



IMAGE COURTESY OF RANCHO LA PUERTA



2017

Whether you're looking for a major body transformation,

# The Year of

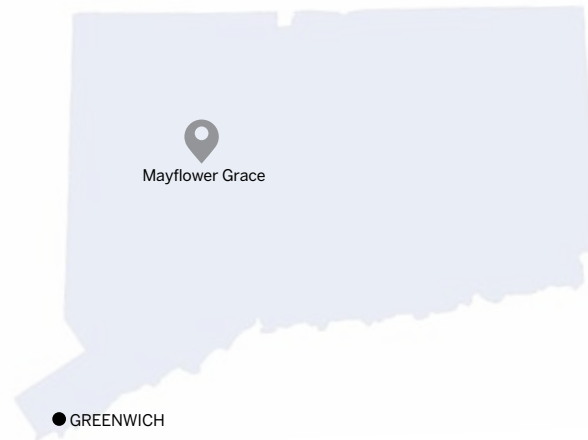
A little health and wellness reboot or a place to quiet your mind

# YOU!

And focus your thoughts, we've got ten spas that nurture body and soul

We can't be the only ones who start each New Year with a heartfelt promise to ourselves that this will be the year we will finally get in shape, eat better, manage our stress or transform our lives. According to statistics, 45 percent of us make resolutions but only 8 percent of us actually keep them. This month we highlight ten destinations that offer the chance at real transformation from the traditional (like weight loss and eating habits) to slightly less tangible (like enlightenment and self-esteem). We know that true transformation takes serious commitment but as they say, the journey of 1,000 miles starts with one step. Here's your chance. **BY KIM-MARIE EVANS**

# CLOSE TO HOME



## ACCOMMODATIONS

There are only thirty rooms and each will leave you feeling like you're visiting royalty. The spacious Grace Suite is filled with antiques and features a fireplace, a bed canopied in silk and your own patio.

## THE SETTING

Mayflower Grace is set in the gorgeous rolling countryside of Washington in Litchfield County. (The fictional town of *Gilmore Girls'* Stars Hollow was based on this picturesque town.) Take the Mayflower Trail for a walk through the forest or enjoy the outdoor pool in summer. The Shakespeare Garden is charming regardless of season or relax by the sun-drenched indoor pool before your spa treatment.

## DON'T-MISS EXPERIENCE Sound Healing

For decades, people have relaxed and meditated to soothing sounds, including recordings of waves lapping, waterfalls and wind chimes. Sound healing, also known as vibrational medicine, offers a spa experience without massage. The treatment is based on ancient Tibetan medicine that uses the sound and vibration of bowls to alter brain wave frequencies and induce a deep meditative and peaceful state. More than just relaxing, sound therapy is also used as a powerful pain reliever.

## RATES

Classic rooms start at \$525 and Grace Suites at \$1,425. All spa services are priced separately.



ALL IMAGES COURTESY OF GRACE HOTELS



## The Lodge at Woodloch

There's no need to fire up the jet for a world-class spa getaway. Both *Condé Nast Traveler* and *Travel + Leisure* have consistently rated The Lodge at Woodloch as one of the Top Destination Spas in the World. Located in the Pocono Mountains, Woodloch is just a two-hour drive away.

## ACCOMMODATIONS

Nature is woven into every inch of this spa, and the rooms are no exception. Each room has a private balcony with a view of either the lake or the rock garden waterfall. "The Lodge at Woodloch provides an escape from the real world while grounding each guest in the nature that surrounds us," explains Robert Baldassari, general manager of The Lodge.

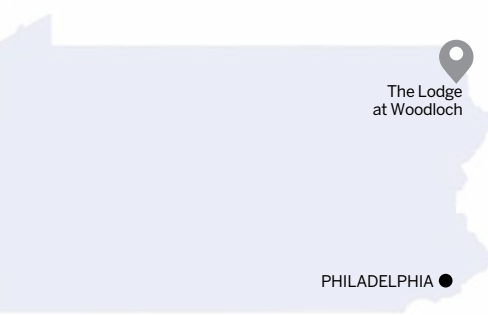
## THE SETTING

The lavish 40,000-square-foot spa is a sanctuary for the senses. Choose from a nap by the fireplace in the Whisper Lounge or a therapeutic soak in the Aqua Garden. For a massage, swim

under the cascading waters of the hydro-massage WaterWalls. Outside, Mother Nature serves up a spa experience with hundreds of acres of pristine woodland gardens, docks and waterscapes.

## DON'T-MISS EXPERIENCE Forest Bathing

Statistics say that we spend 87 percent of our time indoors and 6 percent in an enclosed vehicle. Yet a growing body of research finds that spending time in the great outdoors has some very real medicinal effects. Despite the name, there is no nudity or soap involved. The goal is to simply spend time in nature with no particular goal. It's



not a hike, it's about slowing down and being in nature. It might sound simple, and maybe even hokey, but science backs up forest bathers. Data from field experiments

conducted in twenty-four forests across Japan (where the practice started and is known as *shinrin-yoku*) found that subjects who participated in forest bathing had lower

blood pressure and heart rate and concentrations of cortisol—a stress hormone—when compared with those who walked through a city setting. Other studies have found a boost in immune function from forest bathing. It can't hurt, right?

