

TATLER

A photograph of two women in spa attire. The woman on the left is wearing a grey textured swim cap and a blue and white striped towel. The woman on the right is wearing a white lace swim cap and a blue and white striped towel. They are both looking towards the camera against a dark blue background.

Spa Guide 2020

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
Healing  Holidays AND ESPA

SPA DIRECTORY


THE GOOD RETREAT GUIDE



BEST FOR... **A BRAIN-REBOOT**

SHA, Alicante, Spain


A Space-Age sleek retreat (check out the new residences with their wrap-around pools and fingerprint-entry systems), Spain's best-known medi-spa has a turbocharged wellness offering. Take SHA's Healthy Ageing programmes for men and women: seven- or 14-day retreats which determine guests' biological and chronological age, before prescribing a flurry of hi-tech treatments, specially designed to elevate quality of life and send longevity soaring. The medical wizardry is utterly bespoke, and may incorporate ozone therapy (the process of oxygenating the blood), colonics or cognitive therapies (think NASA-developed headsets, which use 'neuro-feedback' to detect brain activity and pinpoint underlying conditions such as depression or insomnia). The step-change is immediate: guests' bodies feel stronger, outlooks become brighter, minds are sharper. The future awaits...

 *Healing Holidays (healingholidays.com)* offers a seven-night Rebalance programme, full board, from £4,149, including British Airways flights and transfers.

BEST FOR... **FINE-TUNING**

Lefay, Lake Garda, Italy

An Italianate air prevails at this holistic hideaway, with its Lake Garda views and olive groves – but Lefay's approach to wellness is altogether more worldly (a blend of Chinese medicine and Western know-how). Most guests come seeking respite (from daily life, illness or emotional burden) and all find reprieve in Lefay's nurturing surrounds and tried-and-tested methods. Restoring balance to the organs is key, achieved through traditional means such as moxibustion, acupuncture or reflexology – though the subtle yet seismic shift that comes from guided meditation walks and dining on organic fare is not to be underestimated. And when equilibrium is reached, the real magic kicks in: sleep comes easily; emotions level out; even skin feels softer (helped by the lavender-infused aromatherapy baths).

 *Healing Holidays (healingholidays.com)* offers a three-night Discovery programme, full board, from £1,279, including British Airways flights and transfers.

BEST FOR... **REWILDING**

Matt Roberts Retreat at Lime Wood, Hampshire, UK

Matt Roberts is a fitness industry veteran with a roster of A-list clients – and his new three-day retreats at Lime Wood are the hottest thing to happen in Hampshire. Designed to get city-dwellers out into the wild, guests ricochet between New Forest runs (spot the miniature ponies), fitness classes (yoga takes place on the lawns during summer) and ample downtime at the Herb House Spa with its rooftop garden, alfresco pools and Raw and Cured cafe, overseen by nutritional therapist Amelia Freer (think Asian salads, cured fish and super-fresh smoothies). Shaping up suddenly sounds a lot more appealing... *Three-day retreat, from £1,890 (limewoodhotel.co.uk)*

BEST FOR... **THE HEAVY-HEARTED**

Guided by Gratitude Retreat at Four Seasons Resort Sayan, Bali, Indonesia

Spa-goers seeking inner change will find little as transformative as a few days with former Buddhist nun Henri Ferawati. In the balmy surroundings of Bali's Four Seasons Resort Sayan, the retreat focuses on listening and talking, laughter and tears, while Ferawati teaches guests to be 'Guided by Gratitude', which brings a quiet contentment and makes the soul sing. The healing power of ritual is felt throughout

with candlelit meditations, water blessings, cleansing Balinese smoke ceremonies and – best of all – sacred 'naps', where Ferawati swings guests in a silk hammock cocoon. The point is to recognise what one has in life, and to bring about true and consistent happiness. It works. *Elegant Resorts (elegantresorts.co.uk)* offers a seven-night stay, including three nights on the Gratitude Retreat programme, from £3,395, including flights, transfers and UK airport lounge passes.

