

# SPA GUIDE

A woman with long, wavy brown hair is sitting on a wooden deck next to a swimming pool. She is wearing a white, ribbed, one-shoulder swimsuit with a red polka-dot trim along the neckline and hem. She is looking down and to her right. The background is a clear blue swimming pool with a wooden deck.

45 pages  
of how to  
soothe the  
mind, cleanse  
the body and  
invigorate  
the soul...



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THE SPA GUIDE

## EDITOR'S LETTER



It is no longer news that the world of spas and health holidays is blossoming, if not fully fledged. The word 'wellbeing' has become an integral part of our everyday language, accessible to all, achieved through a well-accepted code of living: sleep more, stress less, eat green, disconnect to reconnect, meditate to levitate. Yet sometimes I, for one, feel we are being bombarded from all sides by this notion

of perfected living and I often wonder if I can keep up with all the rules. Frequently I berate myself for my 'bad' behaviour, only to remember I am also meant to be thinking positively.

Many of us are also juggling careers with the needs of our children. Mine recently gave me a card depicting everything I love on it – the cinema, sunshine, chocolate (100 per cent dark, obviously), our dog, and then there it was – my laptop – because apparently I am 'always' on it. I almost started to feel guilty. Almost. Because, if it weren't for my computer my children might not wake up to a view of rolling green hills every day. They might never picnic by a stream in the summer or know the everyday magic of the changing seasons. We all have our codes. I want my children to know that they don't have to be chained to an office desk for life. And that hard work can help not to just put food on the table, but to achieve a satisfied life, mind and heart. For me, health is more and more about fulfilment. Unlike our Instagram accounts, this is not something that can be filtered, though there are definitely times when we might need help remembering how to live the best possible lives we can, for us, in this present moment.

This guide is a barometer to the most inspiring spas in the world right now. Each has been tried and tested, and all of them are indeed dedicated to your personal wellbeing. Our advice? Dip in, travel, seek revelation, return refreshed. Take with you only the pieces of guidance that work for you. Don't aim for 100 per cent obedience. Aim to be you, in your brilliance, and to have fun in the process. Because we only do this once. And it is definitely meant to be an enjoyable journey. So take good, very good, care of your self.

*Daisy Finer*



# SPA TROTTING

Lisa Brown, founder of [theluxuryspaedit.com](http://theluxuryspaedit.com), shares the hottest launches, wellness programmes and spa trends around the globe



## SEVEN PINES, Ibiza

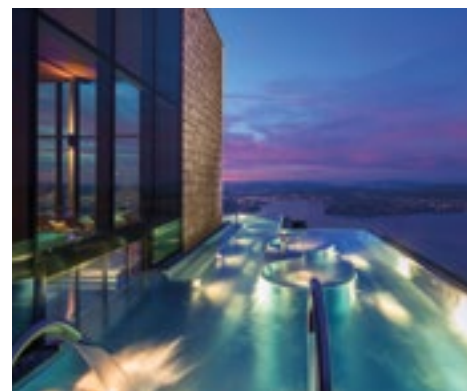
The White Isle sees one of the most exciting wellness openings of 2018. Seven Pines nestles in a forest on the west coast with incredible sunset views. Its spa, Pure 7, is set to be a game-changer on the island's wellbeing scene - with organic elements alongside cosmetology, medical aesthetics, meditation, breathwork, yoga, running trails, cross-country biking and stand-up paddle boarding. [7pines.com](http://7pines.com)

## HOT NEW OPENINGS



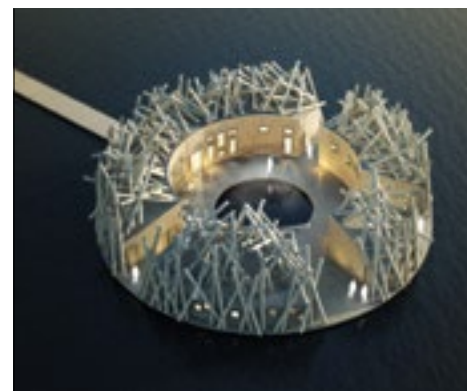
### THE LANGLEY Buckinghamshire

Launching this summer, The Langley (sister hotel to The Wellesley in London) will have a world-class spa featuring vitality pools and a women-only thermal area. With top-class systems and equipment, the state-of-the-art gym will be led by fitness guru Matt Roberts. Services will include personal training, group classes, health diagnostics and nutrition consultations. [thelangley.com](http://thelangley.com)



### BÜRGENSTOCK RESORT Lake Lucerne, Switzerland

The Alpine Spa at Bürgenstock Resort (set 500m above Lake Lucerne) is set to become one of the top ten spa destinations in the world. The glass-enclosed haven embraces its breathtaking backdrop of the Swiss Alps with floor-to-ceiling windows. Facilities include an outdoor infinity pool to revel in those epic views, panorama saunas, Kneipp baths and Jacuzzis hidden within caves. [buergenstock.ch](http://buergenstock.ch)



### ARCTIC BATH Harads, Sweden

A new wellness retreat is heading to the shores of the Lule River. Scheduled to drop anchor in December, Arctic Bath will free-float in summer and stay ice static come winter. The innovative floating creation circles an open air cold bath, great for circulation though not for the faint-hearted; during wintertime the water plummets to 4°C. Post-dip you can defrost in one of several saunas or the hot tub. [arcticbath.se](http://arcticbath.se)

## FIVE RETREATS TO GET YOU IN TIP TOP SHAPE...



### 1 THE MATT ROBERTS RETREAT Lime Wood, Hampshire

With up to 10 hours of personal training, the retreat encourages you to ignite or rekindle your love of fitness. As well as energy fuelling breakfasts and a dinner from Hartnett Holder & Co, there are spa treatments, nutritional discussions and cooking demos. Use of the award-winning Herb House Spa facilities are thrown in, and you get to stay in the lap of luxury in the heart of the New Forest. 23-25 June. From £3,050, including accommodation. [limewoodhotel.co.uk](http://limewoodhotel.co.uk)

### 2 THE ENERGY HEALING RETREAT Six Senses Spa at The Alpina Gstaad, Switzerland

This three-day programme has been designed by wellness masters Six Senses to restore vitality, boost energy and provide mental clarity. Treatments include the Kundalini Back Treatment, which uses ancient massage techniques to balance the nervous system and sound healing. Yoga, meditation, an amethyst wrap and holistic massages are also on the menu. From CHF1,500pp, excluding accommodation. [thealpinagstaad.ch](http://thealpinagstaad.ch)



### 3 INTRO TO DETOX PROGRAM Kamalaya, Thailand

An ideal solution for the detox curious - the simple and effective programme features Kamalaya's delicious detox cuisine and a range of holistic therapies to cleanse the body. The package includes wellness consultations, a Body Bio-impedance analysis, holistic massages and use of fitness and yoga facilities. From £1,400 full board. [kamalaya.com](http://kamalaya.com)



### 4 ULTIMATE RESHAPE Epic Sana, Portugal

Get in shape on the shores of the Algarve... The seven-day reshape programme includes fitness and nutrition, a wellness meal plan, a modelling massage, workout days, wellness workshops, five transdermal mesotherapy sessions and access to EPIC Vital group activities and spa facilities. From €2,893. [sana-hotels.com](http://sana-hotels.com)



### 5 DIOR INSTITUT EXPERIENCE Plaza Athénée, Paris

An aesthetic boost from one of the world's leading beauty and fashion houses, The Dior Institut Experience includes an overnight stay, American breakfast for two and €200 towards a treatment of your choice. You can opt for one of the high-end facials or get preened for a night on the town with the made-to-measure make-over. They also throw in a Dior nail varnish and complimentary access to the fitness room and hammam. From €1,370. [dorchestercollection.com](http://dorchestercollection.com)





## THE LANGHAM

With expertly executed rituals such as Magnesium Wellness and Tranquil Deep Sleep, the Chuan Spa offers some of the best alternative therapies in the metropolis. After a recent revamp, this hidden haven of wellness boasts his-and-hers steam and sauna rooms, a state-of-the-art Technogym and a glorious 16-metre swimming pool – housed cleverly in an old banking vault. Be sure to stop by the spa lounge where you can chomp on healthy snacks and quaff a detox shot. [chuanbodyandsoul.com](http://chuanbodyandsoul.com)

## LONDON HOTELS UPPING THEIR WELLNESS GAME...



## THE CORINTHIA

ESPA Life at Corinthia has launched a Nurture & Support programme specifically designed for those who are undergoing, or have recently received, treatment for cancer. ESPA worked closely with Wellness for Cancer™ to develop the treatment collection of four nurturing face and body rituals, which include Be Nurtured Facial, Be Nurtured Massage and Be Nurtured Energy Balancer. [espalifeatcorinthia.com](http://espalifeatcorinthia.com)



## MANDARIN ORIENTAL

Its 'next generation spa' will be unveiled this spring after an 18-month refurbishment. Expect to enjoy express beauty treatments, a hair salon by colour queen Jo Hansford and a mani-pedi studio by renowned French podiatrist, Bastien Gonzalez. The fitness centre will welcome guests into a high-tech space overlooking the swimming pool, and there's a new yoga studio featuring classes from award-winning trainer and founder of London's successful PilatesPT studio, Hollie Grant (left). [mandarinoriental.com](http://mandarinoriental.com)



# A MAN'S EYE VIEW

Think spas are mostly for the female of the species? Think again. We despatched three men to India, Austria and Switzerland for some 'me-time'. This is how they got on...



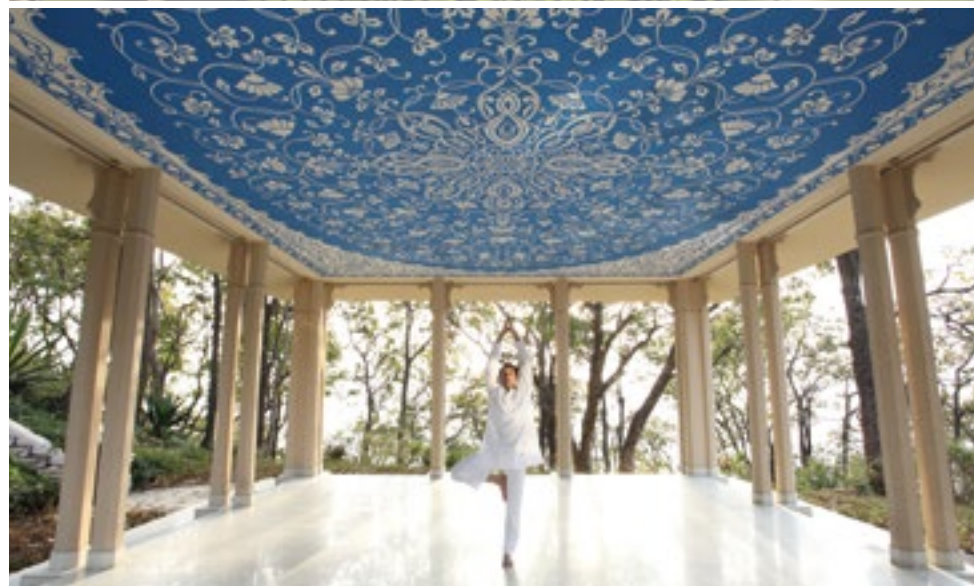
**ANANDA, *The Himalayas***  
Tim Lott is a veteran spa goer, and it's the Ananda that pulls him back again and again. This time, though it's to address his mental, not physical wellbeing

Arriving at the Ananda Spa in the Himalayas is not a new experience for me. I have visited twice before. The trouble is, the moment I leave, I just want to go back. This time it was a nine year wait. Too long.

The Ananda regularly features on the 'best spa in the world' lists. It is in a beautiful location - in the foothills of the Himalayas overlooking the Ganges river valley - and its spa is matchless, with 25 rooms spread across thousands of square footage. But that is not why I love the Ananda. I love it because it is sincere, a quality hard to articulate in writing. You just have to go there.

The spa is slick and professional. The staff are utterly charming, not simply trained to charm. You change into white linen pyjamas the moment you arrive, and get a fresh pair every evening. Their signature massage is a joy to experience.

I could talk at length about the physical treatments, but I wanted



to find out if the Ananda was as good for my mental health. Because it struck me that the whole wellness industry seems to avoid mental health issues - sticking to the respectively more tangible and more ephemeral issues of the physical and the spiritual. But as a lifelong sufferer of depression and recently diagnosed with ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder), I wanted to see if a spa could do anything for my mind.

The spa seemed a little bemused when I asked them to put together a schedule to address my issues. Really, the truth is there

was nothing in particular that spoke to the mind specifically, except the general idea of relaxation, adjusting chakras and energies and alterations to the diet.

On arrival, you have a consultation with a doctor who categorises you as pita, kapha or vata, and thereafter your treatments and diets are based around that, your body type. But there is little for psychological matters.

The best mind food I could find was the twice-daily Vedanta lessons. This is a unique feature I have not come across before - philosophy lessons to help you

achieve peace of mind. Vedanta is a philosophy that goes back thousands of years, but the teachers here are from the modern Vedanta Academy in Delhi where there is a 90-year-old guru, Swami Parathawarsy, in charge. By contrast, the teacher at the spa looked about 19, but he was charming, funny and very sweet. The Indians have a genius for philosophy and storytelling and he was expert at both.

I attended lectures about marriage, choice, self-control, ego and more besides. The scheme of Vedanta itself seems largely about personal mental discipline, and making sure your intellect is in charge of your passions. Nothing new here, really. I listened in particular to his advice about marriage, having recently got divorced - the other person is always right apparently. If only that had occurred to me at the time.

To tell the truth the most peace of mind I could have had was with some good sleep. But for some reason, I suffered from insomnia. I have no idea why. I even changed the pillows (they have that ultimate symbol of decadence, the pillow menu). It was a bit stuffy and I couldn't open the window because of the monkeys coming in and - well, my imagination stops there. I don't know what monkeys do to people in the night.

Apart from this, everything was pretty much perfect. I hardly spoke to anyone all week, which was fine by me. The food was



superb. By the end though, I was getting stressed by the amount of relaxation I was required to do. And some of the treatments were vaguely irritating - having oil poured onto your head for 30 minutes as in shirodhara, reminded me too much of getting stuck under my Hillman Imp in the 1970s with a leaking sump.

