

A New Year lift for mind & body

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Jo Roberts takes her pick of the world's luxury spa resorts and looks at the different ways they can see you begin 2016 at the peak of your powers

The festive season is great fun, but it often leads to over-indulgence. Excessive consumption of alcohol, sugar and rich, fatty foods leave our body's detox system struggling to deal with the influx, leaving us feeling tired and sluggish. However, it is possible to begin the new year on a healthy note by taking a luxury detox break. There are an increasing amount of specialist retreats setting up around the world, and the techniques and emphasis they adopt may vary, but all promise to send you home feeling lighter, healthier and happier. Here are some of my top recommendations for the ultimate way to begin the new year.

For medical advice: Grand Resort Bad Ragaz, Switzerland

The Grand Resort Bad Ragaz located at the base of the Pizol mountain in Switzerland, is revered around the world for its 36.5C healing thermal waters and impressive hydrotherapy suites. People visit from far and wide to find help in treating a range of ailments, from dermatitis to infertility. The resort is also popular with guests recovering from surgery, as there is a top class medical centre here, offering a staggering depth and breadth of expertise.

The spa facilities include a plunge pool, Finnish sauna, and the world's first Swarovski-covered steam room. Their latest detox package, called Peace and Harmony, includes various treatments from an 80-minute singing bowl massage, 60-minute water shiatsu, a yoga class and nutritional guidance. This is a large hotel complex, with 267 rooms, a Michelin-starred restaurant, casino, a classical concert programme, golf and 12 spa suites – yet it somehow manages to retain an air of exclusivity.

www.resortragaz.ch



For tranquility: Ananda Resort, Uttarakhand, India

In the foothills of the Himalayas, in a setting of stunning natural beauty, which has an instantly calming effect, the Ananda Resort successfully combines luxury accommodation with a gentle detox programme. After an initial consultation and body analysis, you will receive a tailor-made set of treatments, which is likely to include yoga classes, hydrotherapy, stone massages and meditation. Your health will be monitored throughout and the expert staff promise that you will leave Ananda with a purified body and mind and a renewed willingness to pursue a healthier lifestyle.

Ananda offers the ultimate way to both shape up and unwind, in heavenly surroundings.

www.anandaspa.com



For weight loss: Red Mountain Resort, Utah, USA

If you're looking to lose those extra pounds gained over Christmas and kick-start a healthier lifestyle, then the Red Mountain Resort has a strong track record of exceptional results from its weight-loss holidays. Set among red rock cliffs and spectacular Utah canyons, you'll not only lose your target weight but also get fit with a personalised health programme of outdoor adventure, personal training and lifestyle workshops. You can choose from over 50 fitness classes, ranging from yoga to kickboxing, and allow your body to recover and rejuvenate with the latest holistic spa treatments. Your day starts with fresh fruit juices and a hike into the Utah countryside. Enjoy the wild beauty of this rather special resort – and as a bonus, return home lighter and healthier.

www.redmountainresort.com

For Ayurvedic treatments: Zen Resort, Bali, Indonesia

Ayurveda is an ancient philosophy, centred on treating mind, body and spirit as one. Zen Resort is a rather special, intimate retreat, surrounded by lush Balinese vegetation and enjoying views out to sea, with lavishly-furnished luxury villas made out of local materials. Zen's Ayurveda and yoga practitioners, fully qualified from the College of Ayurveda in Kerala and with many years of practical experience, will assess your Ayurvedic body type and lifestyle and identify any ailments and imbalances. Based on this evaluation and your constitution, various Ayurvedic therapies and dietary regimes will be advised as you design your individual health and beauty plan.

Ayurveda is increasingly recognised as a complement to modern medical practices to treat and cure the causes and symptoms of poor health such as fatigue, sleeplessness, anxiety, stress, obesity and premature ageing. In addition to the specialist treatments, guests can also enjoy daily sunrise yoga and sunset meditation. Zen by name, zen by nature.

www.zenresortbali.com

For intense detoxification: Verdura Golf & Spa Resort, Sicily, Italy

If you're not too keen on the "softer" sides of detoxing, such as yoga and meditation – and you want visible results and fast – then this could be the place for you. Verdura's surroundings may be luxurious, but the pampering ends there. After non-invasive scientific diagnostic tests to establish the true state of your physiological balance, the in-house experts will design either a 3, 5 or 7-day programme to correct any imbalances. Your treatments will centre on deep tissue and lymph detox using a combination of therapies such as advanced pulsed light lymphatic detoxification, daily infrared saunas, Mesotherapy (facial rejuvenation) and electromagnetic therapy. You will also be on a strict detox diet with advanced detox supplements and exercise.

Whether you choose to stay just 3 days or longer, you'll certainly leave this exclusive Mediterranean retreat feeling ready to tackle the year ahead with renewed energy.

www.roccofortehotels.com



For specific health issues: SHA Wellness Clinic, El Albir, Spain

Proprietor Alfredo Bataller turned to a macrobiotic diet in an attempt to cure his severe stomach complaint. The results were so dramatic that he transformed his family estate into the esteemed SHA Wellness Clinic. Located just a half hour drive from Alicante airport, this modern retreat is now one of the leading detox centres in Europe.

The setting is so enchanting that you could come here simply for a relaxing holiday, but it just so happens to be the place to come to if you need to tackle a specific health problem or lose some weight. Your programme will include medical and nutritional check-ups and consultations, therapies, life coaching, coastal walks or runs and personal training. There is also a Life Learning Centre, where you can undertake a range of therapeutic and useful courses – anything from cookery to martial arts. A complete makeover for mind and body.

www.shawellnessclinic.com

For sleep enhancement: Almyra, Paphos, Cyprus

If you suffer from insomnia or simply feel burned out, then you can enjoy catching up on some deep and blissful sleep on the Mediterranean shoreline of Paphos, at Almyra's 7-day retreat. The programme includes sleep enhancing treatments such as reflexology, oriental head massage and reiki as well as signature baths, yoga classes and 6 Hypnos meals. The Hypnos diet menu features fresh fish, tofu, nuts and seeds that nourish the brain, stimulate the effects of each day's treatment – and thereby induce optimal sleeping patterns.

This stunning hotel, just a short walk from Paphos harbour, offers its visitors wonderful sea views and top class facilities. Non-detoxers can choose from four excellent restaurants on site. It is also family-friendly, with excellent childcare facilities – so if you take your younger guests with you, they will be well looked after, too.

www.thanoshotels.com

For variety: Kamalaya, Koh Samui, Thailand

The multi award-winning Kamalaya on the Thai island of Koh Samui is widely recognised as one of the world's finest spas – and it is easy to see why. Kamalaya's location and service levels are second to none, but what will appeal to anyone on a detox mission is the sheer range of what it can offer. You can pick and choose your own programme, from a combination of traditional detoxing, yoga, stress management, optimal fitness, sleep enhancement, emotional balance and weight loss.

If the idea of visiting Thailand and being deprived of its excellent cuisine is too much to bear – then fear not. At Kamalaya, they don't believe in juice diets, but prefer to present local, organic produce to guests; delicious meals, which will both nourish and cleanse.

With deluxe villas and spectacular sea views completing the package, this is the ideal spot to take time out and make positive lifestyle changes.

www.kamalaya.com



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