gavó, or for tapas and cocktails at View 180. If you're busy working on your tan, the Pool Bar features full-service food and drinks poolside. Across the path, Mii amo Café serves a constantly changing menu full of healthy choices featuring fresh produce picked daily from the chef's garden.

Our dinner at Che-Ah-Chi, which means Red Rocks, rocked! The stunning floor-to-ceiling canyon views, the guitar player softly strumming, the friendly yet professional service, Chef David Schmidt's Southwest accented contemporary American cuisine, and a tightly curated wine list that received Wine Spectator's "Best of Award of Excellence", all join forces to ensure a truly memorable dining experience.

Standout dishes include the Fois Gras starter, enhanced by a dusting of Ras El Hanout and a smear of currents and rosemary honey, the Local Little Gem Lettuce Caesar salad sprinkled with crunchy eggplant croutons and an intensely flavorful dish of Diver Sea Scallops, on saffron pasta, with short rib ragout and tomato confit.



World class Mii amo spa



Cozy Southwestern ambiance...



Creative cuisine at Che-Ah-Chi

But wait, there's more! As you would expect, Mii amo's hiking program and spa treatments are both top-notch, but we luckily stumbled across two people who deserve an extra special shout-out for keeping Native American traditions alive.

Our fave Red Rock hike was led by Roy, a clinical psychologist as well as an avid outdoorsman, who gets my vote for the person I'd want to be with if I got stranded in the desert. I doubt there's anything he doesn't know about the local flora, fauna and Native Americans. After spending a fascinating couple hours with him, we learned how to make needle and thread from a yucca plant (as well as about 18 other survival tips utilizing yucca) tasted different flours he ground from Manzanita and juniper berry, and marveled over the beautiful arrowheads he had carved from a homemade knife, as well as sandals, shampoo, baskets, etc. he had made from desert elements. He is so knowledgeable that a local Native American tribe reached out to him to teach their teenage boys survival skills. Check which hike he's guiding and be sure to sign up in advance, since they only allow 6 people on a hike.

The second crown jewel here is Gita Wagner, a licensed massage therapist and healer. Gita has studied in Europe, India, and Africa with extensive training in Spiritual Therapy, holistic massage and Body Oriented Psychotherapy Trainings and Meditation. Neither of her workshops, The Time is Now and Food for the Soul (for women to explore the forgotten art of nourishing oneself) were available during my stay, but I had timed it right for a Spirit of the New Moon Treatment. This is 90



Marvelous massage.

minutes of sheer bliss offered exclusively on days around the new moon, which Gita explained to me was the perfect time for manifesting your deepest desires and wishes. This powerful treatment begins with a footbath while writing down your intention on parchment. This was followed by a full body and scalp massage to stimulate mental function, activate intuition and enhance inner guidance. It was so wonderful that afterwards, I asked Gita if I could change my wish to having her give me a weekly massage. That would really raise my spirits. ■

Contact Information

525 Boynton Canyon Rd.
West, Sedona, AZ 86336
(928) 282-2900
(800) 826-4180
www.enchantmentresort.com
www.miiamo.com



Joan and I hiking Coffeepot (see it behind us?)