

Condé Nast Traveller

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THE WORLD MADE LOCAL

WELLNESS & SPA GUIDE 2024



THE BEST SPAS IN THE WORLD • FAMILY HEALING • IN SEARCH OF MIDLIFE MOJO

ITALY

LEFAY RESORT & SPA DOLOMITI

A MAGICAL TRIO OF TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE, MOUNTAIN BEAUTY AND HUMANITY

Deciding between Dolomites spa resorts is like having to choose between a bevy of suitors, each handsome, articulate and spiritually evolved. This year, Lefay Dolomiti swooped in and stole my heart. Its mountain setting is as magic as a cover spread, the crowd skews cool but not intimidating, and I have a private sauna and hot tub in my spacious, uncluttered room.

The spectacular indoor-outdoor pool is the centrepiece of public spaces, but there are all manner of saunas, steam rooms and nooks to relax in. Yet it is the spa and its ethos based on the Chinese elements that melts my heart. This year has been awful. A new friend overdosed, my mother died and a beloved piece of real estate from a former life changed hands. I haven't cried for months, maybe the whole year, and feel as if all my negative emotions are growing stronger but not getting released. The Active and Balance programme at Lefay brings

me back to myself with the space to process feelings. It starts with a consultation with resident doctor Monica Colombini, a type of Yoda (if he had been an articulate, beautiful woman). She suggests concrete things to try when I get home, and how to return to activities I love. She sources equine therapy near where I live (I used to be a huge rider and have missed it terribly) and suggests slower runs in the woods instead of sprints in the open countryside, because of feeling emotionally exposed.

The support gives me the confidence to believe I can work through emotional pain: in nature, on spiritual hikes, with yoga and through acupuncture, during which I cry purifying tears.

Detoxing in the sauna and nurturing massages help my body feel safe. The technicians are gentle and professional, making it easy to be liberatingly vulnerable. Lefay Dolomiti is life-changing and I can't wait to go back. **ONDINE COHANE**

Healing Holidays (healingholidays.com/condenast) can arrange a four-night Purifying programme from £1,609 per person sharing, including transfers, B&B and treatments



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