

Tricks of the trade

Reap the benefits of a spa break long after the holiday is over, says Aby Dunsby

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Some swear by a soothing massage, others extol the benefits of a stress-busting yoga class in the sunshine. Whatever the indulgence, a holiday is universally seen as the ideal opportunity to ease away life's worries and enjoy some me-time.

Increasingly, though, clients are looking for more than just a quick dose of pampering during their time away, preferring to pick up

techniques they can take home for longer-lasting wellness. So choosing the right spa break for a client will allow them to come away feeling refreshed, with the know-how to make long-term life changes.

According to the Global Spa & Wellness Summit, the wellness industry was worth more than £2 trillion last year. With so much choice on the market, hotels

and spas are upping their game by offering everything from yoga and meditation retreats to nutritional advice and tips on how to sleep better, so clients can leave enriched and ready to adapt their lifestyles for the better.

Karen Nyoni, spiritual and holistic specialist at Healing Holidays, says: "We have seen a growing desire for clients seeking to learn how to spa, whether →



FAST FACT

Elegant Hotels Group opens new wellness property Waves Hotel and Spa in Barbados this month

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LEFT:
Ananda



RIGHT:
Fonteverde

that be learning yoga, the art of massage, proper skincare or any new skill that will allow people to maintain the improvements that their retreat resulted in, ensuring it's a real worthwhile investment in their future health and wellbeing."

INNER CALM

Yoga bunnies have long praised the benefits of both yoga and meditation in beating the blues, aiding sleep and even helping with pain relief, so it's no wonder there's growing interest from clients to learn these practices on a wellness break.

Yoga styles vary from Ashtanga to Vinyasa and a lot more besides, so encourage clients to test out a few classes before their holiday so you can book the most appropriate trip. Daios Cove in Crete, for example,



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offers twice-daily Jivamukti yoga classes, where exercises are practised alongside chanting, music and scripture readings. The sessions take place outdoors during a five-day Yoga Retreat (October 3-7) so clients can breathe in fresh air and marvel at dramatic views over the cove as they learn how to put the core philosophy of this yoga form into practice in daily life.

Wellbeing Escapes recommends the yoga programme at The

Ananda in India for clients who want to combine yoga and meditation with the principle of Ayurveda, which identifies a client's 'dosha' and focuses on natural ways to improve wellbeing. The resort, in the Himalayan foothills close to the birthplace of yoga, Rishikesh, offers a seven-night programme including daily personalised yoga sessions and meditation classes and a wellness consultation with the Ayurvedic doctor.

For yogis seeking a short-haul option, there's the Chedi Andermatt retreat in Switzerland, where clients learn meditation techniques and exercises associated with Lu Jong yoga by booking a four-night Mindfulness Meditation and Yoga holiday. Buddhist monk and renowned Tibetan spiritual advisor Loten Darhortsang will run workshops

and teach exercises, and he'll answer questions about Tibetan monastic culture and practices each evening at hosted dinners.

For devout yoga fans, there's the Yoga Programme at Absolute Sanctuary in Thailand, which Healing Holidays recommends as a popular retreat for yoga instructors themselves. Guests will enjoy unlimited yoga and meditation classes, as well as access to group fitness classes.

FIGHTING FIT

Forget lounging by the pool with a mojito - for health-conscious clients, holidays mean finally getting some free time to improve on fitness. Many hotels and resorts now offer structured workouts and classes alongside personalised diet plans that can be followed long after the holiday is over.



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RIGHT: Kids' yoga at Beaches

FAR RIGHT: Shanti Maurice

BOTTOM: Banyan Tree Samui



Wellbeing Escapes offers a seven-night Yoga at The Ananda programme from £3,177 based on two sharing and including flights and transfers. Prices are based on departures in August. wellbeingescapes.com

Healing Holidays offers a seven-night stay at the SHA Wellness Clinic on an Anti-Stress Programme for £3,745 per person, based on two sharing a Deluxe Mountain View Suite and including flights from Gatwick and private transfers, for stays before September 30. healingholidays.co.uk

➔ At Fonteverde, a luxurious Tuscan property that's part of the Italian Hospitality Collection, clients on its three- or seven-day wellness programmes will receive a full medical check-up, be able to sign up to fitness classes, receive nutritional coaching and leave with a detailed health plan.

Guests holidaying at Sandals' resorts can choose from a wide range of fitness classes, with everything from kick boxing to 'tabata' (high-intensity) training offered on an all-inclusive basis. Its popular tennis clinics are open to everyone from beginners to advanced players, so guests can learn how to improve their game whatever their ability – and pick up enough technique to keep it up when they get home. At sister brand Beaches Resorts, kids over the age of three can muscle in on the fitness fun with a spot of yoga, which is new to its resorts in Jamaica and Turks & Caicos.

