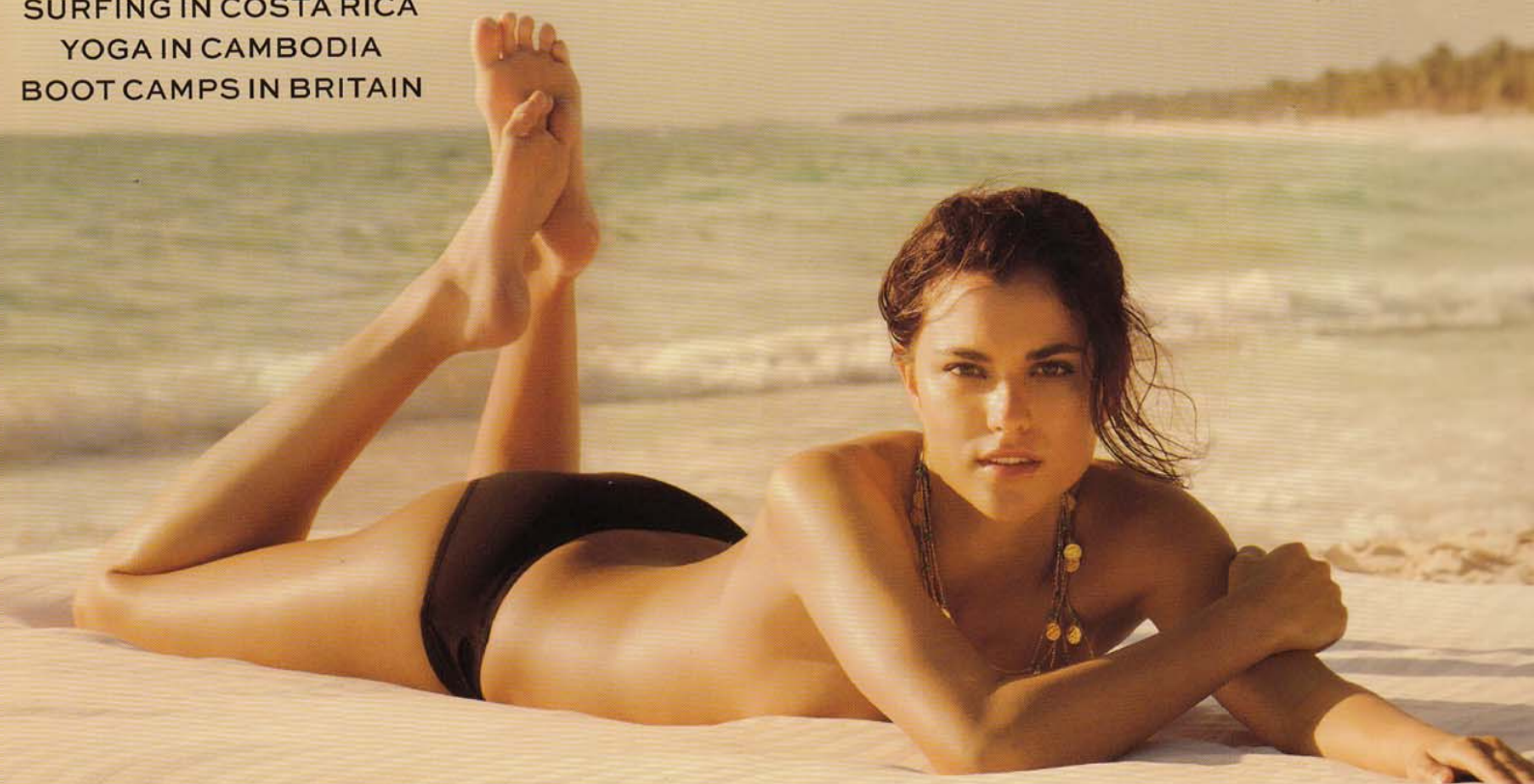


Condé Nast Traveller

THE SPA GUIDE 2013

THE BEST SPAS IN THE WORLD

WEIGHT LOSS IN ITALY
ASHRAMS IN CALIFORNIA
DETOXES IN AUSTRIA
YURVEDA IN THE MALDIVES
SURFING IN COSTA RICA
YOGA IN CAMBODIA
BOOT CAMPS IN BRITAIN



