

# THE POWER REVOLUTION ISSUE

## #ACTFORNATURE

Tony Juniper: now's the time to demand action from MPs – and here's how to do it

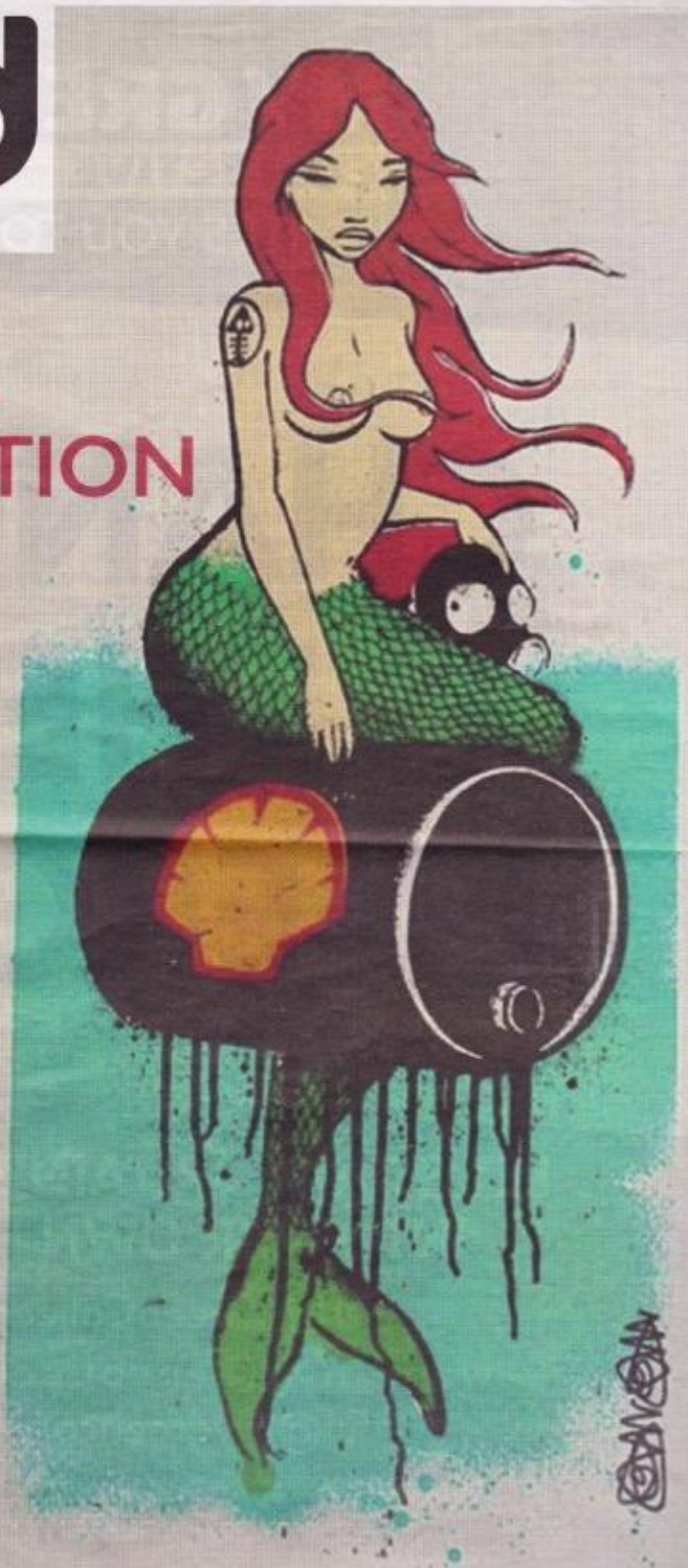
## OCTOPUS ENERGY

'The energy market in this country is broken', so this new breed of supplier is trying to fix it

## PLANT-POWERED BEAUTY

Weleda's natural summer skincare tips will help you make the most of the sun and surf

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# Natural HIGH

Lake Garda's Lefay Resort and Spa is raising the bar for sustainable wellbeing



It was a risk to perch an eco-spa 6km away from Lake Garda's main strip; resort competition is high on the lakeside and one of the main reasons tourists visit this paradise in the north of Italy is to be close to that view. But Lefay – meaning 'the fairy' – is a magical resort in a fairytale spot.

In the heart of the enchanting Riviera dei Limoni on the western banks of Lake Garda, Lefay is the lake's first five-star luxury resort. It sprawls over 11 hectares of natural park in Gargnano, surrounded by rolling hills, woods and olive groves that supply the nourishing oils used in the resort's spa and restaurants.

However risky the location may have been from a business point of view, the 6km drive actually works to guests' advantage: by the time you've twisted up the winding road to Lefay's hilltop gates you'll have dropped into harmonious bliss with the surrounding area – from its melodic birdsong to the scent of its sun-drenched olive trees. It's as though the drive itself is part of the treatment: an initiation into the resort's bespoke Lefay Spa Method.



## REDEFINING LUXURY

The resort's owners – Alcide and Liliana Leali – decided to create a luxury wellness brand back in 2006, and Lefay – which opened in 2008 – was the first resort on the map. It reflects a new understanding of luxury that values space, Nature, time to yourself and discrete service – all with fantastic attention to detail.