BEST FOR... **HIGH-FLYERS**


Bodhimaya at The Lanesborough, London, UK

The arrival of Bodhimaya's much-lauded private wellness retreats at The Lanesborough means two things: firstly, a total mind and body reset in as little as 24 hours, right in the middle of London's hustle and bustle; and secondly, the launch of a decadent wellness concept fusing fitness, meditation and nutrition with ample spa time (and delicious food). These restorative escapes are the brainchild of mind and meditation expert Cornelius O'Shaughnessy, whose country house retreats are catnip for over-achievers on the brink of burnout – though, at the Lanesborough, it's about de-stressing as quickly as possible via a focused PT session in the subterranean gym, a deep-tissue massage in the gilded spa, or guided meditation with the man himself. The end result is on point – and somewhat life-changing. *From £1,795, including overnight stay (lanesboroughclubandspa.com).*

BEST FOR... **NEW BEGINNINGS**

Kamalaya, Koh Samui, Thailand

Kamalaya has its die-hards: those who return each year to find solace in its lantern-strung gardens, shimmering streams and profoundly healing therapies. But for those in search of a new path or perspective, the Embracing Change programme breaks the mould. The five- or seven-day retreat is a journey: one that slowly, gently, explores emotions; that resets biased systems; and that lessens the grip of ingrained habits. One-to-one mentoring provides a safe space to let go, while energetic bodywork – like a Tui Na massage – helps to relieve physical tension. Guests feel cosseted in the hands of therapists who are among the best in the world and who help their clients to glimpse new possibilities. It's an enriching and eye-opening immersion; a source of light for those fumbling in the dark.

 *Healing Holidays (healingholidays.com)* offers a five-night Embracing Change programme, full board, from £2,999, including British Airways flights and transfers. ▷

No schedule, no minuscule portions, no white-coated doctors... Yeotown is about laughter, sharing and roaming outdoors



Rustic chic in Yeotown



Lefay Resort & Spa

YEOTOWN
Devon, UK

Guests walk into the kitchen of this country-chic cottage, and think they've taken a wrong turn: the dining room is lined with empty mugs of Monstrachet, the relics of a life well-lived by owner Simon Steff. Though there's no alcohol involved, this is not your average retreat. There's no schedule, no minuscule portions, no white-coated doctors administering enemas. Instead, it's about laughter and sharing, with hearty tofu scramble at breakfast, joyful group singing classes (to encourage better breathing) and roaming the great outdoors. Hikes – 50km across four days – trace the wild North Devon coastline, dotted with quaint seaside towns; a 57km bike ride meanders through soaring coastal rocks and inland highlands (ignore the twinkling of the ubiquitous ice cream shops). Twice-daily yoga, with the gorgeously effervescent Mercedes Steff, is a huge draw – as is the shiatsu, the osteopathy and the bone-crunchingly good massages. The five-day programmes might have all the trappings of a relaxed country weekend, but the transformation is extraordinary. Guests arrive tired and listless, and leave brimming with energy, with a roadmap for the way forward. *Double, from £1,950, for a five-night programme (yeotown.com).*



Beach house, FX Mayr

FX MAYR
Lake Wörthersee, Austria

FX Mayr is famed for gently, yet effectively, rebooting worn-out bodies. Some guests come to tackle weight loss, others to recover from injury; though its die-hards (many of whom book in at the same time each year) are here to reset their gut. Cue an emphasis on proper chewing, bowls of healing broth and time for reflection (don't be surprised if buried emotions bubble to the top). However, the latest here is the new Immunity Boost programme. Designed to strengthen the intestines and spurt new energy, the cure incorporates intermittent hypoxic-hyperoxic therapy (interval

breathwork, using low-level oxygen to boost respiratory performance); nasal reflexology (to clear colds and congestion) and immune-boosting drips. Vigorous exercise is out (resting while detoxing is key), but sessions of water biking raise the heart rate, and the UltraTone body treatment is a revelation (a half-hour session is akin to a two-hour workout). After a week, the physical sensation of lightness is unmistakable – but so is the sense of strength. *FX Mayr offers a one-week Mayr Basic Cure, from £2,394, full board, including all treatments (original-mayr.com).*

LEFAY RESORT & SPA

The Dolomites, Italy

Calling ski fanatics in pursuit of serious post-exertion spa-ing: head straight to the new sister to the outstanding Lefay Lake Garda. Dazzling in the UNESCO location, it boasts a state-of-the-art ski shop, ski Butler and on-demand mountain shuttle – so there's no excuse not to explore the 150km of powder-blanketed pines. Inside, a cozy alpine metaphor is omnipresent: welcoming fireplaces, suites tricked out in granite and wood, and a candle-lit forest of a restaurant serving alpine trout and gentle gnocchì. The philosophy marries Chinese tradition with western medicine, emphasising the preventive powers of a life lived in balance (cue a wine cellar, with over 500 labels). But the calling card is the spa. Languid lengths in a pool of electrolysed water eases wound-tight muscles – then sink into a hot tub of horse chestnut, olive oil and honey before a massage with hot posolites. Otherwise, bring the outside in with therapeutic 'journeys' based on the seasons – and end a may truly appreciating the healing power of nature. *Wellbeing Escapes (wellbeingescapes.com) offers three nights from £1,100, including breakfast, five treatments, flights and transfers.*