But the thing is, you do get peace of mind - and even elevation of mind. This isn't only through meditation and so on, but also - the highlight for me - the visit to Rishikesh for Aarti where they hold a sunset ceremony on the Ganges with children from the local ashram. This was not merely novel and colourful, but deeply moving.

At the end of my stay, I was still feeling a little rough - the lack of sleep had got to me - but I had had wonderful time. Did it help my depression? Well - I'm not depressed. As for the ADD, it's... where was I? Oh yes, as for the ADD, it's still there. I think. But there is a limit to what even the best spa in the world can achieve. And the Ananda may be exactly that.

**BOOK IT:** Seven-night wellness programmes from around £3,150, based on two sharing, full board. [anandaspa.com](http://anandaspa.com)





**VIVAMAYR**  
*Maria Wörth, Austria*  
 Henry Conway gives his liver a break

Toxicity could be my middle name. Over the past decade and a bit, I have habitually gone to bed at 4am more nights than most and never held back when it comes to a dry Martini or three. So seven days at VivaMayr, where I would be denied all my favourite things, would be anathema to me but no one can accuse me of not being game. The advantage of the Mayr is that it's like a private hospital – various appointments with a doctor, six blood tests later, and you really do get a full body 360. Even for the most pampering-averse, you get a proper look over. It's a hyperconductor's dream. My test results were pleasantly surprising – I seem to have a 'superliver', hence my rare hangovers despite a level of bacchanalian abuse that would make Caligula blush. It turns out I also have higher than average testosterone – my feather boas are just a ruse... Mornings start with a 'Kneipp' – basically stepping from steaming hot buckets of water to icy cold ones (cue small shrieks), all in the name of circulation. Then



the gut work starts. The Mayr method is based on a 'healthy gut, healthy body' theory, so each day also starts with a pre-breakfast Epsom salts drink, which makes you appreciate each room's bidet. NEVER do this with a lover. Your meal plan is prescribed by your doctor – balancing protein and carbs, and even though diet food (properly tiny portions), it is delish. You have to chew everything 40 times, and dress properly for dinner. Oddly though I never felt hungry and nor did I particularly miss alcohol. I did miss caffeine dreadfully – the sleepless headachy third day was all caffeine withdrawal. The rest of your day is punctuated by massages, liver compresses and voluntary exercise. I did Nordic Walking, basically bouncing over the mountains with

sticks. If you are a regular gym-goer, the exercise classes are very gentle; but with your calorie restrictions, that's for the best. I came back feeling revived and everyone told me I looked fresher – though most of my friends thought I had been forced into rehab rather than the gentler Mayr. I didn't manage to keep up the regime quite as the doctors would have liked – we touched down at Heathrow at 2pm, and by 6.30pm I had a glass of cold Veuve Clicquot in hand. A leopard may not change his spots, but a good detox did kick start a healthier new me, and I now want to go back once a year for a MOT. **BOOK IT:** Seven days, from €200 per night, plus minimum treatment spend of €1,005. [vivamayr.com/en/maria-worth](http://vivamayr.com/en/maria-worth)



**KULM'S, St Moritz, Switzerland**  
 Sam Kinchin-Smith needs to feel he earns his pampering time

We who are about to die, to the steam room! Despite its unparalleled luxury and glamour – or perhaps because of it – St Moritz is a deathtrap for the aristos and playboys who throw themselves down its historic slopes and tracks. Unless you're racing horses on a frozen lake at 'White Turf', notching up head-first speeds of 80mph on the Cresta Run, or skiing by moonlight on the Kulm Hotel's private mountain, you might as well go home. But for those willing to risk life and limb, a reward awaits them at the Kulm Spa. Because the key, in my experience, to relishing an afternoon of wellness, as a male of the species,

is to feel like you've earned it. The jackpot, that is. A proper pool, for starters; Jacuzzis and a spectacular open-air whirlpool, too, but it's the magnificent 20m centrepiece that announces the Kulm's leading edge. After a serious swim, there's a reassuringly gadgety, even macho maze of corners to explore – an infrared cabin and a saltwater grotto, Kneipp footpaths and gender-segregated saunas – before your massage. My 'AktiVital' treatment zapped both overwork- and snowsport-induced tension with startling precision, in an atmosphere of heated pine, Alpine herbs and total competence. Adrenaline pumped, then diffused, with my masculinity totally in tact. Perfect. **BOOK IT:** Doubles from approx. £504 half board. [kulm.com](http://kulm.com)

**PACKING ESSENTIALS**



**DUBARRY**  
 Thornton lightweight waterproof jacket, £189.  
[dubarry.com](http://dubarry.com)



**ORLEBAR BROWN**  
 Bulldog swimming trunks, £145.  
[orlebarbrown.com](http://orlebarbrown.com)



**EDWARD GREEN**  
 Galway boot, £1,225.  
[edwardgreen.com](http://edwardgreen.com)

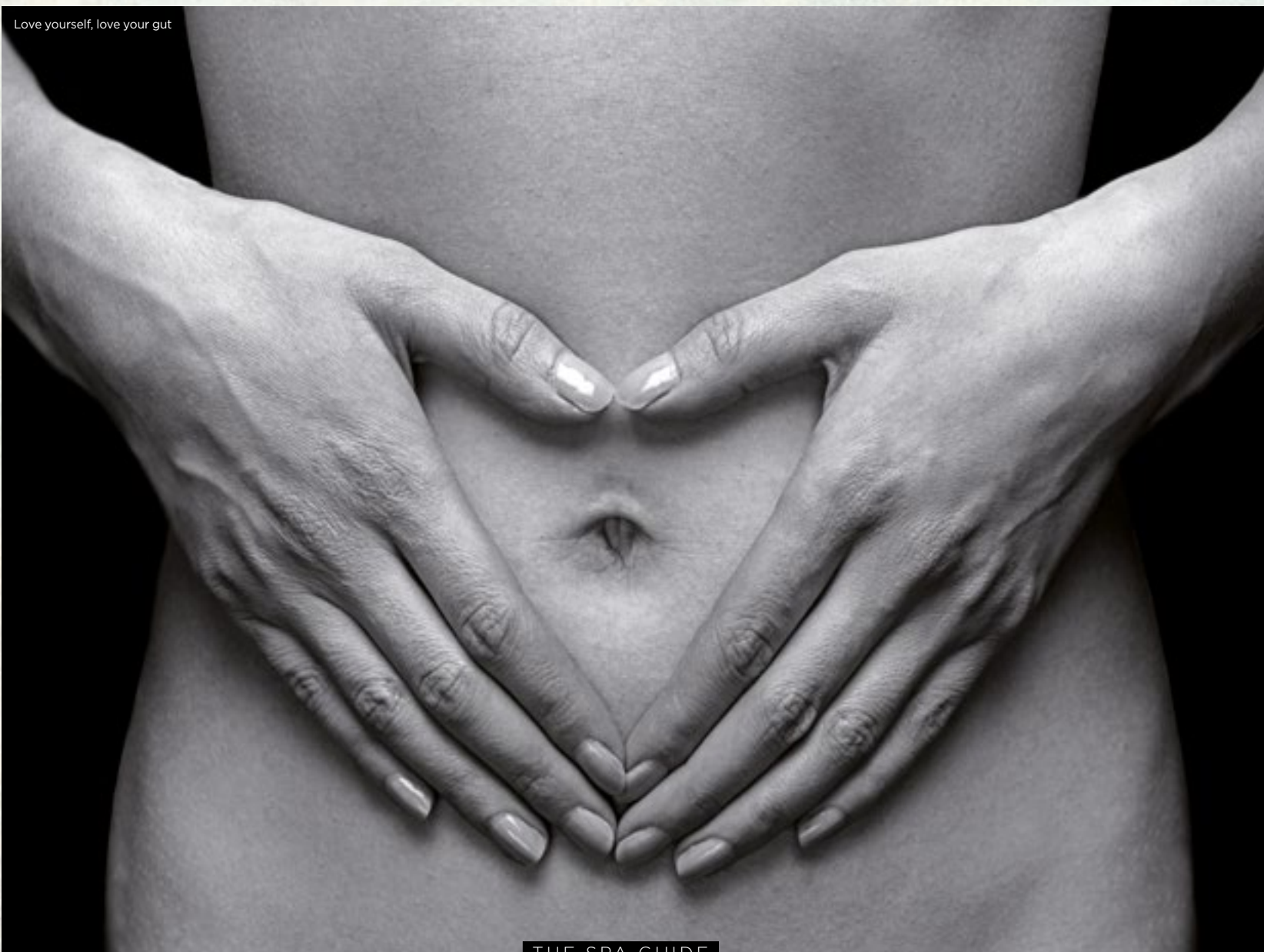


**HANRO**  
 Sea Island Cotton PJs, £253.  
[hanro.co.uk](http://hanro.co.uk)



**LOUIS VUITTON**  
 Avenue backpack, £1,860.  
[uk.louisvuitton.com](http://uk.louisvuitton.com)





THE SPA GUIDE

## GUT REACTION

Recent studies reveal just how much control your gut has over your physical and mental wellbeing, so it's worth caring for it, says **Sophie Bengé**

**H**ave you been feeling sad, even properly depressed? Emotional issues, science increasingly shows, likely stem from our bellies rather than our brain. When our microbiome, latest health buzz word and formal term for the 2-4kg 'pool' of microbes that populate our intestinal tract, is out of balance, so is our state of mind.

We've long known that our brains affect our guts – the queasy butterfly tummy before a date – but perhaps our guts have more control on how we feel. The flow of information via neurotransmitters in the intestinal ecosystem that travels up the vagus nerve – our gut-brain axis – can directly influence brain activity.

'Messages sent in this process flow in both directions, but the majority



Yoga and meditation help to alleviate stress which can cause gut inflammation

PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES

seem to go north from the gut,' explains Professor Bobby Prasad, a consultant gastroenterologist at London's Lister Hospital. 'Changes in the microbe levels might play a role in conditions such as depression, anxiety and even autism-spectrum disorders.'

These changes come from a blossoming of bad bacteria over friendly flora that kick off a chain of problems: constipation, bloating and IBS, unexplained weight gain, the tell-tale sign of sugar cravings, even symptoms of arthritis and, more profound, a breakdown of emotional boundaries and self-esteem. When the microbiome is low so are levels of serotonin.

'We should think of our gut like a rose garden,' says nutritionist Hannah Richards (*hannahrichardswellness.space*). 'If we don't tend to it, the weeds will grow.' So she suggests an annual gut MOT starting with a stool test to check the weed levels and types. Her personalised programme for clients includes a supplement regime, a shift in what you eat, how you eat (ideally chewing 30 times per mouthful) and even how you prepare to eat: with regular mealtimes, lovingly prepared. 'Bodies get very confused and constipated when they don't know when the next meal is coming,' she says.

There's also a case for not eating, for a while at least, because when we give our digestive systems a rest, the body can divert energy into cellular repair. Dr Nyjon Eccles, of the Natural Doctor in Harley Street, agrees that calorie restriction activates AMPK (adenosine monophosphate activated protein kinase), an enzyme that's shown to stimulate a healthier more youthful metabolism, but one that naturally slows down after the age of 30. He says that the link between metabolic pathways and the anti-ageing effect is an intriguing area of study, proving that eating less can lead to living longer. 'Also a diet rich in polyphenols, compounds found in a broad range of plant foods, particularly red berries and green tea which encourage growth of healthy bacteria in the bowel,' he says.

But it's not all about food. Experts agree that stress of all kinds also affects gut health, even walking, working and being on phone while eating activates our parasympathetic nervous system and so our ability to digest. Mindful practices – yoga, meditation and walking all help, so does a planting a garden, a direct way to encourage more friendly microbes through the mud on our hands!

'In my experience, ten times out of ten, people with gut issues have an underlying emotional issue,' says Hannah.

Be good to your gut and it will be good to you.

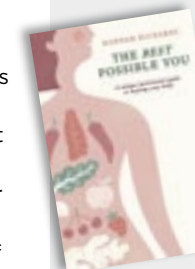


Bodhimaya retreat at glorious Cowdray Manor

### TOP UK GUT RETREAT

The Bodhimaya Retreat at beautiful Cowdray Park, Sussex is a highly personalised retreat that focuses on gut health as the starting point of overall health. Guests are under the constant care of a team of nutritionists and can choose whether to fast, juice or eat light meals. 'Our philosophy is that most things start in the gut,' says founder Cornelius O'Shaughnessy. 'We treat the individual biology of our guests and tailor a programme to optimise their health. We're all about nutrition, TLC and giving people the break they need.' The retreat includes meditation, yoga, spa treatments, acupuncture, walks and gut health talks. With an almost equal staff-guest ration you're guaranteed to get exactly what you want and need. [bodhimaya.com](http://bodhimaya.com)

### READING LIST



**THE BEST POSSIBLE YOU**  
Hannah Richards explains what it may look or feel like if any one of your organs is out of balance. £14.99. Orion Spring



**BE GOOD TO YOUR GUT**  
Eve Kalinik's excellent book is full of real, doable tips to feel better. £20. Piatkus



**GUT**  
Medic Giula Enders guides you through the gut in layman's terms. £12.99. Scribe UK



**THE GUT MAKEOVER**  
Jeannette Hyde's four-week eating plan to restore health and lose weight. £9.99. Quercus

### GOOD GUT TIPS

**1** Start each meal with a slug of cloudy apple cider vinegar or bitter vegetables – cress, dandelion, chicory or radicchio – to stimulate digestive enzymes.

**2** Chew, chew, chew – the more work the teeth do the less the digestive system has to do.

**3** Drink 20 minutes before a meal, not while eating, it dilutes the digestive enzymes.

**4** Take raw white cabbage juice (juicing is best) or eat cabbage generally. It contains L-glutamine which repairs gut tissue.

**5** Eat fermented foods such as yoghurt, keffir, kimchi, kombucha, pickles and miso which contain live bacteria that help reinoculate the gut and curb carb and sugar cravings.