With a background in architecture and an acute awareness that the wellbeing of the individual is dependent on the health of the whole, Liliana's beliefs helped carve a physical structure to contain the couple's vision of a sustainable and holistic approach to wellness.

Local materials – from olive wood to Italian marble – feature in abundance and the building itself, inspired by the local lemon groves, is landscaped so sensitively that it's barely visible from the road. It backs into the hillside, facing south to make the most of the view and to save energy on heating.

Behind the resort is a high-tech biomass-fuelled plant, and solar panels have been fitted to the roof of Lefay's main restaurant. As a result 85% of



**LEFT**  
Lefay's infinity pool blends seamlessly into the lake

**ABOVE**  
Treatments can be enjoyed outside in summer

**RIGHT**  
The indoor saltwater pool

**BELOW**  
The resort faces south to make the most of views over the lake



the the resort's heating – and 100% of its cooling and air conditioning – comes from renewable energy. All electricity is from renewables – 60% of which is generated on site.

#### AWARD-WINNING WELLBEING

A sustainable approach that puts the local environment first has been central to the vision for the spa, and it's paid off. The awards are rolling in thick and fast: each year brings another string of accolades, awarded by everyone from industry experts to travel gurus and members of the public. Among a list too long to include here, Tripadvisor's Travellers' Choice Awards have ranked Lefay among the Top 25 Hotels, Top 25 Luxury Hotels and Top 25 Romantic Hotels.

Lefay is the first wellness resort in southern Europe to obtain the prestigious environmental certification of Green Globe, the first worldwide certification programme to develop international reference standards for the wellness industry. It's also the first spa in Italy to receive Ecocert's prestigious new certificate, Being - Organic and Ecological SPA, Level: Excellence.

#### A TEMPLE OF WELLNESS

The 3,800 square metre spa is described as a 'temple of wellness' where 'mind and body are regenerated through the discovery of genuine emotions and a sense of inner harmony'. It's divided into three areas: The World of Water and Fire includes all areas connected to the swimming pools, saunas, grottos and small lakes – including the indoor and outdoor saltwater pool, indoor thalassotherapy pool and six different types of sauna.

The Nature and Fitness area boasts a large gym fitted with all the latest equipment for training, plus a fitness studio for courses and fitness activities. Finally, The Park – In Silence Among the Stars: Trilogy in the Air is made up of all the outdoor areas for sports and trails dedicated to wellness and relaxation. The resort's large park has a running circuit and a fitness trail with eight stations for improving muscle elasticity, plus a therapeutic energy garden with five stations linked to ancient symbols for wellbeing.

#### THE LEFAY SPA METHOD

The spa has its own treatment philosophy – the Lefay Spa Method – created by the Lefay Spa Scientific Committee. The approach, which fuses classical Chinese medicine with western scientific research, was devised to address mental and physical wellness, with treatments customised according to individual needs – from stress relief and weight loss to combating insomnia and signs of ageing.

The signature treatments include energy massages and special treatments using perfumes and essences from the local area. Non-invasive aesthetic medicine, which uses acupuncture for aesthetic purposes, is also available, as well as therapies in the fields of natural medicine, osteopathy and physiotherapy. Rituals dedicated to couples are held in the exclusive Private Spa – inspired by Greek mythology to offer a sensual trip for two into the Lefay Spa world.

#### VITAL GOURMET

As you might expect from a resort with a holistic approach to wellbeing, food is seen as vital to good health. Lefay Vital Gourmet is a style of cuisine underwritten by principles that champion an authentic, seasonal Mediterranean diet, packed with Italian spirit, good ethics and local character. Seasonal ingredients, extra virgin olive oil, citrus fruits from the lake and locally grown herbs all combine to create a quintessential and light cuisine that's bursting with health and surprisingly filling.

Lefay Vital Gourmet is just one of the options in the main restaurant, La Grande Limonaia, where meals are food for the soul. The Trattoria La Vigna is a more relaxed eating area that balances the simplicity and warmth of Italian cuisine.

While some wellbeing resorts also double up as drying out clinics, this is Italy. Prosecco is on tap for breakfast (alongside just about every other Italian delicacy you could wish for) and a long list of wines is presented with a proud flourish at lunch and dinner. The bar mixes a particularly good martini, so there's something for every occasion. The light live music sets help cement this resort's place among the world's most romantic getaways, and the staff are incredibly thoughtful and attentive with children, setting high chairs with silver cutlery and pressed linen.

The next Lefay resort, expected to open in 2018, is being built in the Madonna di Campiglio ski area. One of the most famous skiing destinations in the Alps, it's surrounded by the Dolomites, mountains with UNESCO World Heritage status. We expect it'll be another belter of a resort that bags even more awards for Lefay.

#### FIND OUT MORE

- To book, visit [le fayresorts.com/eng](http://le fayresorts.com/eng)
- More on Lefay Spa treatments is at [lagodigarda.le fayresorts.com/eng/spa](http://lagodigarda.le fayresorts.com/eng/spa)
- More on Ecocert's certification process is at [ecocert.com/en/certification](http://ecocert.com/en/certification)