In association with ESPA and Healing Holidays

GLENEAGLES SCOTLAND

Issue: **FATIGUE**



You probably think this grand golfing Goliath (all turrets and tartan trews) is too buttoned-up and smoothly polished for soul searching and emotion releasing. But the ESPA Life programme is as finely tuned to your needs and as cotton-wool caring as the rest of Gleneagles is geared to immaculate service and hearty country pursuits. Slip through the spa's polished doors into a parallel world of creamy calm, Asian sparkles and the capable hands of naturopath Dr Louise Westra. Precise and piercing, she gently but firmly unpicks your problems. You do need to come clean – depression, IBS, low confidence – so she can create your programme, mixing treatments with personal training and nutritional know-how. For fatigue and stress, you'll be blissfully uncoiled with a deep-reaching exfoliation and massage before Dr Louise zones in on your adrenals and, most likely, your sluggish digestive system. It's not always comfortable. The acupressure massage roots out your under-active spleen while the colon hydrotherapy (not mandatory but worth it) can be buttock clenching. Both are unexpectedly 'lightening' (and enlightening), as most of the mood-enhancing hormone, serotonin, is made in the gut. Osteopathic sessions re-align your posture, reflexology wrinkles out your blockages and the acupuncture is weirdly soporific. Therapists are focused, enthusiastic and uncannily empathetic. Bradley, a huggy-bear of a man, will have you giggling over the kettle-bells, and you'll end up telling your life story to acupuncturist, Ailsa, who you'll want to take home as your new best friend. The Spa Menu (encouraged but not compulsory) is surprisingly tasty, with butternut squash and peanut salad, grilled cod and roast peppers, chocolate and beetroot cake; and Dr Louise turns a blind eye to sneaky treats. You'd have to be pretty



strong willed not to indulge here; the afternoon tea is wildly over-the-top. Choose either the snazzily refurbished rooms in the old part or the cooler, contemporary Braid House. Don't expect an instant makeover, but you'll go home calmer, sunnier (a personalised facial is included – ask for Kim, who will magic away those under-eye circles), clearer, lighter in step and, crucially, with the determination and tools to keep on improving and moving.

TOP TIP Eat a protein snack – oatcakes and peanut butter, for example – an hour before bed and you will sleep better. **BOOK THROUGH** +44 800 389 3737; www.gleneagles.com. A four-day ESPA Life Optimal Energy and Vitality programme costs from £899 per person, including treatments. Doubles cost from £335, including breakfast. **TRAVELLER SPECIAL** Book this and receive a complimentary room upgrade and a two-and-a-quarter-hour Body Cleanse Ritual

LEFAY ITALY

Issue: **SLEEP**

As you gaze out from the hot-as-a-bath infinity pool, the steam rising over the mountains and the glass-like Lake Garda below stretching into oblivion, this remarkable spot feels more like an Asian paradise than northern Italy. But Italy it is, with three different types of fresh mozzarella to choose from at breakfast and candy-coloured macaroons left on your pillow each evening – it's not a place to come for weight loss. However, it is the place to come if you are plagued by insomnia: first of all because it's close, so you don't have to battle with jet lag, and secondly because it has recently launched a five-day sleep programme. According to Dr Maurizio Corradin, there are 10 different forms of insomnia recognised by Chinese medicine and all can be treated. His credentials are impeccable (he was a GP for years, discovered Chinese medicine, and is now one of Europe's leading acupuncturists), and his approach is caring. Despite the decidedly spiritual thread of your cosy chats, which include dream analysis (bonkers dreams are a sign your unconscious needs to be soothed before bed, rather like a tricksome toddler), his advice is extremely sensible and it works. For someone who wakes at 4am each day, the treatment focuses on the regeneration of the lungs, with meridian stretching classes focusing on improving your energy flow, combined with strolls through stunning countryside. Book in for reflexology with the ever-smiling Teddy; a former palliative nurse, he knows exactly where your problems lie as his nimble fingers get to work on your toes. Daily moxibustion treatments, using little hot sticks of dried mugwort, work along your meridian lines to unblock energy – it's like a heated form of acupuncture and is upliftingly relaxing. Eating lightly definitely aids better sleep and there is a light option for every meal but, remember, enjoying yourself is also key. There are fresh



pastries and made-to-order omelettes for breakfast; lunch is more challenging, with plates of wafer-thin prosciutto, hand-rolled pasta and homemade ice creams inducing coma-like siestas that last well into the afternoon. And then there is the truly life-changing acupuncture with Corradin, who targets your deepest emotions with pinpoint accuracy, unravelling years of unresolved issues. His singsong words of encouragement will leave you feeling a more balanced, happier person – and with that comes sleep. Blissful, uninterrupted, heavy sleep.

TOP TIP Dr Corradin advises you to create a daily ritual; for example, stopping working at 6pm and devoting time to jogging, meditation or drinking an aperitif with a friend. How Italian. **BOOK THROUGH** Wellbeing Escapes (+44 845 602 6202; www.wellbeingescapes.co.uk), which offers a five-night sleep package from £2,293 per person full board, including consultations, spa treatments, activities, flights and transfers. **TRAVELLER SPECIAL** Book this and receive an £80 spa credit