**6** Make chicken broth. The collagen (especially in the claws), protein and gelatine heals the gut lining.

**7** Get your hands dirty: nature's own bacteria on our skin is good for boosting ours.

**8** Eat inulin-rich foods such as leeks, onion, garlic, Jerusalem artichoke – they are not broken down by gastric juices so act as food for beneficial gut bacteria.





# UNDER DOCTOR'S ORDERS

Give yourself a full body MOT

## ESPACE CHENOT AT L'ALBERETA Brescia, Italy

A serious regime from Henri Chenot, the king of Italy's detoxing, may not be what you first expect from this glorious Relais & Châteaux hotel close to Milan. Usually Italy means exceptional food – and there are temptations nearby. But a dedicated restaurant for those on 'the cure' and a super busy spa timetable make things easier. Days are peppered with treatments. Energy-giving acupuncture and Chinese cupping massages focus on rebooting your meridians, and daily hydro-jet baths and mud wraps are designed to break down fatty tissue, stimulate the lymphatic system and aid deep body cleansing. Powdered magnesium, which acts as a laxative also helps, as does the one-day liquid broth cleanse. Otherwise, three course meals satisfy all your senses (though they are tiny), and you should swim, walk, hit the gym, sleep, read, sleep some more, so as not to notice the hunger. Some guests lose up to half a stone in a week, and the nutritionists really help you crack not just your physical needs, but your emotional approach to food, which – let's face it – needs work in most of us. It's all about banning guilt and enjoying different flavours and textures in every meal. **BOOK IT:** Healing Holidays offers seven nights in a double room from £3,675pp, including transfers and full-board detox programme. [healingholidays.co.uk](http://healingholidays.co.uk)



## LANSERHOF LANS Lans, Austria

Lanserhof Lans is no arriviste. Ensnared in an idyllic Tyrolean village, it was converted from hotel to clinic in 1984, only the second in Europe after the original FX Mayr Health Centre. This year, it emerged from the chrysalis of a £25m refurbishment by Christoph Ingenhoven. Everywhere, those gorgeous mountains have been unveiled, plus a new bathhouse with a pool that has a salt content hovering at 3.5 per cent, and new cryotherapy chamber. Its practice, built organically over decades, is detoxification

and de-acidification of the body through gut cleansing rituals. Like all Mayr Clinics, it offers that magical fusion of cutting-edge medicinal diagnostics and traditional holistic healing. You can come post-chemo to have infusions to strengthen the immune system; to re-start your gut health, to eat healthily and play golf, or to rest and have some pampering. It's perfect for anyone with white-coat syndrome, as it doesn't feel like a clinic – more slick hideaway. **BOOK IT:** Seven-day Med Basic package, from €1,727, excluding accommodation. [lanserhof.com](http://lanserhof.com)



## PARK IGLS, Igls, Austria

'It's not what you eat, it's when you eat and how you eat it,' were just some of the wise words imparted by Dr Peter Gartner at Park Igls, an impeccable Mayr cure-based retreat. And if you come away with anything (apart from a tighter tummy and renewed vigor), it is knowledge, and knowledge is power. The (minimum) seven days are really a process of re-education. Learning to realise when you're full, the key to food mixing, not eating late at night and chewing obsessively will be the new foundations to your relationship with food. Recent medical research has even found that neurodegenerative diseases such as

Alzheimer's and Parkinson's start in the gut, so it's well worth paying attention. And if the doctors do find something more sinister going on, you'll be whisked off for an MRI at nearby Innsbruck Hospital. Add in the glorious mountains of the Austrian Tyrol (walking and skiing aplenty), a daily regime of exercise, kneipping, lectures, films and special excursions – interspersed with herbal teas, broth and delicate portions of nutritious food (depending on which 'stage' you're on), boredom is not an option. A future full of vital energy and health is, so grab it.

**BOOK IT:** The Mayr Classic Programme is €1,254, plus €153 per night in a single room. [park-igls.com](http://park-igls.com)



## VILLA STEPHANIE Baden-Baden, Germany

Nestled in the heart of the Black Forest in the historic spa town of Baden-Baden, the progressive Villa Stéphanie spa (just next door to Brenners Park Hotel) covers medical, emotional and fitness issues, as well as aesthetic ones. Whether you're checking in for an annual health check or a specific detox or fitness programme, there's a 360° approach to getting well. The 'full Monty' includes having every ounce of your being analysed (body scan, brain scan, spine, heart, bloods...). On top of that, there's an intense nutritional and

body analysis (protein, body fat, intracellular water etc), followed by a prescribed reparative programme that includes vitamin infusions and other treatments for your body's needs. Don your robe and slippers and your day will be a rotation between doctors' appointments, a relaxing hammam and massage, a spot of light yoga, and then back to your room for a detox supper (always early) where you can select a pillow from the pillow menu for the ultimate night's sleep. **BOOK IT:** Doubles from €500 room only. Prices for individual treatments vary. [oetkercollection.com](http://oetkercollection.com)

## PACKING ESSENTIALS



**LONGSTAFF LONGSTAFF**  
Paisley silk robe, £680.  
[longstafflongstaff.com](http://longstafflongstaff.com)



**SOMERVILLE**  
Pyjamas, £75.  
[somervillescarves.com](http://somervillescarves.com)



**NEAL'S YARD**  
Lavender bath salts, £14.50.  
[nealsyardremedies.com](http://nealsyardremedies.com)



**CHINTI & PARKER**  
Cashmere onesie, £595.  
[net-a-porter.com](http://net-a-porter.com)



**BIRKENSTOCK X RICK OWENS**  
Arizona sandals, £280.  
[birkenstock.com](http://birkenstock.com)



THE SPA GUIDE

# DIG YOUR DOSHA

For eastern healing, look no further than these ayurvedic experts

## SHANTI MAURICE RESORT & SPA, Mauritius

This island resort remains a magnet for die-hard ayurvedies. With one of Mauritius' best views, just gazing out onto the starlit sea generates enough 'om' to send you in to a meditative slumber. Shanti Spa is one of the largest in the Indian Ocean and ancient practices of ayurveda and yoga are fused with cutting-edge wellness regimes. Airy treatment rooms circle lily ponds encased with tropical foliage, creating a horizontal haven. As well as traditional ayurvedic offerings, Shanti Dhara is one of the most popular choices from the Indian treatment list. Designed to relax the nervous system, the full-body, synchronised four-hands massage is followed by a blissful stream of warm herbal oils. An hour in and chakras are balanced to a state of pure nirvana. The cuisine is pretty hard to fault – head to Stars for ocean views and posh nosh; Fish Shack does a tasty rustic beachside BBQ; and La Kaze Mama serves up authentic Mauritian home-style treats in a gorgeous outdoor setting. The laidback Rum Shed is the place to enjoy a sundowner. All suites and villas among the 36 acres of fragrant tropical gardens offer private pools, outdoor rain showers and dining pavilions or 'salas', with breathtaking ocean views. Interiors are fluid and spacious. Large windows allow the sunshine to soak through.

**BOOK IT:** Junior suites from €450 B&B. [shantimaurice.com](http://shantimaurice.com)



## SURYA LANKA AYURVEDA BEACH RESORT Talalla, Sri Lanka

Head here if you don't want to break the bank and fancy ayurveda – most do an intensive panchakarma cleanse – beside a golden beach. A sari-clad doctor will diagnose your dosha and select your therapies – so plead 'stress' to bag a shirodhara of warm oil dribbled on your forehead to banish those incessant thoughts. Bedrooms are simple – with mosquito-netted beds and ceiling fans. You'll waft around in a batik sarong

and towel turban – allowing that herbal scalp paste to do its thing – practise yoga, and eat under palm trees amid monkeys and iguanas. If you're not nibbling according to doctor's orders, you'll feast on excellent buffets – fragrant coconut soups, mango curry and lentil pancakes. Fall asleep to the sound of the Indian Ocean and awaken to the tuktuk mobile bakery tinkling in the village behind. Leave rejuvenated, with your dosha as balanced as a tightrope walker.

**BOOK IT:** From £140 full board, including all ayurvedic treatments. [suryalanka.com](http://suryalanka.com)



## SOUKYA Bangalore, India

When your GP can't help you and you feel like there is nowhere else to turn, head to Bangalore, the garden city of India. Founded by the esteemed Dr Issac Mathai (whose full title comes with a host of reassuring initials) and his nutritionalist wife, Suja Issac, Soukya is a yogic healing haven set amid 30 acres of organic fruit orchards and herb gardens. The 12 pretty cottages have open fires, hand-carved beds and private meditation areas. Many a guest (including the Duchess of York, George Harrison and Sting) have come to address health issues that

modern medicine can't help them with. Soukya offers visitors access to a range of medical and complementary treatments as needed, including modern psychotherapy for addiction, state-of-the-art MRI scans and, of course, India's most ancient health system – ayurveda. Treatments such as abhyanga (a two-handed massage with warm oil) and shirodhara (when hot oil is dripped gently and constantly on your third eye) help to ease and release tired bodies and clear chaotic minds. Don't-miss activities include full moon meditations and cookery demos.

**BOOK IT:** Doubles from \$195pp full board. [soukya.com](http://soukya.com)



## ATMANTAN Pune, India

Located about three hours south of Mumbai, in a ridiculously pretty valley, deep in the Sahyadri mountains (renowned for their healing, crystalline properties) and overlooking the serene waters of the Mulshi Lake, the aim at Atmantan is to combine traditional Indian healing practices with a variety of international therapies and western fitness techniques. The end result is a transformative healing of mind, body and soul. Your ayurvedic doctor will put together a programme according to your dosha, including a customised diet from the delicious spa restaurant

(cooked using ingredients from their own organic farms) and a schedule of treatments and exercise. Days pass by happily in a restorative blur of kriyas, massage treatments, yoga, infrared saunas, juices and evening meditation. Rooms are modern, spacious and chic with beautiful views over the lake and herb and butterfly-filled gardens. You might, however, want to go incognito in the remote luxury villa (beloved by Mumbai's elite), which has its own pool, kitchen and private gym for the ultimate secluded pampering.

**BOOK IT:** Three-day packages, from £890. [atmantan.com](http://atmantan.com)

## PACKING ESSENTIALS



**IN-GRID**  
Oversized shirt, £360.  
[in-grid.co](http://in-grid.co)



**PIPPA HOLT**  
Kaftan, £695.  
[boutique1.com](http://boutique1.com)



**BAMFORD**  
Balasana essential oil, £25.  
[bamford.co.uk](http://bamford.co.uk)



**HOMEBOODY**  
Flippy shorts, £90.  
[homebody.co.uk](http://homebody.co.uk)



**VALENTINO**  
Silk headband, £220.  
[net-a-porter.com](http://net-a-porter.com)



# MIND OVER MATTER

Treading the spiritual path can lead to better health in mind and body



## YOGA ROSA Santa Eularia, Ibiza

A decidedly quieter experience of the party island. Come to Yoga Rosa for daily two-hour morning yoga classes and meditation in the evening. Rosa is your teacher and she is passionate, authentic and works from the heart. Having recovered from a near-death accident, she now shares the tools she acquired with guests, and her feel-better magic can help shift you out of a rut. Her yoga is accessible to all, and while the hour's meditation may be challenging to begin with, the pace and methods used are varied enough that you'll cope better than you might think. This is yoga as a philosophy, not a sport – and Rosa's intention is to balance intellect with instinct. Meals are decadent and nourishing – taken as a group – and consist of a hearty brunch (eggs, porridges, the best tomatoes and avocado), followed by an early evening supper overlooking the setting sun. The chef carefully calibrates everything, and you barely realise you've gone vegan. Some days are allocated for silence and digital detoxing. Relish the me-time and rediscover your inner world. Meanwhile there are beaches and markets to explore (if you hire a car), or you can hunker down on the estate with its two pools, pigs and chickens. The sunshine is healing in itself. A real find.

**BOOK IT:** Doubles from €250, all-inclusive. [yogarosaretreats.com](http://yogarosaretreats.com)



## AMANYANGYUN Shanghai, China

The first spa to open after Aman's new push into wellness is an impressive 2,840 sq/m, has ten treatment rooms and state-of-the-art gym; a yoga and pilates studio; suites for reflexology and hydrotherapy and bathhouses with a Russian banya and a hammam. With immersions in place which free you of stress, unwanted kilos or an imbalance between your ying and yang, this is somewhere where you should linger. Your doctor in traditional oriental medicine will diagnose a course of action which might

include acupuncture, will definitely include meditation and either tai chi or qigong. Body treatments are divided into grounding, purifying and nourishing. Nutrition and diet are also discussed and a menu created for you which can be adhere to whether you are eating in the Chinese, Japanese or Italian restaurant. Transformation is the aim of the game here, with a team dedicated to imparting the sort of knowledge that helps you maintain balance in your lifestyle, mind over matter indeed.

**BOOK IT:** Doubles from approx. £674 B&B, plus taxes. [aman.com](http://aman.com)



## FOUR SEASONS BALI AT SAYAN, Indonesia

The journey begins as soon as you arrive at the resort – over the lush valley via an Indiana Jones-style wooden sky-bridge and into a reception area like a sleek modern spaceship landed in the jungle. The spa itself nestles near the sacred Ayung River, lost in the rice paddies and verdant grounds dotted with soaring palms and fragrant frangipani. While it offers all the holistic beauty treatments you'd expect, it is in its bid to pamper the inner – as well as the outer – that it shines. The clue to this is in the bright eyes of the therapists. Conceived as a journey inward,

the spa's menu offers innovative treatments that concentrate on each chakra in turn. For those who like their spirituality more actively delivered, there is yoga, meditation, healing and dharma talks, as well as fabulous anti-gravity yoga. And on hand is the resident former Buddhist nun who oversees perhaps the most extraordinary treatment: the sacred nap. Cocooned in a silk hammock hanging in the middle of rice paddies, you are gently rocked as the sounds of nature and a story gently told lull you to sleep. Relaxation as you have never known it.

