

### Property at a glance

Location: The Homestead, Hot Springs, VA

Staff: Homestead Grounds and Landscaping

Category: Hotel, Motel or Resort

Year site built: 1766

Acres of turf: 85

Acres of woody ornamentals: 15

Acres of display beds: 15,000 sq. ft.

Total paved area: 30 acres

Total man-hours/week: 900 in-season, 600 off-season

### Maintenance challenges

- ▶ Steep slopes
- ▶ Climate/seasonal considerations
- ▶ Intensity of maintained landscape

### Project checklist

- ▶ Spa Gardens
- ▶ Cottage Row and children's playground
- ▶ West Wing

### On the job

12 full-time staff, 10 seasonal employees, 3 licensed pesticide applicators

# The Homestead

## A 2000 Grand Award Winner of the Professional Grounds Management Society for Hotel, Motel or Resort

Who would have thought that, in 1766, a hot spring-fed pool resort for 15 guests started on a 300-acre land grant in the Virginia mountains would grow to a 3,300-acre, top-notch American resort spa? Well, time will do wonders, and no doubt the Homestead Grounds and Landscaping staff wishes they had more time for their numerous jobs.

A few of those jobs include maintaining 100 miles of trails that wind through resort property, pulling up all annuals by hand before the first hard frost in this Zone 5 mountain setting and stringing up 75,000 outdoor lights for a Christmas display. Since guests come here to relax, mowing starts after 9 a.m., and the crew may be asked to work around an afternoon nap or social function.

Because The Homestead is a mountain resort, crew members have to contend with steep slopes when caring for the gardens. All mulch is hand-carried, and weeding requires sure footing and

care to avoid damaging plants. The shallow, rocky soil must be amended to bring out superior results.



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The classic architecture of the Grand Tower of the Homestead Hotel inspired the landscape for the hotel campus.



A staircase connects the hotel first floor lobby to the Casino level. Barrier-free walks traverse either side of the staircase, and a pergola and putting green sit at the bottom.



Well-proportioned plant beds with a variety of colors, sizes and textures sculpt the hillside on the walk from the Casino building to the hotel.