



A top-notch weekend getaway in County Mayo

■ JESSICA MAILE

AS you drive west across the country, the flat scenery of the midlands gives way to the dramatic hills and mountains of Mayo and it's then you know you're in for a great weekend.

Arriving in Westport, you can not help but be delighted by the colourful pubs, varied shops and many restaurants in this lovely town. Shops like Foxford Woollen Mills and Carraig Dunne have some of the best of Irish goods on offer and there are restaurants from Chinese to Indian and traditional pub food to Italian.

Standing in prime location is the Castlecourt Hotel, which is an excellent location to spend all of your time or to use as a base to visit the delights that Connaught has to offer, including Croagh Patrick, if you feel daring.

I have read many a review about this hotel and I was not disappointed. The friendliness of all the staff is definitely what makes this hotel such a success.

The most amazing thing about staying there was the fact that you were not yet another figure on

a corporate hotel chain's balance book. This is a large, family-run hotel, and that is a unique thing in itself. You can feel the warmth and attention to detail that you would expect from a small hotel or B&B.

The bedroom was grand and spacious and the four-poster bed was a unique sleeping experience.

The hotel bar was a pleasant way to end an evening, either outside in the cosy armchairs or inside at Petie Joe's Bar, as locals and guests mingled as the live music played away and conversation filled the air.

This hotel also offers a great choice for eating with the informal dining at the Courtyard Bistro and the elegant Orchard restaurant. The food was of top quality and the staff always ready to help make your dining experience one to remember.

The Castlecourt Hotel also has an excellent leisure centre, the C Club, which includes a 20-metre pool and kiddies' splash pool, sauna, steam room, jacuzzi, a fully-equipped gymnasium and even a hairsalon.

But the real secret of a stay at the Castlecourt

Hotel is the spa. If you still have that tension from work or you ache from a days' adventure exploring the Mayo countryside, then spending time at Spa Sula is the best way to let all that stress and tiredness just melt away.

The choice of steam room or sauna allows you to sweat away all of your troubles and pains only to bring you back to life with the amazing choice of hot and cold showers. The Caribbean rain shower cooled the heat of the sauna, making me ready to explore the salt room.

After all of the indoor treatments, it was a refreshing and unique treat to sit in the outside jacuzzi, which is in its own private grotto. The warmth of those bubbles were soothing as I filled my lungs with that pure cool country air.

I treated myself to the Sundari Abhyanga Massage, which is a full-body, oil massage that deeply relaxed my tired muscles but also rejuvenated me

at the same time.

After my massage, I lingered in the soft music and ambient light of the relaxation suite, which allowed me to drift away from reality and made me wonder if it was safe to drive or operate machinery after my time in Spa Sula.

So, all in all, the Castlecourt Hotel is well worth the trip across the country to experience the delights of the West of Ireland. Enjoy the beautiful scenery that you forget is within easy driving distance.

The staff and facilities of this Westport hotel will leave your mind full of happy memories and

have you planning your return trip as soon as you get home.

For more information on the Castlecourt Hotel for a Mayo getaway, go to www.castlecourthotel.ie

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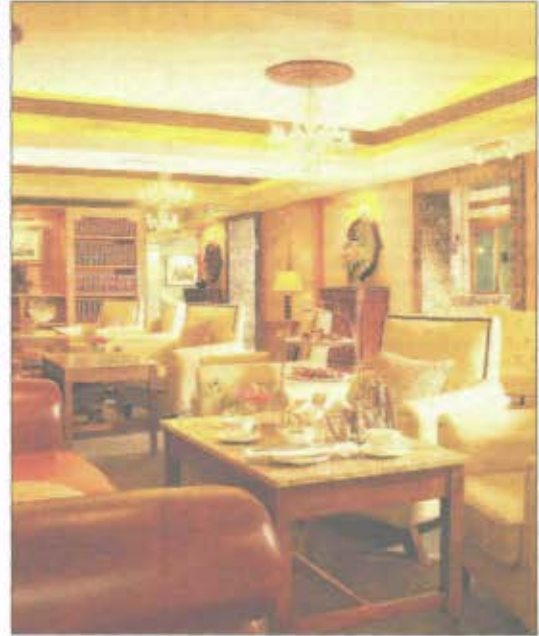
The hotel is in a prime location within the town of Westport



Petie Joe's Bar



The Orchard restaurant



The welcoming lobby

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