

ECHO VALLEY RANCH

He's the proud owner of a high-end guest ranch and spa and a successful businessman, but Norm Dove will be the first to admit he has a consuming addiction -- flying. And nothing gets his adrenaline going more than seeing two or three aircraft landing one after another on his ranch's runway.

When Norm and his wife, Nan, started building their dream getaway ranch in British Columbia's spectacular Caribou region in the early 1990s, they quickly realized they wanted their own plane and airstrip to cut traveling time from their home in Vancouver from five hours to less than one hour. Norm was now consumed by two passions -- his guest ranch and flying.

Nature satisfied the first passion by creating the perfect setting for one of the world's premier eco- and soft-adventure ranches -- Echo Valley Ranch & Spa. He satisfied the second by building a 3,416-foot paved runway and hangar for his first plane -- an amphibian turbo Beaver. Norm's new Cessna 206 is parked beside the hangar where he can see it from the lodge, and he'll find any excuse to take it up.

He'll also be the first person on the runway whenever a plane lands, bringing new guests to Echo Valley. When the greetings are done, it's time to talk to the pilots about their aircraft and flying. Fortunately for Norm, his runway will accommodate quite a variety of aircraft, which fly in from across North America.

The minute guests arrive, whether by air or

land, they sense the magic of being surrounded by wide-open spaces and tranquil wilderness. Those who come for a western riding adventure or the luxurious spa soon realize they have also found a sanctuary for restoring their passion for life. "We knew that we had found something very special when we first came to Echo Valley," says Norm. "We were awed by the serenity and beauty of the land and by an overwhelming sense of spirituality and reverence for it." The Doves started building the 160-acre ranch, with hundreds of thousands of acres of surrounding range land, in 1990. The sense of spirituality they felt as they developed the ranch inevitably led to the creation of the Baan Thai spa pavilion, which provides a special place for rejuvenation. The world-class spa includes a full range of Western as well as Asian spa therapies, including facials, herbal aromatherapy massages and steam baths, hydrotherapy, body wraps, manicures, pedicures, and of course - Echo Valley's signature Thai massage.

Those wondering about the connection



between Western and Asia influences soon realize how everything connects with Echo Valley's surrounding beauty. From the air, it's easy to be captivated by the expansive beauty of four distinct biomes -- desert, boreal forest, grass lands and marshes. The breathtaking Chilcotin Mountains and range and coastal mountain glaciers to the Southwest are only minutes away, to the West is one of the world's last two remaining expanses of natural grasslands and to the East are the magnificent Rockies. Also just minutes away to the South, the mighty Fraser River cuts its way through a spectacular desert canyon.

In addition to the awe-inspiring vistas from the air, fly in guests have a number of appealing choices for day trips from the ranch. Its less than an hour to Vancouver or Whistler (Pemberton airport), where glider flying and golfing are popular. There are landing strips at historic sites such as Barkerville, and those with float-planes have access to some of the best trout fishing lakes in the world.

On the ground, guests have the freedom to explore countless trails designated for horseback riding, hiking and mountain biking. The trails lead to valleys of flower-filled meadows, magnificent mountains, forests, pristine lakes and winding rivers, and through sagebrush and tiny cactus in the arid desert canyon. The ranch also provides guided excursions

whether on foot, horseback, 4 X 4 vehicles, or by plane. Guests can adopt a kid-like curiosity for gold panning or watch the resident expert fly and feed the ranch's falcons. There's also the opportunity for some extraordinary fly-fishing at nearby lakes.

The four-and-a-half star rating underscores the exceptional guest accommodations and facilities. Accommodation includes Dove Lodge, with six spacious guest rooms, Lookout Lodge, which has nine large bedrooms, and four guest cabins.

For more information on Echo Valley Ranch & Spa, go to www.evranch.com, e-mail: info@evranch.com, or phone: 800-253-8831.

Echo Valley's private landing strip: 3416-foot-long runway; 3650-foot elevation; 51 degrees, 14' (Lat), 121 degrees, 59' (Long). Identifier: CBJ4.