**BOOK IT:** Doubles from \$540 room only. [fourseasons.com](http://fourseasons.com)



## CHABLÉ RESORT & SPA Chocholá, Mexico

To the Mayans, cenotes (natural swimming holes) were sacred, so it makes sense that the spa at this stunning new 750-acre Yucatán resort is built around one. Dip into the complimentary daily programme of classes and you might find yourself practising early morning zen meditation or full moon yoga. Or book in for a treatment in one of the wooden cabins with a cenote-facing balcony. The Mayan herbal compress massage, where herbs grown onsite are combined with organic oils to ease muscle tension, leaves you floating. Tucked away in the forest is the temazcal

or 'sweat lodge' for anyone wanting a deeper, more soul-searching experience. It's not for the faint hearted (literally – as volcanic rocks are heated to up to 1,000°C) or those who are claustrophobic (you sit in the igloo-shaped lodge in the dark), but it can be incredibly emotionally cleansing as chanting and gentle questioning by a shaman help you recall some of your earliest feelings. The joy of this place is that it is more about balance than deprivation. A magical haven to unplug and reconnect.

**BOOK IT:** Doubles from £835 B&B ([chableresort.com](http://chableresort.com)). Return flights via Mexico City from £547.57 ([aeromexico.com](http://aeromexico.com))

## PACKING ESSENTIALS



**ATHENA PROCOPIOU**  
Sundown Breeze fringed silk kimono, £395. [boutique1.com](http://boutique1.com)



**SEP JORDAN**  
Cashmere shawl, £350. [sepjordan.com](http://sepjordan.com)



**MAYA & ME**  
Lana trousers, £150. [meandmaya.co.uk](http://meandmaya.co.uk)



**RAE FEATHER**  
Deborah monogram pom pom basket, £210. [raefeather.com](http://raefeather.com)



**KIN LIINI**  
Sandals, £65. [johnlewis.com](http://johnlewis.com)





THE SPA GUIDE

## ART OF THE RE-TOX

We've all been there, piling on the pounds after we've worked so hard to shed them, so how do you really keep the long-lasting benefits of a spa detox? **Annie Bell** has some answers

**T**he very last day of any spa experience or detox is like reaching the top of a mountain. Boy does it feel good. You haven't felt this clear-headed, determined and svelte for months. If only it could last for the rest of your life. And so, as you set off back down the mountain, you vow to keep up the good work of the last few days.

The reality, of course, is that depending on the path you take, you may find yourself back to square one in anything from a week to about a month. The chances are that hard-won feelgood factor is likely to ebb almost without you realising, until you reach a point where it feels like it's time to set off back to a spa to regain it. For the seasoned detoxer, this cycle is not dissimilar to yo-yo dieting, when in truth what we should all be aiming for is a little less perfection and a few better



Presented beautifully: protein at Tokyo's Hoshinoya

habits. We may not be able to live our lives at the high octane bliss we experience at the end of a spa break, but if we can find a realistic path where the majority of our habits are good ones, we are doing well. So instead of setting yourself an impossible range of targets, I would keep just five considerations in mind.

### SMALL CHANGE BIG DIFFERENCE

This may sound like a cliché, but rarely is it more apt than when applied to our diet. For most people, weight gain has less to do with eating mounds of junk food and takeaways every night, than the slow but insipid creep of extra kilos that come with an additional 200-300 calories a day. If you think of the myriad ways you might incur that energy, it becomes apparent just how easy it is to trim them. If you have small children, for instance, one habit is having a nibble of whatever you happen to be feeding them. A tablespoon of Greek yoghurt with honey, a fish finger and splodge of mash, a spoonful of ice cream, a corner of buttered toast with jam, adds up in no time. And who can resist a taste (or three) of whatever they are cooking. So as you get back into the daily routine, be aware of these little habits. Once broken, we rarely miss them.

### WEEKLY NOT DAILY

It is all too easy to beat yourself up when you first diverge from the clean habits of a detox. This can be the beginning of an unhealthy relationship with treat foods, which in reality will always be a part of our lives. So instead of judging yourself meal by meal, try to observe your diet over the period of a week. The slice of chocolate fudge cake you enjoyed at a friend's birthday will be less of a cause of guilt if you see it as seven small bites. If you happen to go out for a three-course blow-out supper, fine, just eat less over the next couple of days and it will average out.

### VEG FOR BREAD

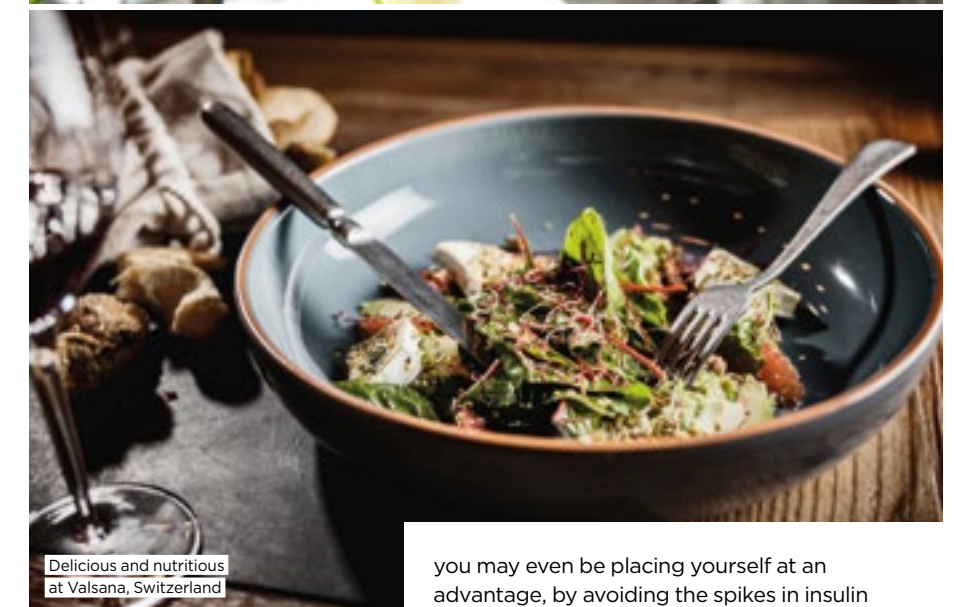
Bread is so often the first line of convenience for a snack, or partner to a bowl of soup. Full of salt, high in carbs and most likely refined, and that is before we get to the butter. But, there are any number of lovely veggie options that will stand in, especially with dips or a sliver of cheese, or with a splodge of nut butter or miso. As well as crudités, cooked spears of asparagus and fine green beans, or some roast or grilled veg will make for a luxurious stand-in. My own treat is slices of roast aubergine that make a great base for bruschettas and the like.

### PROTEIN SNACKS

Aside from trying to limit energy intake there is no logic in limiting snacks or suggesting a dietary regime. If you are someone who prefers to eat little and often rather than three times a day, a grazer for whom large meals are unappetising,



Cooking with gut health in mind at VivaMayr



Delicious and nutritious at Valsana, Switzerland



The Caudalie spa and pool in France

you may even be placing yourself at an advantage, by avoiding the spikes in insulin that tend to accompany large meals.

So if snacking throughout the day is what works for you, there is no reason to change. The secret is to include a little protein, which will lead to a sense of feeling well-nourished. With the highest satiety index among the macronutrients, quite simply it reduces your appetite.

### SUGAR TRAPS

Even if we think we have given up sugar, by avoiding chocolate, cake and fizzy drinks, it is the hidden or expected sources that are most likely to catch us out and drive up our energy intake. Smoothies, in particular, count as 'free sugars' or those to be limited, some contain a small basket of fruit (but without the benefits of whole fruit); cartons of juice are little better. Other sugar traps are ready-made foods, of all types. In the region of 75 per cent of off-the-shelf products have added sugar. Again, frequently where you least expect to find it, in nuts and savoury snacks, pasta sauces and salad dressing, chilled dips, yoghurts, and preserved fish. So the guideline here is to buy as much fresh produce as possible.



THE SPA GUIDE

# WATERWORLD

After all 'spa' is short for salus per aqua – health through water



## MASSERIA SAN DOMENICO Puglia, Italy

Once used by the Knights of Malta as a watchtower during the Ottoman wars, this 15th-century farmhouse in Puglia is now a white-washed picture of peace, an impeccably chic hideaway with a fabulous thalassotherapy spa. Thalasso means 'sea' in Greek and this serene retreat has come up trumps in harnessing the healing power of marine water. Everything is tackled here: dropping the pounds, shifting cellulite, skin conditions, or simply recharging your batteries. There's a dizzying array of treatments to get stuck into such as hydro massages with seawater jets to boost circulation, detoxifying seaweed wraps, sea salt scrubs with essential oils and the revitalising algotherapy, where your entire body is covered in pulverised seaweed. Don't miss the aquabiking (spinning in water) – hardcore but great for toning. Food focuses on a low-calorie Mediterranean diet. But there's no deprivation here – just fresh, local ingredients with generous smatterings of the hotel's own olive oil (the sea bass mille-feuille is a must). Afterwards, flop in one of the ornate first-floor suites – vast with views of the sparkling Adriatic. **BOOK IT:** Doubles from €330 B&B, with three-day thalasso programmes starting from €360pp. [masseriasandomenico.com](http://masseriasandomenico.com)



## OLD COURSE HOTEL St Andrews, Scotland

You might only have had reason to visit Old Course Hotel near Edinburgh for the golf; now you can add lavish – not to mention vast – new spa as a seductive draw, so couples can feel equally spoiled (the hotel spent £8m bringing the space up to scratch). Water is at the heart of its healing ethos (it is located by the sea, after all), with a hydrotherapy pool, cold plunge pool, buttock-clenching ice fountain and a 20m swimming pool as just some of the watery attractions. Thirteen treatment rooms offer

mineral-rich seaweed or spiced peat wraps, anti-oxidant facials and hot stone massages, as well as a host of specific 'bathing' rituals. Lying in bliss looking out of the floor-to-ceiling windows at that epic coastline, this is the perfect spa for those who appreciate the therapeutic elements of nature – from a comfortable distance, although a bracing walk in all that wildness will also do you the world of good. Just book in for their signature Tranquility pro-sleep massage and a roof-top hot tub session afterwards. **BOOK IT:** Doubles from £150 B&B. [oldcoursehotel.co.uk](http://oldcoursehotel.co.uk)



## HOSHINOYA TOKYO Tokyo, Japan

Tokyo's only luxury ryokan (Japanese inn) cocoons you in calm from the moment you step through its 300-year-old cypress doors. You slip off your shoes (to be stored in intricate chestnut and bamboo boxes) and pad about in hushed reverence, feeling the feng shui. Tatami mat floors, washi paper walls and delicate shoji screens create the typical ryokan ambience, complemented by subtle five-star services. The hot USP is the open-air onsen (hot spring bath) on the 17th floor: it draws mineral-rich, ancient

seawater from 1,500 metres below street level. If you visit at night, you will bathe naked (as is the custom) in the 40°C water beneath an inky sky, the seductively lit high granite walls reducing the city's cacophony to a low rumble. With your core revitalised by the onsen, a shiki treatment therapist will massage your body with fragrant oils and two warm balls made from rice cake and ground, steamed Japanese herbs. **BOOK IT:** Original Travel offers a 14-night trip to Japan, including three nights at Tokyo Hoshinoya, from £4,600pp, including flights. [originaltravel.co.uk](http://originaltravel.co.uk)



## DAS CENTRAL Sölden, Austria

From the warm 'Grüss Gott' on arrival to award-winning restaurants (one featured in a Bond movie) and the three-storey Water World Venezia, Das Central is a glistening oasis of wellness in the Austrian Alps. The Venetian-inspired Water World comes complete with an indoor pool, a plethora of saunas, steam baths and water beds, and its very own gondola. At the Spa & Wellness Residence, 16 treatment rooms play host to holistic massages, scrubs and classic beauty treatments. The resort is also ripe for adventure seekers – in addition to 429 hectares

of pistes, there's a Technogym and fitness programmes. Rooms are fresh, bright and airy, fusing clean lines with Tyrolean touches, views of the Ötztal mountains are standard in most, with wellbeing suites featuring in-room saunas. Culinary delights are prepared by Gottfried Prantl – the award-winning chef who rustles up delicious local delicacies such as river trout and potatoes grown in hay. There's also an impressive fine wine cellar, with 30,000 bottles, should you like a little of what you fancy. **BOOK IT:** Three-night spa package half board, from €885pp. [central-soelden.com](http://central-soelden.com)

