

Client: Borgo Egnazia
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50 SUPER-CHARGED SPA BREAKS

Time to try something different? Today's retreats offer everything from detox to yoga, mindfulness and 'mud rituals'



SUZANNE DUCKETT
SPA EXPERT

The best destination spas range from space-age fantasies to gleaming temples of self-care, staffed by spiritual teachers and body workers who bring a lifetime of learning, wisdom and time-honoured tools to preserve mind, body and soul.

If you're looking for a serious detox/weight-loss programme, then northern Europe, particularly Germany and Austria, are your best bet. Generally speaking, India, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Bali and Vietnam are still the spiritual home of yoga, meditation and the more mindful aspects of wellness.

We are all living longer, but it's now about healthspan – and the smart money is on spa programmes promoting longevity via prevention, diagnosis and early detection.

This isn't old-fashioned pampering. It's about self-preservation to try to combat our modern, sedentary and anxiety-filled lives.

Here's my pick of the best.

WOMEN'S RETREATS

48 BORGO EGNAZIA, ITALY

East of Monopoli on the coast of Puglia, the Tarant Women's Wellness retreat at Vair Spa, a hushed candlelit spa with female therapists in floor-length gowns, is said to enable women to express emotions and feel empowered. At the heart of Tarant is an ancient purifying Apulian dance, the tarantella. According to folklore, a tarantula bite sent a local woman half-mad and the villagers danced and sang with her and cured her. Today's retreat centres on this traditional rhythmic dance, a Mediterranean diet and personalised treatments with shared villas for emotional bonding. Selected dates throughout 2019.

Four nights from £2,822 (0039 08022 55850; borgoegnazia.com)



EAT WELL, SLEEP WELL
 Es Saadi, Marrakech, main; Tarant Women's Wellness at Borgo Egnazia, Puglia, inset above