

## Western RV News and Recreation

### Challis Hot Springs - A Sense of Place

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#### RV Wife

**By Lisa A. DeBruyckere**

Some places just have a special “feel” about them. It’s not the brochure, the activities available on site, or even the first “welcome to . . .” you receive. It’s as though you can feel the “arms” of the place opening up to welcome you as you’re nearing the destination. Such is the case with Challis Hot Springs in central Idaho.

Nestled along the Salmon River, the facility offers beautiful RV and tent camping, a bed and breakfast, and for the weary traveler that enjoys a good soak and the health benefits of natural mineral hot springs, two different pools await you—a therapy pool with temperatures that range from 105–107 degrees, and a larger pool regulated from 100–102 degrees. Both have gravel bottoms that allow for continuous movement of water from the underground geothermal springs, lessening the need for harsh purification chemicals.

If you’re a history buff, you’ll enjoy being welcomed at this 4th generation family-owned resort.



Photo by: Lisa A. DeBruyckere  
The Challis Hot Springs.



Photo by: Lisa A. DeBruyckere  
The Challis Hot Springs RV Campground.

Known as the “Beardsley Resort & Hotel” in the 1800s, Challis Hot Springs once welcomed miners that toiled in the Beardsley, Custer, and Yankee Fork Mines. Challis was founded in 1873, and served as a supply base for miners and ranchers. A unique visitor center at the town’s crossroads (Land of the Yankee Fork State Park) a few miles from the hot springs features an excellent video on the history of gold mining and offers numerous gold mining artifacts for your viewing pleasure.

Challis Hot Springs offers every visitor an opportunity to enjoy the wilds of Idaho, as well. Bighorn sheep, deer, birds, and a variety of wildlife can be found on or near the property. The Salmon River runs along the campground, and offers a peaceful backdrop to the quiet, relaxing surroundings. Horseshoe pits, horse corrals, clean restrooms and showers, a driving range, and barbecue area accompany the 30 RV hookups and 10 tent sites available. And conscientious pet owners are welcome to enjoy the facilities with their best friends, as long as the owners keep them on a leash and clean up after them.

A short distance from Challis Hot Springs is the gateway to rafting or kayaking, fishing for a

variety of native Idaho trout, or a jaunt into some of the best protected and most rugged wilderness in the United States—the Frank Church Wilderness. But what's most unique about Challis Hot Springs isn't its geothermal features, Salmon River beauty, or incredible history. What makes Challis Hot Springs a wonderful destination is its sense of place . . . and space. It's a place a few miles off a busy highway at the end of a four-mile asphalt road, in a valley that literally swallows you up when you arrive.

In today's world of commercialization, places like Challis Hot Springs are few and far between, and are definitely worth the stop. Challis Hot Springs is located off of Highway 93 in central Idaho. The facility is open 7 days a week. 5025 Hot Springs Road, Challis, Idaho. (208) 879-4442. At the junction of highways 75 and 93, travel south on highway 93 to Hot Springs Road.