## PACKING ESSENTIALS



**CAMILLA**  
Short dress, £542.  
[harrods.com](http://harrods.com)



**LAZUL**  
Swimsuit, £240.  
[selfridges.com](http://selfridges.com)



**ERIC BOMPARD**  
Short-sleeved cashmere sweater, £150. [eric-bompard.com](http://eric-bompard.com)



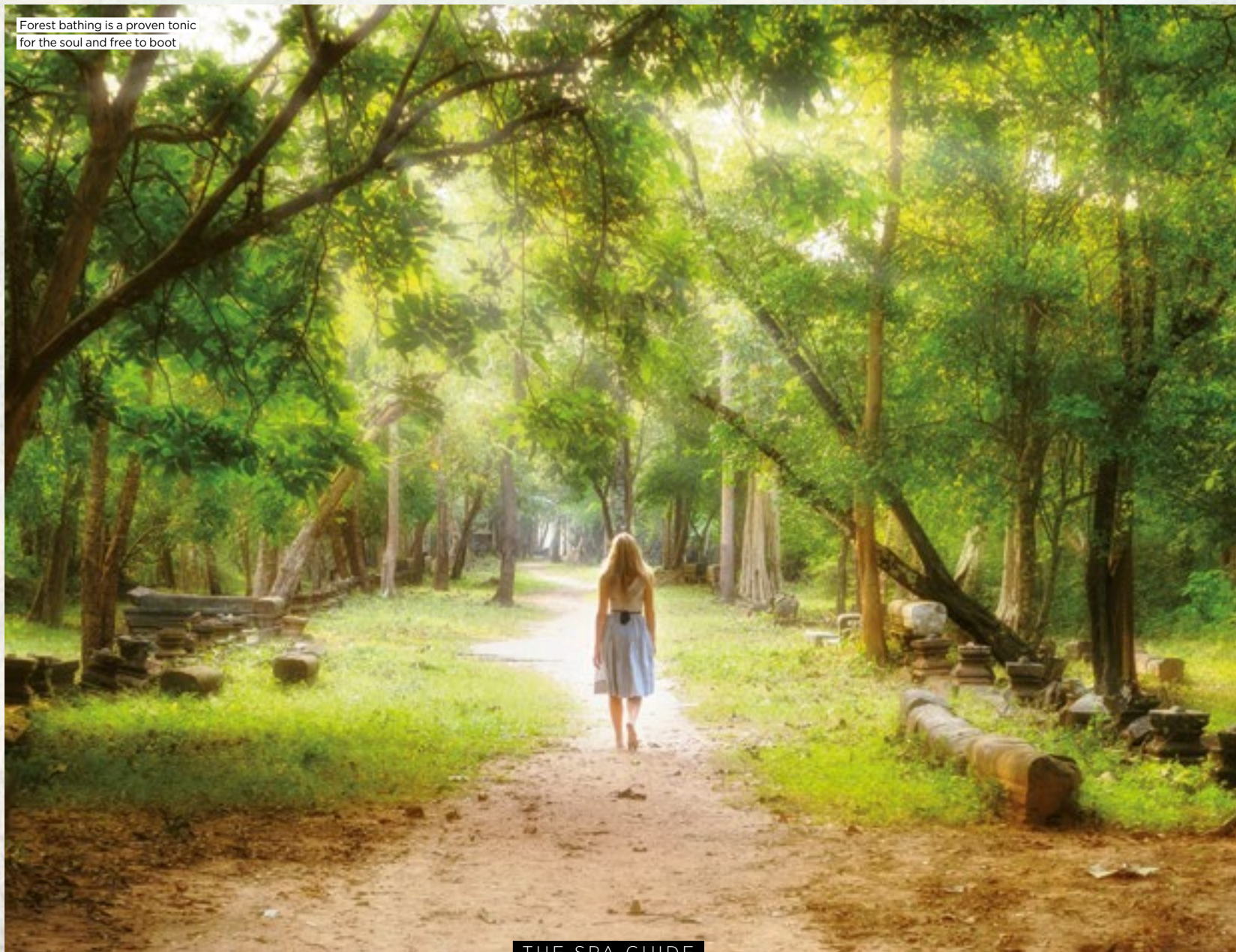
**HEIDI KLEIN**  
Maya Bay espadrilles £150.  
[heidiklein.com](http://heidiklein.com)



**PLAGE BY PAPER LONDON**  
Shell bikini, £140.  
[paperlondon.com](http://paperlondon.com)



Forest bathing is a proven tonic for the soul and free to boot



THE SPA GUIDE

## INTO THE WOODS

Forget forking out for a swanky spa, all you really need is a walk in the woods. **Adriaane Pielou** reports on the Japanese tradition of forest bathing making its way westwards

**J**ust saying... you don't have to spend a vast amount on treatments to relax and rejuvenate. Or spend anything, really. Forest bathing is therapy for free. Trees, the dear trusty things, are increasingly proven by science to be actively beneficial to our health – and in more ways than ever suspected. So forget expensive massages and just let a tree or two do its calming, curative thing.

Forest bathing was born in Japan, where Shinto reverence for the natural world is culturally ingrained. In 1982 Japanese scientists discovered that being among trees – walking in a wood, leaning against the bark, hugging a tree – measurably reduces stress and blood pressure. Three minutes' exposure, they discovered, is all it takes before levels start to fall.

The research prompted the Forest Agency of Japan to launch a preventative health programme of shinrin-yoku, 'taking in the forest atmosphere' by bathing one's entire being, body, soul and psyche in the fragrance of a forest.

From 2004 to 2012, a \$4m Japanese research programme discovered trees emit phytoncides, airborne aromatic oils that ward off potentially damaging insects and bacteria, and that

inhaling these phytoncides has a beneficial effect on human immune systems, too, boosting natural anti-cancer killer cells and improving resistance to bacteria and viruses.

In response to the results Japan launched a country-wide network of Forest Therapy Trails, with equipment en route allowing walkers to measure their blood pressure, pulse and skin temperature before and after a walk, and logs are strategically placed along the trails for lying down to meditate among the trees. Today, the restorative power of forest bathing and spending time in nature is recognised around the world.

Forest bathing doesn't mean going into a wood and stripping off and stretching out. Not necessarily, anyway. It's enough just to be among trees, consciously, mindfully enjoying them through every sense the sight, scent, sound and sensation of the forest, breathing deeply, stroking bark, watching the play of light, enjoying the woody fragrance and listening to birdsong.

And, if walking in a wood is good for you, sleeping in a forest, with a window open to the stillness and the silence and the phytoncides, is even better.

## FIVE HOTELS WITH FORESTS

### JURMALA SPA HOTEL, *Latvia*

The forest covering over 50 per cent of Latvia runs right down to the beach at Jurmala, 30 minutes outside Riga. A 15-minute drive into the forest reveals a wooden walkway where you can squelch barefoot through miles of shallow bog, inhaling the scent of the pines. Afterwards, at nearby Valguma Pasaule, a traditional Latvian sauna lets you sweat in 85°C heat before plunging into the forest lake. Birch-twig beating optional. *Four nights B&B, with flights, from £510. balticholidays.com*



### ARASHIYAMA BAMBOO FOREST, *Kyoto*

The epicentre of forest bathing is Kyoto's otherworldly Arashiyama, above the Tenryu-Ji Temple – beautiful, but with a tarmacked lane running through it and very crowded, it's best and emptiest around dawn. Exploring the woods surrounding some of the ancient city's other 1,600 temples, however, takes you into enchanting mossy worlds where you can walk alone, drinking in the utmost beauty. *Doubles at Celestine Gion (pictured), from £172.55 (celestinehotels.jp). Return flights with JAL from £838 (jal.com)*



### LEVI SPIRIT VILLAS, *Finland*

Finland is the most forested country in Europe, with 73 per cent of its land still covered by trees (Britain has just 12 per cent). Twenty minutes outside the ski resort of Levi in Finnish Lapland, the nine glass-and-pine villas are pure Arctic chic, with five bedrooms, open fires, sauna, treatment room for in-villa massages, and floor-to-ceiling windows looking out over thousands of miles of birch, spruce and pine. *From £1,510 per night for five people including a private guide. originaltravel.co.uk*



### SAN LUIS, *South Tyrol, Italy*

High in the Italian Alps, forest treehouses and epic antique-wood chalets by a mountain lake provide a serene setting for healthy holidays at this remote alpine hotel. Think miles of pines, headily fragrant air and, when you're back from your forest hike, open fires, your own private sauna, plus clubhouse, thrilling indoor/outdoor pools, a hot-tub sunk into the jetty, and a spa. *From £185, full board. sanluis-hotel.com*



### WEEKEND WOODY RETREATS IN BRITAIN

Devoted to upmarket spots with atmosphere, Cool Places has a whole section on hotels in woodland. The 24-room Montagu Arms (pictured), for instance, is deep in the New Forest. Within seconds of leaving the fireside you're crunching along a winding woodland path in the footsteps of one-time guest Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. And in the Nadder Valley, Wiltshire, the nine-room Howard's House is the ultimate forest hideaway. *Doubles at both from about £190. coolplaces.co.uk*



# THE GREAT OUTDOORS

There's nothing like nature to soothe the senses

## TIERRA ATACAMA HOTEL & SPA Chile

Check into your private villa at Tierra Atacama, with views of the Licancabur Volcano bordering Bolivia, and take time to stop and gaze: it might be the only time you stand still here. On arrival, your own private adventure concierge will run through the extensive excursion options – choose from climbing volcanos, mountain biking, horseback riding, hikes, stargazing in the desert and visiting the iconic Atacama salt flats and Chaxa lagoon to learn about the three species of flamingo endemic to this area. You can keep yourself active from dawn 'til dusk – and at an altitude of 2,408m you'll be keeping fit, too – but make time for the Uma Spa. There are indoor and outdoor pools, a Jacuzzi and hot tub, yoga classes three mornings a week and a host of signature treatments using local products. The Tierra Ritual is a must-do – a full-body exfoliation using desert salts and chocolate, a desert clay and chocolate body mask, the most gloriously comprehensive massage and some reiki.

**BOOK IT:** The Ultimate Travel Company offers an 11-day break from £4,905, including all flights, transfers and a stopover in Santiago. [ultimatetravelcompany.co.uk](http://ultimatetravelcompany.co.uk)



## AMAN LE MELEZIN Courchevel, France

All the hassle normally associated with skiing vanishes as soon as you step over the threshold of the newly refurbished alpine Aman. In the spacious ski room, obliging Frenchmen ease your feet into boots fitted by the in-house rental service, before you walk the few steps onto the slopes where your skis await. After a long day on the mountain, don a fluffy robe and slippers, and pad down the parquet-floored corridors to the new spa area with St-Just aqua glass panelling. Two further underground floors were dug out in the 2016 refurbishment

to accommodate five treatment rooms (including a Thai massage suite), a yoga studio for pre-ski sessions and a wellness area featuring a sauna, steam room and plunge pool – brilliant for reducing swelling and lactic acid build-up. A 14-metre lap pool and gym with state-of-the-art equipment are available for those wanting to get their heart-rate up. Eat at the new Nama for sublime sushi, before sinking into an enormous bed, with views of the Bellecote piste below, and dreaming of the first lift. **BOOK IT:** Seven nights from £3,799 half board, including flights and transfers with The Oxford Ski Company. [oxfordski.com](http://oxfordski.com)



## ASHFORD CASTLE Co Mayo, Ireland

Once home to the Guinness family, Ashford Castle, perched on the edge of Lough Corrib, is straight out of a fairytale with its ancient stone turrets, glorious gardens and peerless setting. Following a meticulous, multi-million-pound refurb in 2014, inside it's all four-poster beds, sumptuous décor, suits of armour and Irish wolfhounds lolling in front of roaring fires. The last piece in the renovation jigsaw was the spa, which was unveiled in 2015. Ashford is Ireland's first hotel to work with Spanish luxury skincare brand Natura Bissé and on the menu are impeccable treatments such as the Diamond Rose Body ritual which leaves you fully rejuvenated and silky smooth. There are also Elemis facials, seaweed leaf wraps and the spa's very own PureFlow system, which uses counter-pulsation technology to improve circulation and oxygenation while detoxifying. But there's also fresh air aplenty in the 350 acres, with activities like falconry, stand-up paddle boarding and fishing. Afterwards, feast on slow roasted rib of beef from the carving trolley in the glorious George V dining room before retiring to your room fit for a king. Bliss.

**BOOK IT:** From €400 B&B. [ashfordcastle.com](http://ashfordcastle.com)

## NIHI SUMBA Sumba, Indonesia

This elegant eco-hotel on the remote island of Sumba in eastern Indonesia is famous for its private wave, Nihiwatu, on which only ten surfers are allowed at any one time. But that's not all that's on offer here – choose from galloping a thoroughbred along the private beach, yoga in an airy pavilion with breathtaking 360° views over surrounding tropical forest and rice fields, paddle-boarding, deep-sea fishing or visiting local villages. While there's a spa in the hotel, don't miss the NihioKa Spa Safari, a 90-minute trek through rolling countryside and rice fields followed by a healthy breakfast cooked on a wood fire accompanied by fresh coconut water and pots of coffee before enjoying a half or full-day spa in a private, cliff-side room with as many treatments as you can fit in. Afterwards, instead of taking a shower, plunge yourself into the surf on the beach below. Go to sleep in your thatched, private villa listening to the sound of waves crashing on the beach below, happy in the knowledge that money spent staying here goes directly into improving the wellbeing of the community via the hotel's Sumba Foundation. **BOOK IT:** Audley Travel offers an eight-night trip from £5,442pp. [audleytravel.com](http://audleytravel.com)





## PACKING ESSENTIALS



### KURHOTEL SKODSBORG *Denmark*

Just a 25-minute drive from the centre of Copenhagen, this hidden gem – formerly a sanatorium – is home to Denmark's largest and most enticing spa. Founded in 1898 by Dr Carl Ottosen, the hotel has a long history of promoting healthy living. Today the Scandic chic state-of-the-art fitness and wellness facilities offer daily yoga classes with the gloriously picturesque 1,000-acre, deer-filled Gribskov Forest as their backdrop. The SaunaGus is the signature treatment where gutsy guests are

steamed in a sauna before taking the plunge into almost-freezing water from the private jetty. Invigorating and not for the faint-hearted. The chef's table by Erik Kroun is a don't-miss gastronomic journey. In keeping with the overall vision, each course is complemented by a fresh juice (or wine pairing if you prefer). With simple Nordic traditions at the core of this hotel's philosophy you'll find mini hot water bottles tucked into your bed at night in rooms that have high ceilings, muted palettes and standalone bath tubs. Sophisticated but cosy. A real find.

**BOOK IT:** Doubles from £167 B&B. [skodsborg.dk](http://skodsborg.dk)



### PREIDLHOF *South Tyrol, Italy*

The hills are alive... with a brand new six-storey spa tower joining a renovated five-star spa hotel long visited by savvy Italians and Germans, 10km from the historical spa town of Merano and within easy reach of the Val Senales glacier. New rooms have balconies with double day beds overlooking the cloud-hugged mountains of the Vinschgau Valley, where Nordic walking sets you off to a good start. Follow a session in the hills or post ski with a life-changing deep tissue massage, followed by a health check and the comedy icing on the cake to us Brits: a sauna

show. With six different saunas, some with glass walls overlooking that invigorating view, Marcus, the handsome spa maestro performs a sauna infusion to classical music sporting a toweling kilt; prudish Brits are allowed the same to avoid what they refer to as 'free willy'. The restaurant serves a truly gourmet menu full of local specialities – still healthy but indulgent too – as well as a more restricted version for serious spa goers. Forget fitness and health for a bit and whizz around the local village on one of the resort's canary yellow Vespas.