For more family fitness under the Caribbean sun, Travel 2 recommends



Plenty of hotels dish out nutritional advice as part of packages to make sure that guests keep up the good work at home

the BodyHoliday in Saint Lucia, where the 'Well Fit Families' programme runs throughout the school summer holidays and is hosted by Olympic legends ranging from runner Jamie Baulch (July 17-31), Paralympic athlete Danny Crates (August 7-14) and rower Steve Williams (August 14-28). The programme includes lifeguard classes, first-aid CPR training, yoga, family spa specials, bike rides, sailing classes and healthy cooking classes, and could be just the inspiration families need to up their exercise regimen.

▶ EAT CLEAN

What you put into your body is just as important as how you treat it, so plenty of hotels dish out nutritional advice as part of wellness packages to make sure guests keep up the good work when they get home.

These include Thailand's Banyan Tree Samui, where clients signed up to the new Amrita wellness and detox programme will meet a nutritionist to learn about the very best cuisine to eat during and following their detox.

Six Senses spas also have an Integrated Wellness programme offered at various resorts, combining nutritional advice with a range of fitness and wellness activities. In Morocco, at Mazagan Beach & Golf Resort, nutritional coaching includes juicing demonstrations and is offered alongside twice-daily yoga sessions as part of its Complete Transformation Retreat package.

For clients looking to change their eating habits altogether, suggest





ABOVE: Culloden Estate & Spa

→ a visit to Shanti Maurice in Mauritius, which will host a vegan cooking class as part of its five-night Holistic Health and Happiness programme. The cooking classes take place in the resort's herb garden, where a chef will explain the health benefits of vegan cuisine, which, when combined with yogic practice, is said to be a natural way to detox.

Healthy cooking classes are also offered alongside nutrition tips by Lux Resorts & Hotels' three Mauritian properties as part of its new Wellness Concierge Service. The resorts' detox programme also covers everything from hikes up Le Morne mountain to spa treatments including the Zhengliao Chinese medicine treatment, designed to teach



ABOVE: Six Senses



Clients can come away from a break feeling pampered and preened – and with a new skill

clients how they can treat aches and pains.

▶ **SWEET DREAMS**

For anyone who struggles to sleep well, Six Senses Hotels Resorts Spas has come up with a potential solution. Its Yogic Sleep Programme combines gentle yoga and meditation with calming spa treatments and sleep-boosting snacks. Rooms are set at optimal temperature, sound systems play relaxation music, while pillow mists and sleep journals are provided to encourage clients to clear their mind before bed. A three-night package starts from £250 per person and includes a wellness consultation.

Insomnia is often seen as a symptom of stress, and Navutu Dreams Resort & Spa's tailor-made packages can be designed to eliminate anxiety and worry. The de-stress packages incorporate everything from acupuncture to crystal healing, as well as yoga and meditation sessions.

Healthy Hotels

Spa visits don't usually bear much relation to a GP appointment, but the growing trend towards specialist wellness breaks – which include a once-over from a doctor to offer individual advice – tells a different story.

A medical check is part of the total overhaul plan at SHA Wellness Clinic in Spain and Parkhotel Igls in Austria. The former asks clients for a saliva sample before they arrive, basing diet consultation, health tips and

treatments on the genetic results; the latter involves blood tests and urine samples on-site, with treatments, including a diet plan and training sessions, based on the results.

Those who prefer the homeopathic approach can meet with an Ayurvedic doctor at Anantara Peace Haven Tangalle Resort in Sri Lanka, where the resident doctor is qualified in massage, acupuncture, yoga and counselling.



▶ **BEAUTY BASICS**

Clients celebrating a special occasion can come away from a spa break feeling pampered and preened – and with a new skill in their repertoire.

For Valentine's Day or an anniversary, suggest a couples' massage where clients learn simple techniques that can be replicated at home. Sandals resorts often run couples' massages as a Valentine's Day promotion, or for a UK-based break, there's the Culloden Estate & Spa near Belfast, whose massage masterclasses are based on Swedish techniques and offered in a private couples' suite. Prices start from £80 per person.

For clients prepping for their big day or honeymoon, recommend the Beauty of Body and Mind retreat at Lefay Resort & Spa Lago di Garda, where guests will have a beauty consultation to learn

more about their skin type, and undergo treatments including facials, massages and aculifting. The programme concludes with a consultation that has personalised recommendations for clients to take home.

Would-be brides hoping to learn make-up tricks can do so at Canyon Ranch Kaplankaya in Turkey, which offers a 50-minute make-up lesson followed by application, while for skincare enthusiasts, JW Marriott Venice offers beauty lessons in its Goco Spa every Thursday.

The lessons don't stop with the grown-ups, however: at Porto Elounda Golf & Spa in Crete, little ones can be enrolled on the new three-day Six Senses Spa programme for kids, which includes activities such as learning how to make foot scrubs, painting nails and making natural, organic beauty products suitable for younger skin.