**BOOK IT:** Three nights full board with four treatments, from £1,125pp. [healingholidays.co.uk](http://healingholidays.co.uk)



**XENIA DESIGN**  
Top, £155. [julesb.co.uk](http://julesb.co.uk)



**ALEX EAGLE XTROY**  
Eagle parka, £865.  
[troylondon.com](http://troylondon.com)



**GENEVIEVE SWEENEY**  
Elsa jumper, £180.  
[genevievesweeney.com](http://genevievesweeney.com)



**ME V ME**  
Lotus leggings, £90.  
[mevme.co.uk](http://mevme.co.uk)



**& OTHER STORIES**  
Nike SF Air Force 1, £165.  
[stories.com](http://stories.com)



# NICE 'N' EASY

A short-haul flight means you can be on the massage table before you can say, 'full body, please'

## HÔTEL DE CRILLON, Paris, France

As Paris's most exclusive address, bar none, it is only fitting that the recently re-opened Hôtel de Crillon should, under its new Rosewood management, offer a sensational spa behind its magnificent 18th-century, neo-classical façade. Find it at the end of the long, narrow, art-filled hall, past the gilded heritage ceiling of Les Ambassadeurs Bar, where you should stop for a Paris Mule cocktail, before continuing on down to a long swimming pool, its floor glittering with 17,600 gold scales, and walls covered by a mural from noted ceramicist Peter Lane. Beyond are the treatment rooms; pearly white-on-white with marble floors and tranquil tones, with separate showers and dressing rooms complete with jewellery boxes. Choice of products include French brand EviDenS de Beauté, acclaimed for its anti-aging properties, creator of bespoke facial 360° Global Anti-Age Ritual, and the renowned Maison Caulières, which draws on the 250 years of knowledge acquired through its cultivation of plants. But not to be missed is a massage with the brilliant Fernando and the sweet almond balm created by Kos Paris for the spa. Afterwards float upwards on cloud nine to dine on oysters and champagne at the Brasserie d'Aumont and imagine for a moment that you are Marie-Antoinette.

**BOOK IT:** Doubles from €1,110 B&B. [rosewoodhotels.com](http://rosewoodhotels.com)



## HOTEL LES OTTOMANS Istanbul, Turkey

Istanbul gives good value for flight time: within just a few hours you can be zipping down the Bosphorus by speedboat, bisecting Europe and Asia, and marvelling at the city's countless spoils. Hotel Les Ottomans may be a touch gaudy at first glance, but it soon reveals its distinctly Turkish delights: spacious suites, charming service and a great al fresco restaurant and bar on the waterfront heaving with Istanbul's glitterati. Thinking of heading to a hammam but petrified of the public offerings? Then

the Caudalie Vinotherapie Spa will do nicely. The signature Rose Remedy will see that (almost) every inch of you is washed, exfoliated, masked and watered liberally in a grand marble wet room. You'll be draped in huge pillows of soap foam with rose extract – the perfume of choice for discerning women of the Ottoman era – and massaged into blissful relaxation. Once reinvigorated by handfuls of ice cubes rubbed on your silken skin, you'll be glowing with the best of them.

**BOOK IT:** Small Luxury Hotels of the World offers rooms from £366 B&B. [slh.com](http://slh.com)



## LA BUTTE AUX BOIS, Near Maastricht, Belgium

Set on the edge of Belgium's only national park, surrounded by forest, this is an elegant architectural juxtaposition of old and new, a historic house offset by a modern spa with 20 eco-chic rooms. An award-winning gourmet hotspot, you can choose from the Michelin-starred restaurant (where signature dishes include hamachi and North Sea crab and Dombes duck) to a spa menu featuring the likes of yellowfin tuna with shrimps in tempura, which can be enjoyed fresh from a dip in your towelling robe. In addition to all the first-rate facilities

you'd expect – pool, steam, gym etc – there are eight treatment rooms with the latest quartz sand and waterbed treatment tables. However, it's the dermatological offering that really sets this spa apart. Led by Dr Yolande Bullens-Goessens, Belgium's leading authority on anti-ageing, the qualified team of therapists offers procedures including peels, fillers and botox. A perfect trip for anyone wanting to return home with a glow and – naturellement – the exclusive La Forêt by Dr Bullens cosmetics are on sale at the hotel too.

**BOOK IT:** Doubles from €225 B&B. [labutteauxbois.be](http://labutteauxbois.be)



## VALSANA Arosa, Switzerland

Sandwiched between the frozen lake and bordering the forest in the iconic ski resort, this 40-room hotel is powered by an ice battery. The first hotel in Switzerland to use this cutting-edge technology, energy is captured by geothermal probes and from waste energy from the hotel and its neighbouring supermarket, all of which heat and power the building and its large spa. Spend the day walking or skiing, and return for a relaxing swim or sauna with views into the forest. Treatments are classic and use Clarins products; think facials and sports massages, perfect for

limbs aching from the slopes. The spa features a pool, steam bath and 24-hour gym, plus yoga studio with twice-daily classes. The menu in Valsana's Twist restaurant caters for every taste – with vegan, gluten- and lactose-free options and organic, locally sourced produce. The surrounding nature and modern technology of the hotel have been fantastically captured by interior designer Carlo Rampazzi – his mix of industrial chic, roughly hewn Aztec rugs and botanical prints goes hand in hand with the whole ethos of this pioneering hotel.

**BOOK IT:** Doubles from approx. £284 B&B. [valsana.ch](http://valsana.ch)

## PACKING ESSENTIALS



**BORGO DE NOR**  
Josephine dress, £630.  
[matchesfashion.com](http://matchesfashion.com)



**ISABEL MARANT**  
Filipo sage wool blend coat,  
£835. [harveynichols.com](http://harveynichols.com)



**MADELEINE THOMPSON**  
Curlew cashmere top, £295.  
[madeleinthompson.com](http://madeleinthompson.com)



**RI2K**  
Metallic tote, £99.99.  
[ri2k.london](http://ri2k.london)



**THE ROW**  
Flats, £675.  
[boutique1.com](http://boutique1.com)



# BEACH RETREATS

Combine a traditional beach break with some holistic healing

## CONSTANCE HALAVELI, *The Maldives*

If unapologetic luxury is your bag, there are few resorts to beat the Maldivian island of Halaveli, with its trio of chic restaurants, its 20,000-bottle wine cellar and resident tennis pro and yoga instructor. This is the kind of place people revisit time and again (families and honeymooners are welcomed alike), as manta rays and whale sharks also return year in year out. The all-inclusive Cristal package includes access to 160 fine wines and innovative food from former El Bulli chef Jordi Vila. The diving is some of the best in the world, and the water villas are so private that you feel as though the entire turquoise ocean, from fingertip to fingertip, is yours alone. The spa, perched on the longest jetty in the Maldives, has its own range (U Spa by Constance); alternatively, choose a Brice Nicham foot treatment or a top-end facial with Swiss brand Valmont. A massage here, gazing down on the resident blue octopus in the gin-clear waters below, takes some beating.

**BOOK IT:** Turquoise Holidays offers seven nights in a water villa B&B for £2,950pp, including flights and transfers. [turquoiseholidays.co.uk](http://turquoiseholidays.co.uk)



## HILTON LABRIZ *Silhouette Island, Seychelles*

Small boats bounce over the waves from Mahé, the largest island in the Seychelles. In the distance there's North Island, where William and Kate honeymooned, and where a villa will set you back £6,000 a night. But, your boat veers left and in around half an hour you're dropped at the more egalitarian Silhouette Island. Here, there are no roads and, apart from a small B&B, just one resort: the Hilton Labriz. If there's a preconceived picture of paradise, this has to be it: villas with private plunge pools, talcum powder-sand beaches, calm, crystal-

clear sea and a lush, hilly, forest-clad interior. At one end of the resort is the Eforea Spa, which has the air of a Hobbit village, tucked away into the hillside, and almost covered by vegetation and trees. The six treatment rooms are set slightly up the hill, some with gorgeous views out to sea and with nothing but the sound of birds and waves to disturb you as you embark on a Volcanic Heat or Orchid Champagne massage. You might be too blissed-out afterwards to walk back along the beach, but the golf-buggies are just a phone call away.

**BOOK IT:** Doubles from £273 B&B. [hiltonseychelleslabriz.com](http://hiltonseychelleslabriz.com)



## SIX SENSES ZIGHY BAY *Oman*

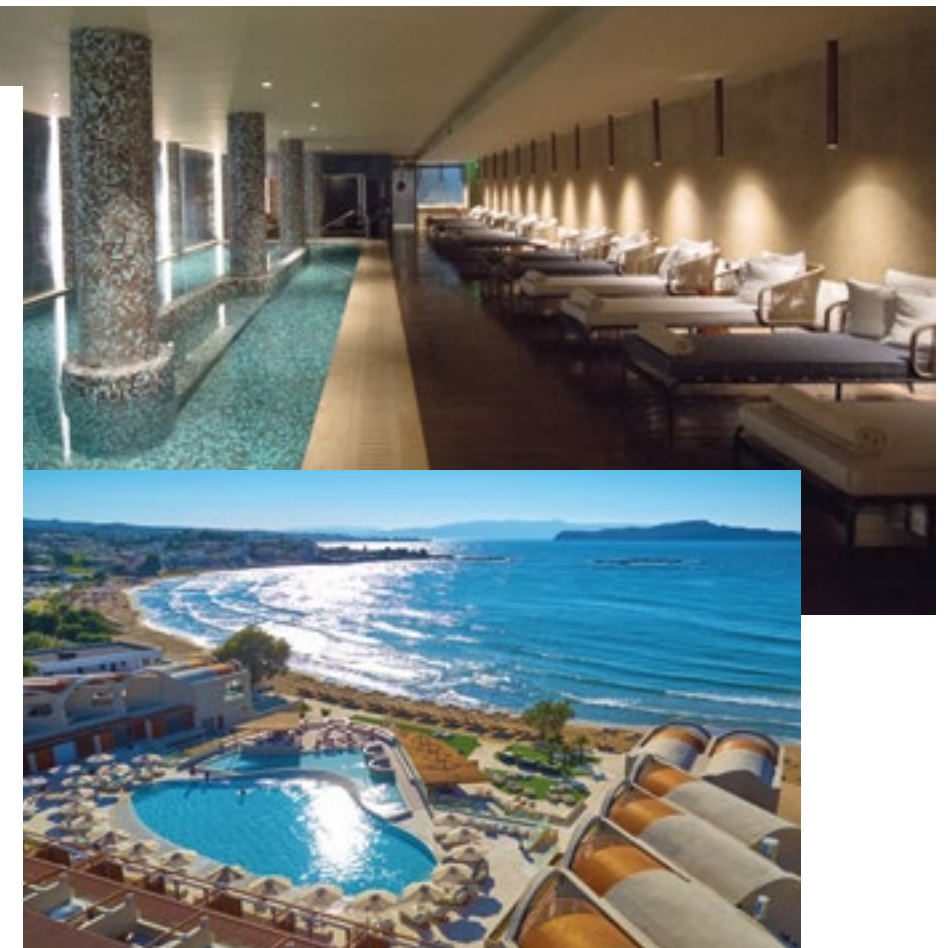
If you are after health with a bit of heat, but don't want to schlep across the world, this is the place for you. It's a hop to Dubai, a skip from there over the border into Oman, across the mountains and then, if you are brave, a jump (or paraglide) down to this beachside paradise. Eighty-four very private villas complete with pools, sit low amid the palm trees. The spa is sensational as befits a Six Senses resort. Book Ketut, a Balinese therapist with a sense of humour and hands that tease out any knots. The detox massage is brilliant, loosening toxins and breaking up cellulite. There are homemade scrubs, think sea salt, mint and honey. Other indulgences include treatments by The Organic Pharmacy - such as the signature rose crystal lymphatic facial, as well as anti-aging facials from high-performing ayurvedic-based Subtle Energies and biomimetic brand Margy's. There are hammam treatments and the Arabian body rasul, which slim and purify. Best of all, when you are glowing, wrinkle-free, thinner and rested, your flight home won't put you back to square one.

**BOOK IT:** Scott Dunn offers seven nights from £2,290pp half board, including BA flights and transfers. [scottdunn.com](http://scottdunn.com)

## DOMES NORUZ *Crete, Greece*

Belonging to Marriott's prestigious Autograph Collection, this adults-only boutique hotel stands on its own sandy beach and is home to a vast subterranean spa. With architecture inspired by the domes of nearby Chania's Venetian shipyard, its clean lines and secluded spaces are decorated in earthy tones. Each of the 83 suites offer blissful relaxation, complete with a plunge pool, outdoor Jacuzzi or private pool. If you can tear yourself away from the plush sun loungers and waiter service, the Soma Spa features an indoor heated pool, sauna and steam room. The treatment menu offers everything from soothing massages using locally sourced oils to pioneering BIOTEC facials by British brand Elemis. Be sure to watch the sunset from the rooftop Raw Bar, then sample the locally sourced menu at the hotel's restaurant Zeen (named after the Greek expression for living well 'ey zeen'). They also offer a wellness and fitness package that includes a personal training session, outdoor yoga, a rejuvenating spa treatment and a bike ride to discover the local area. Perfect for putting health at the heart of your beach holiday.

**BOOK IT:** Doubles from €132 room only. [domesnorum.com](http://domesnorum.com)



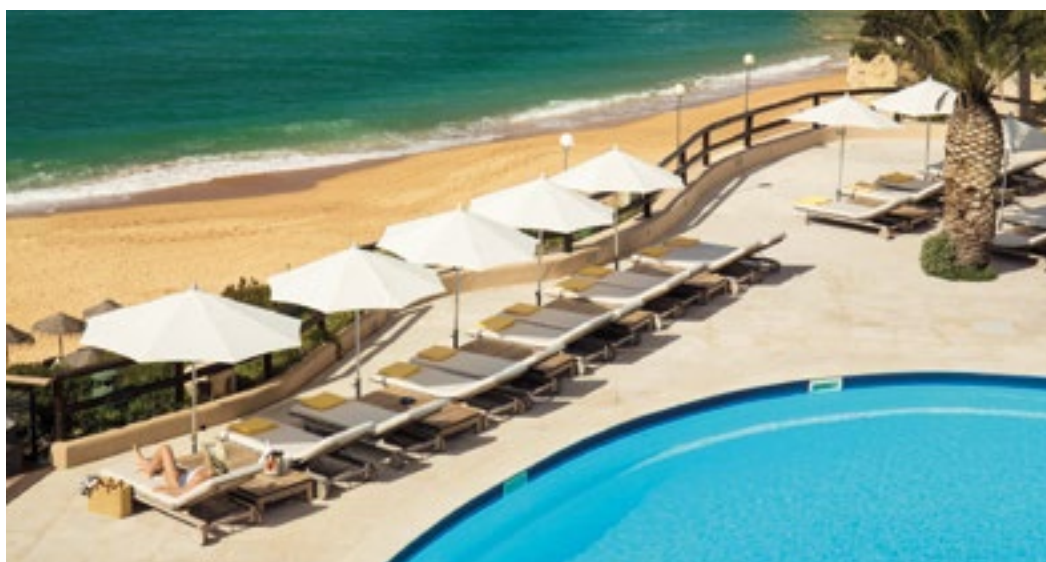




## HEMINGWAYS *Watamu, Kenya*

The African welcome is as warm as the beating sun at Hemingways' spa, housed in the grounds of this recently refurbished iconic boutique hotel on spectacular Watamu beach. Its 39 bedrooms and 21 sumptuous apartments are chic and comfortable with four-poster beds, grand bathrooms and private balconies to soak up that Indian Ocean view. Sign up for the four-hour detoxifying journey – a body mask, harmony massage and facial given by the healing hands of three therapists using delicious oils from Terres

d'Afrique. Your face, mind and body will be eternally grateful. All that spoiling comes after long walks on East Africa's most beautiful unspoilt beach and swimming in its clear waters. A top tip is to visit the extraordinary Arabuko-Sokoke forest just 10 minutes from Hemingways, where you can spot over 60 species of birds on an early morning walk and catch elephants at the swamp at sunset. Finish off with a seafood feast after one of the hotel's legendary cocktails. What could be more blissful? **BOOK IT:** Doubles from \$250 B&B. [hemingways-collection.com](http://hemingways-collection.com)



## VILALARA LONGEVITY THALASSA & MEDICAL SPA *Algarve, Portugal*

An idyllic haven for sun-soaked oceanside wellness. With one of the best thalassotherapy centres in the world integrated with the internationally renowned Longevity Medical Spa, this is the perfect alliance of cutting-edge preventative and anti-ageing medicine combined with the healing power of marine therapies. They really do take your health seriously here, and Longevity's wellness programmes have been expertly executed – from detox, weight loss, fitness, stress management, anti-ageing

and health check-ups, to holistic healing and alternative medicine. Opt for one of the gentle wellness retreats for some R&R or the high impact and structured programmes for a total body overhaul. You can enhance your experience with an array of spa, thalassa, anti-ageing and aesthetic medicine services – all are available à la carte. 'Healthy & Tasty' nutrition plans and medically approved liquid diets are also available as an add-on or are already included in the Longevity programmes. **BOOK IT:** The Longevity Active Detox seven-night programme starts from €3,445pp. [vilalaresort.com](http://vilalaresort.com)

## PACKING ESSENTIALS



**LISA MARIE FERNANDEZ**  
Sabine embroidered cotton dress, £776. [mytheresa.com](http://mytheresa.com)



**EUGENIA KIM**  
Bunny Sun Day straw sunhat, £456. [modaoperandi.com](http://modaoperandi.com)



**ASCENO**  
Stripe bikini top, £115, bottoms, £95. [asceno.com](http://asceno.com)



**AND/OR**  
Beaumont mini jute bag, £35. [johnlewis.com](http://johnlewis.com)



**OLIVER PEOPLES**  
Isba sunglasses, £272. [oliverpeoples.com](http://oliverpeoples.com)



# TIME FOR A TWEAK-MENT?

If your usual face and body treatments are no longer cutting it, and your makeup and face creams are more fancy than firming and framing, then maybe it's time to up the ante.

**Nathalie Eleni** advises on the best non-surgical options available



## « 15-minute nose job Dr Tara

Dr Tara (of Enhance by Tara) and her specialist injecting techniques can give you the perfect profile in as little as 15 minutes. She will assess your features and profile and inject to create a natural, yet impressive result which is instant and virtually pain free.

From £300. Email: [dr.tara.francis@gmail.com](mailto:dr.tara.francis@gmail.com)

**AT HOME ALTERNATIVE** Shade Charlotte Tilbury Filmstar Bronze & Glow down the sides of your bridge and highlight the tip of the nose to give the illusion of a more streamlined appearance. £49. [charlottetilbury.com](http://charlottetilbury.com)

## » Non-surgical eye bag removal with PLEXR

**Dr Dev Patel**

This treatment, whereby eyelid skin is sublimated using a plasma beam to retract skin and tighten dramatically, has a fantastic effect on getting rid of eye bags without the need for a scalpel. Dr Dev Patel is one of the pioneers of the PLEXR® device in the UK and is the first doctor in England to offer it. Results are outstanding. From £450. [perfectskinsolutions.co.uk](http://perfectskinsolutions.co.uk)

**AT HOME ALTERNATIVE** Place Shiseido's Benefiance Wrinkle Resist Pure Retinol Express Smoothing Eye Mask under your eyes and let the infused patches work their magic. £60 for 12 applications. [houseoffraser.co.uk](http://houseoffraser.co.uk)



## » Hi-fu eye lift Dr Margaret

Smooth fine lines and crow's feet with High Intensity Focused Ultrasound, which simulates natural collagen production to smooth out wrinkles with no recovery time and immediate results. £200 for 30 minutes. [mcliniclondon.co.uk](http://mcliniclondon.co.uk)

**AT HOME ALTERNATIVE** Radara eye patches have tiny (pain free) needles that first create micro channels around the eye area, before a youth-boosting hyaluronic super serum is applied over the top to iron out lines. £165 for one month's supply. [radara.co.uk](http://radara.co.uk)



## » Double chin buster Strawberry Lift

Strawberry Lift is for those of us who want to bring our jawline back to life. A fat reduction chin applicator selectively targets fat cells to tackle double chins while ultrasound technology stimulates collagen production to give a more defined jawline. The treatment is relaxing and only takes 30 minutes with no down time. From £1,000 for a course of four treatments. [strawberry-laser.com](http://strawberry-laser.com)

**AT HOME ALTERNATIVE** Dr Levy Switzerland Décolletage Regenerating

Silk is proven to accelerate cells' repair processes to dramatically improve the tone and texture of the delicate neck area. £290. [cultbeauty.co.uk](http://cultbeauty.co.uk)



## » Laser lip plumper Jasmina Vico

No needles required! Jasmina will increase your lip volume with her specialist laser lip enhancement technique that stimulates collagen production to increase volume and definition. It's a quick and pain-free alternative to fillers. £80. [jasminavico.com](http://jasminavico.com)

**AT HOME ALTERNATIVE** Wunderkiss Plumping Gloss leaves lips looking fuller and glossy in minutes. £17.95. [wunder2.com](http://wunder2.com)



## » Belly buster Dr Galyna Selezneva

Sought-after by the Hollywood elite, Dr Galyna Selezneva can get rid of unwanted fat pockets which just can't seem to shift. CoolSculpting freezes and destroys fat cells by delivering precisely controlled cooling to target the fat cells underneath the skin. The body then naturally processes the fat and eliminates it from the body over the following weeks. From £800. [drritarakus.com](http://drritarakus.com)

**AT HOME ALTERNATIVE** Liquilift Slender Wrap is a bio thermal wrap that contains high grade, natural botanicals and actives that helps take inches off targeted areas on the body. £34.99. [idealworld.tv](http://idealworld.tv)



## « Better than botox Microblading with Sian Dellar

Enhance your eyes and lift your features with a microblading session with Sian Dellar, who uses semi-permanent makeup to apply individual brow strokes that mimic fine strands of hair, using a feather light technique for very natural results, no machines and no needles. Gives perfect brow definition, a subtle 'lift' to the eyes and the eyebrows you had at 17, or before you discovered tweezers! From £595. [permanentmakeup-specialist.com](http://permanentmakeup-specialist.com)

**AT HOME ALTERNATIVE** Hourglass Arch Brow Sculpting Pencil is easy to use to help create natural hair strokes. £29. [spacenk.com](http://spacenk.com)



## « Liquid face lift Dr Sabika Karim

Dr Sabika Karim can sculpt the perfect cheekbones, lift sagging skin and fill out areas of laxity using filler and some rather specialist injections techniques, taking a good five to eight years off your face. From £1,500. [revereclinics.com](http://revereclinics.com)

**AT HOME ALTERNATIVE** MZ Skin's Hydra-Lift Golden Facial Treatment Mask is saturated with gold nano particles, niacinamide, Vitamin C and collagen to plump, firm and help lift the appearance of your skin. £85 for a pack of five. [mzskin.com](http://mzskin.com)





THE SPA GUIDE

# BEAUTY QUEENS

Big name brands that deliver



## LA MER AT ADARE MANOR Co Limerick, Ireland

What better way to reboot your system than at a fantasy neo-gothic castle that has just undertaken its own life-affirming makeover? The two-year renovation of this historic estate, once the home of the Dunraven family, is said to have been one of the biggest construction projects in Ireland outside of Dublin, and no expense has been spared. At a glance it appears to have been faithfully restored to its 19th-century heyday – gurning gargoyles, decorative carved staircases and hand-knotted Tibetan rugs – but the bones of the building conceal all the technical wizardry a modern spa-goer has come to expect. The small, but perfectly formed spa is exceptional in that it is the first, and only in Ireland, to have partnered with Crème de la Mer. What began as a physicist seeking to self-remedy burns sustained after an experiment gone amiss has snowballed into the cult brand beloved by serious beauty fanatics. With the bracing Wild Atlantic Way just a short drive away, it seems only appropriate to be slathered in products that harness the power of the sea. After the 180-minute La Mer Miracle Broth experience you'll be looking for any excuse to dive headfirst into the four-poster princess bed you've had your eye on since check-in.

**BOOK IT:** Doubles from £285 B&B. [adaremanor.com](http://adaremanor.com)



## ESPA AT CASTELLO DEL NERO Tuscany, Italy

If you want to zzzz in a 12th-century former nobleman's castle – set in 740 tranquil acres of rolling hills – then try Castello del Nero's new Sleep Retreat created with ESPA. Bag a suite with Pompeian-style, 18th-century frescoes and let the butler draw you a steaming, essence-infused bath strewn with rose petals. If you're awake by lunchtime, tear yourself away from your zillion thread-count Egyptian sheets to eat foods rich in tryptophan (makes the sleep

hormone melatonin) and fresh ricotta and spinach ravioli (with its sleep-inducing magnesium), all whisked up in the hotel's Michelin-starred restaurant. Then, pop down to the spa for the ESPA Sleep Ritual: think mindfulness meets massage with a foot ritual, cymbals to open the chakras, breath work and meditation, and a hot stone massage with a restorative body oil of frankincense and rose geranium. All guaranteed to calm a busy mind and have you sleeping like a bambino.

**BOOK IT:** Doubles from €422 B&B. [castellodelnero.com](http://castellodelnero.com)



## VINOTHÉRAPIE AT LES SOURCES DE CAUDALIE Bordeaux, France

Pampering combined with Michelin-starred dining and wine tasting? Mais oui, naturellement. Just 20 minutes from Bordeaux, in the Château Smith Haut Lafitte Vineyards, the world-class Vinothérapie spa sits in beautiful French gardens, surrounded by endless acres of green, green land, offering the perfect weekend away for spa bunnies, gourmands and oenophiles. After all, a little of what you fancy never hurt anyone. Feel virtuous on bike rides and walks through the wondrous countryside, then return and surrender

to your senses. Traditional hands-on face and body treatments with signature Caudalie facials and massages (no half-hearted Swedish massages here) invigorate and rejuvenate stressed-out bodies (the Caudalie brand was developed here by the vineyard owner's daughter, Mathilde Thomas, and the château is its very heart and home). After that, it's wining and dining in the way only the French know how, before collapsing, fully sated, in a cloud-like bed for the sleep of the dead. Bliss.

**BOOK IT:** Doubles from €300 B&B ([sources-caudalie.com](http://sources-caudalie.com)). Easyjet flights from £23.24pp one-way ([easyjet.com](http://easyjet.com))



## JK7 SPA RETREAT AT THE SULLIVAN ESTATE Oahu, Hawaii

If you haven't heard of beauty brand JK7, it's best known for flogging the world's most expensive anti-ageing serum for around £1,400, so that gives you some indication that a stay here is not for the financially challenged. In fact, you have to book out the whole lushly tropical five-acre estate and its top-notch facilities in their entirety, so gather a group of friends (up to 12) and embrace your wellness journey together (although it's feasible for just two to stay). A vast, stunning eco house is your home from home with

a private chef to provide balanced delicacies. The basic spa package offers a yoga class, massage and Spa Sensor session (a techy treatment brilliant for stress busting) during your stay, but you've made it this far, so we say go bespoke and every detail of your stay can be personally crafted for you, from diet to the type of yoga you practice. For the rest of the time, you can hit the gym, get on the Power Plate, enjoy endless steams and saunas, meditate in the room designed just for that, then collapse in front of a movie in your own cinema.

**BOOK IT:** Three nights (minimum stay), from \$8,980pp per night. [sullivanestate.com](http://sullivanestate.com)

## PACKING ESSENTIALS



**LA MER**  
Moisturising gel, £220. [cremedelamer.co.uk](http://cremedelamer.co.uk)



**CAUDALIE**  
Detox Oil, £30. [uk.caudalie.com](http://uk.caudalie.com)



**ESPA**  
Muscle Rescue Balm, £30. [espskincare.com](http://espskincare.com)



**FENELLA SMITH**  
Toucan vegan leather wash bag, £20. [fenellasmith.com](http://fenellasmith.com)



**JK7**  
Unique Hair & Body Wash, £165. [jk7skincare.com](http://jk7skincare.com)

PHOTOS: TUCA REINES



THE SPA GUIDE

# A FAMILY AFFAIR

Spa and family are words that can go together happily



## JUMEIRAH ZABEEL SARAY, Dubai

Everything is bigger in Dubai and the family-friendly Jumeirah Zabeel Saray is no exception. A mini-palace with 443 rooms and 10 restaurants on The Palm, the central pool is the size of a small lake with views stretching over to the Atlantis hotel in the distance. The brilliant kids' club features its own pool, a climbing wall, play areas and an indoor area with everything from a Playstation to drawing and games. Leave them there and head to the hotel's Talise Ottoman spa, which is heaven for tired parents. With 42 - yes, 42 - treatment rooms, the spa is one of the largest in the Middle East. Think soaring ceilings, mosaic floors and Ottoman-inspired decorative touches, not forgetting three hammams, two thalassotherapy pools and various saunas and steam rooms, all dotted through a maze of darkly glamorous corridors spread over two vast floors. But what it lacks in intimacy, it makes up for with dazzlingly good treatments such as the Collagen Myoxinol facial (to smooth out fine lines), a full-body Citrus Hydration ritual and an indulgent Arabian rose and gold hammam. The post-treatment come down is beautifully managed with plenty of time to soak in a Jacuzzi, discover your inner Elsa in a snow room or relax on a hot stone bed. All that's left for you to do is find your way out.

**BOOK IT:** Doubles from £215 room only. [jumeirah.com](http://jumeirah.com)



## BORGO EGNAZIA, Puglia, Italy

This magnificent hotel, built of tuff stone to resemble a Puglian village, offers everything; a trendy beach club, hearty restaurants, swimming pools, cycling, cooking classes, a zinging kids' club, golf and the most magical spa for weary parents. Literally - the ethos here is Puglian healing based on ancient witchcraft and ritual. Descend to the labyrinthine spa, where you are met by local healers dressed as Grecian goddesses. Into this sepulchral calm, every inch of space is considered;

vast troughs contain rock crystal to absorb negativity. Sink into the white-curtained cinema for mind-bendingly beautiful films with no dialogue. Unknot your body in the spectacular lyengar studio. Fall into the arms of the therapists whose treatments are beyond description - they release muscles and emotions in the most intuitive way. Perfectly pitched, you will leave whoozy with disconnected delight. Vair Spa will blow your mind. It offers destination spa standards hidden in a family resort.

**BOOK IT:** Doubles from €269 B&B. [borgoegnazia.com](http://borgoegnazia.com)



## ÉVIAN RESORT, Évian-les-Bains, France

A stately retreat for worn-out parents meets a fresh-air adventure playground for children. Évian Resort sits in 42 acres of alpine woodland with hypnotic views of Lake Geneva and a backdrop of the Swiss Alps. For grown-ups there's every top-notch aesthetic and wellness programme you can think of - from rejuvenating beauty treatments to detox, fitness and yoga retreats. Spa Évian Source is savvy to the boom in family wellness and not only offer a range of kids' treatments - mini massages and 'fairy fingers' manicures - they've also created

a genius mother and baby programme, where exhausted mothers can check themselves in for three days of R&R, safe in the knowledge that their babes are enjoying 'aquababy' sessions. The resort's highlight is Hôtel Royal - an exquisite 19th-century palace with gorgeous suites, first-class service and a recently awarded Michelin-starred restaurant, Les Fresques. There's also a championship golf course, tennis courts, a concert hall and even a casino. Oh, and you must hop on the complimentary shuttle bus down to the town to sample Évian water at source.

**BOOK IT:** Doubles from €249 room only. [evianresort.com](http://evianresort.com)



## SCHLOSS ELMAU Krun, Germany

Tucked deep in splendour of the Bavarian Alps, Schloss Elmau is a sanctuary framed by snow-capped mountains and rushing streams. The secret to the hotel's success lies in its six spas, even with the 115 rooms and suites at full capacity you will find space to unwind. There are relaxation rooms with open fireplaces and scenic saunas in the most secluded spots. The Jivamukti Yoga Centre is another highlight, offering open classes on a daily basis. This family-run hotel is positioned as a place for generations to come together and enjoy the endless choice

of activities on offer. While adults unwind in the spa, children can check in to sport, debating or craft clubs. The hotel is also home to eight restaurants, including the Michelin-starred Luce d'Oro, two libraries and a concert hall. With an established cultural programme, Schloss Elmau lures a cast of world-class performers, from classical musicians to literary masters such as Ian McEwan. If you can tear yourself away from the award-winning facilities, the 70 surrounding peaks offer countless mountain biking and skiing routes too.

**BOOK IT:** Doubles from €408 B&B. [schloss-elmau.de](http://schloss-elmau.de)

## PACKING ESSENTIALS



**NOÉ & ZOË**  
Sporty pants, €59.98.  
[noe-zoe.com](http://noe-zoe.com)



**SELINI**  
Selini action poppy swimsuit, £65. [childrensalon.com](http://childrensalon.com)



**BILLIE BLUSH**  
Cotton dress, £54.95.  
[harrods.com](http://harrods.com)



**BODEN**  
Towelling cover up, £24.  
[boden.co.uk](http://boden.co.uk)



**SALT-WATER**  
Sandals, £42.  
[salt-watersandals.com](http://salt-watersandals.com)



# ON HOME TURF

A mind or body workout without the hassle of a plane ride

## CLIVEDEN Taplow, Berkshire

Pray that it's a hot day when you hit Cliveden's dazzling new spa showpiece. There can't be much that beats lounging around on sunbeds in a beautiful lavender and rose scented walled garden by the pool (the only listed outdoor one in the UK) made famous by Profumo. But, don't despair if it's raining, you'll be well looked after. Plump for treatments using Cliveden's latest chatelaine, Natalie Livingstone's own range of Cliveden-inspired beauty products. A favourite is the sleep-inducing bespoke floatation therapy where you lie on a warm water mattress for two hours while therapists work their magic, and the Sarah Chapman (she who's responsible for Meghan Markle's famous glow) facials are a must.

Feeling peckish? Order a super salad or a green detox juice from The Spa Kitchen. Before all that pampering though, get your boots on to explore acres of glorious National Trust park and woodland, running down to the River Thames. And afterwards, play Lady of the Manor yourself in the exquisite bedrooms: the Lady Astor suite is one of the best – deliciously feminine with its own handmade kingsize bed and outdoor terrace. An utterly spoiling treat.

**BOOK IT:** Doubles from £445 B&B. [clivedenhouse.co.uk](http://clivedenhouse.co.uk)



## RUDDING PARK Harrogate, North Yorkshire

Harrogate has secured its spot on the luxury map with Ridding's swanky new spa, a project that has taken over a decade to complete with no expense spared. A lesson in decadent relaxation, this humongous spa is split over three floors and takes the concept of a 'spa garden' to new levels. On the roof lies a panoramic cabin sauna, spa bath and sun loungers amid luscious plants. Buried below are 11 treatment rooms offering heavenly pummelling, and a host of zones from meditation to visual, which plays

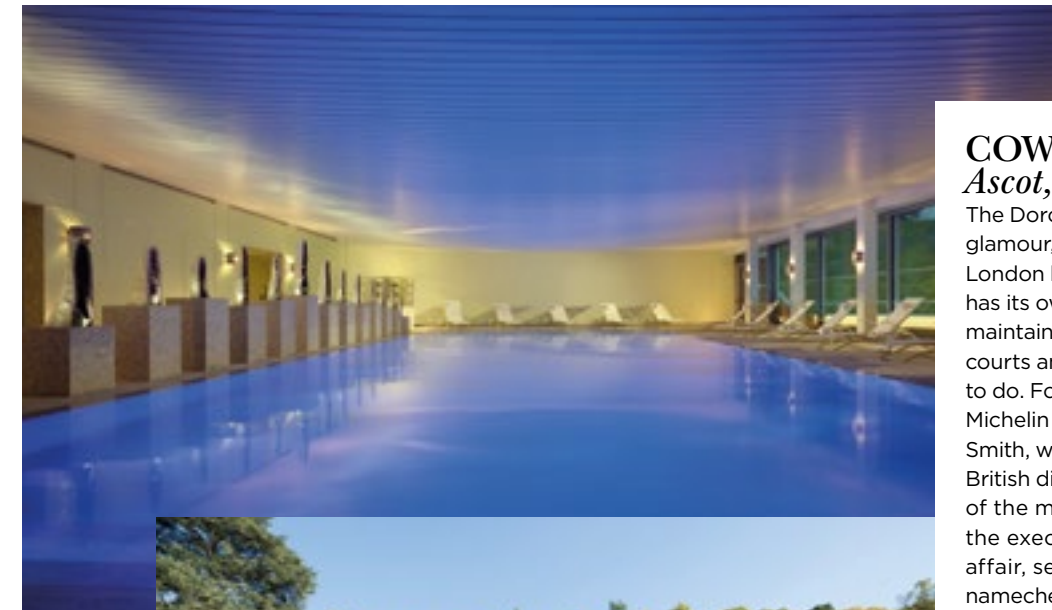
spellbinding videos. The impressive pools draw natural waters from the grounds, playing on Harrogate's aqua heritage. But the ultimate must is the mud bath where puttied minerals are massaged into your skin and rinsed with a tropical shower. Claire Horsley's fresh interior design touch lifts the space while the spa's spectacular Horto restaurant was built around its star chef, Murray Wilson. Meanwhile, gregarious GM, Peter Banks, is the hotel's beating heart, with a yesteryear charm that will guarantee your return.

**BOOK IT:** Doubles from £172 B&B. [ruddingpark.co.uk](http://ruddingpark.co.uk)

## COWORTH PARK Ascot, Berkshire

The Dorchester's country cousin offers all the glamour, elegance and pizzazz of a grown-up London hotel but in a bucolic rural setting. It even has its own polo field, among the immaculately maintained 240 acres complete with tennis courts and an equestrian centre, so there's much to do. Foodies will be impressed by the recent Michelin star awarded to executive chef Adam Smith, who serves up beautifully presented British dishes with a seasonal focus, the simplicity of the menu belying the complication of the execution. The spa is also an impressive affair, set apart from the main building and namechecking superb brands, such as Carol Joy London (get high tech with a microdermabrasion machine to leave skin radiant), Kerstin Florian (the Firm and Tone body treatment will have you skipping out of the spa feeling pounds lighter) and Aromatherapy Associates (if you suffer from problem skin, choose the Skin Solution facial) and a choice of 13 different massage styles. After that, return to your deeply cossetting room, all gentle colours and rich fabrics, modern and elegant, for an incredibly peaceful night's sleep.

**BOOK IT:** Doubles from £409 B&B. [dorchestercollection.com](http://dorchestercollection.com)



## THE LYGON ARMS Broadway, Worcestershire

The fact that this 16th-century coaching inn in the idyllic Cotswolds village of Broadway (think art galleries, gorgeous independent home and gift shops and one of the best children's playgrounds we've seen), which was recently bought by Iconic Luxury Hotels (Cliveden and Chewton Glen) who lavished a multi-million pound refurbishment upon it, had 100 per cent occupancy on a cold, wet February night, is testament to its many charms. There's now a laidback informality that runs throughout – from the staff uniforms (dark jeans and shirts) to the handsome panelled main restaurant, which serves up family-friendly fare (and a killer breakfast buffet). But what those in the know really come for (local membership is available) is the excellent and extensive spa with one of the loveliest swimming pools around (complete with Jacuzzi) and a decent gym. When it comes to facials and therapies, they've cleverly chosen to work with two brilliant British beauty brands, ila and Oskia, and there's a raft of massages – from hot stone to deep tissue – available, plus a Jessica nail bar. A perfect adjunct to a Cotswolds country weekend.

**BOOK IT:** Doubles from £180 B&B. [lygonarmshotel.co.uk](http://lygonarmshotel.co.uk)







## BORINGDON HALL *Plymouth, Devon*

If you ought to practise what you preach then owner Diane Nettleton has taken a hotel that was tired around the edges and converted it into a cathedral of health, juxtaposing the original 16th-century manor with a glossy new glass spa; a temple to modernism that juts out from the old building in a way that would set Kevin McCloud's pulse racing. The space is an homage to Gaia - Mother Nature - and a grounding presence certainly permeates everything from the specially developed products, made from a blend of

macerated and infused oils to balance, awaken or calm, to the mood-boosting herbal infusions by your bed. If hydrotherapy is your bag, you're spoilt for choice between the crystal salt steam room, laconium, Finnish and herbal saunas, but if you're not up to the shock of hot and cold cycles, floating between the indoor and outdoor pools via a trapdoor will keep you occupied. Diane powers up the good karma by giving back to the local community, offering charitable spa days to people living with cancer.

**BOOK IT:** Doubles from £130, room only plus use of spa facilities. [boringdonhall.co.uk](http://boringdonhall.co.uk)



## THE LANESBOROUGH *London W1*

Plush, old-fashioned, furiously expensive, Hyde Park's The Lanesborough isn't the most cutting-edge or exciting hotel in London but it is reliable and it does reassuringly burst with butlers, fresh flowers and plump cushions. The new spa continues this pampering theme. And it's not just a spa, it's a swanky members' club. The high tech, high spec gym is a Bodyism get-up from James Duigan and will get the lardiest physiques into shape in a mindful fashion. Meanwhile, the poshest spa café in existence offers an all-day Clean and Lean menu and an array of shakes

and juices. But it's the spa treatments that are the real jewel here. Yes, there's La Prairie, but if you are seeking soul nurturing then opt for one of the beautiful, deeper ila life therapies. Or fall into the blessed, uber healing hands of Anastasia Achilleos - you'd be hard pushed to find a better, wiser facialist (she is so much more than just a facialist), and a layering of steams and creams combined with craniosacral work and the sort of massaging that relaxes your entire central nervous system will leave you feeling fully rejuvenated. Worth every penny.

**BOOK IT:** Doubles from £525 room only. [oetkercollection.com](http://oetkercollection.com)

## PACKING ESSENTIALS



**COTTON CITIZEN**  
Tokyo crop tee, £95.  
[selfridges.com](http://selfridges.com)



**BIRDIE LONDON**  
Merino jumper, £115.  
[birdie.london](http://birdie.london)



**HUNTER**  
Refined drawstring bomber  
£225. [hunterboots.com](http://hunterboots.com)



**M.I.H.**  
Niki cropped jeans, £225.  
[matchesfashion.com](http://matchesfashion.com)



**GANNI**  
Edna shearling-lined leather and suede ankle boots, £295.  
[net-a-porter.com](http://net-a-porter.com)