## RATES

Rooms can be booked with a \$125 per day credit toward spa services included or with services a la carte. Veranda rooms start at \$329 for an a la carte package and \$429 with spa credit included. All rooms include three meals per day. »





## Omega Institute

Our very own editor describes her time at the Omega Institute as not only relaxing, but life-altering. Originally conceived as a “university of life,” the campus in nearby Rhinebeck has played host to world-renowned teachers, philosophers and change-makers including Deepak Chopra, Al Gore and Gloria Steinem.

**ACCOMMODATIONS**  
If you are looking for a luxury spa experience, you will not find it here. Lodging options range from campsites to what are referred to as “deluxe cabins.” Some guests choose to stay off campus for more creature comforts, but those who bunk-in say the simple dwellings fit the entire experience.

**THE SETTING**  
Wander through the many gardens, go for a hike or take a swing in a hammock

on the shores of Long Pond Lake. The sprawling campus is only open from May through October. In the warmer months, guests swim and boat in the tranquil lake that is home to a few endangered species, including the adorable Blanding’s turtle.

**DON'T-MISS EXPERIENCE**  
Life-Changing Learning

Omega is loath to be called a “spa,” but it offers world-class spa services. Guests return year after year because

of the inspiring workshops and access to big name thought leaders. Internationally known Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn will be leading several weeklong workshops in Rhinebeck in 2017. He is a well-known author and the founder of mindfulness-based stress reduction. (MBSR). The practice is becoming a mainstream way to help manage pain, stress and illness. In addition to weeklong conferences, daily workshops, weekend retreats and even online classes are available.

**RATES**  
A deluxe double-room cabin is \$594 per person for a two-night stay, a single cabin is \$692. Guests who choose to stay off campus pay a \$100 daily commuter fee in addition to workshop fees. Room rates include three meals per day and a variety of activities.



IMAGE COURTESY OF CANYON RANCH; CONTRIBUTED



## Canyon Ranch, Lenox

Canyon Ranch started out in 1979 as a Tucson fat farm. It now has resorts with full spa services in Lenox, Massachusetts; Las Vegas; Turkey and aboard the *Queen Mary 2*. You could fly to Turkey or Las Vegas, but everything you are looking for is just a short and scenic drive up the Taconic Parkway.

**ACCOMMODATIONS**  
Many of the rooms at Canyon Ranch, Lenox, are just upside of spartan. At the high end they resemble a mid-priced hotel, but you’re not here for the room.

**THE SETTING**  
At the heart of the Lenox campus is the century-old Bellefontaine Mansion surrounded by the lush Berkshire woodscape. The mansion was meticulously restored and now serves as the centerpiece to the wellness and spa programs. The grounds are an assemblage of rambling gardens with Adirondack

chairs in quiet spaces.

**DON'T-MISS EXPERIENCE**  
Integrative Medicine

Visiting the doctor might not be high on your list of fantasy spa services. But for those suffering from chronic pain, diseases or other problems, a trip to the Canyon Ranch doctor can be life-changing. The integrative approach is personalized and blends Western medicine (they are all board-certified MDs), holistic medicine and Eastern therapies. Unlike a typical doctor’s visit that is rushed and usually results

in a prescription, Canyon Ranch doctors will spend almost a full hour with each patient. They offer non-traditional laboratory testing and recommendations and will follow up with your physician.

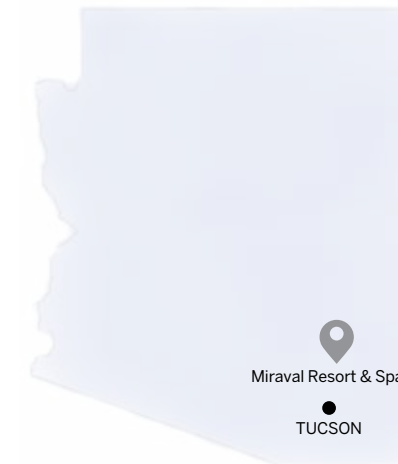
**RATES**  
January through March starts at \$1,650 per person for a two-night stay. There is no single-night option. All meals and a generous spa allowance are included in each package. If you are considering a medical visit, book the Optimal Living package, which includes additional medical appointments.



# DESERT ROAD

## Miraval

Arizona is so chock-full of spas that it’s a wonder anything happens here that doesn’t involve essential oils and a good massage. Miraval has a few things that set it apart, with the most famous being its Equine Experience run by Wyatt Webb, the man many believed to be the real-life inspiration for *The Horse Whisperer* (a claim Wyatt denies).



**ACCOMMODATIONS**  
Lodging options range from cozy rooms to decadent villas that spill out into the desert landscape. Rooms are grouped into six villages and feature sustainably sourced materials.

**THE SETTING**  
Miraval is a desert oasis near Tucson’s Santa Catalina Mountains. Guests have unlimited access to the

hiking, biking and challenge courses on the sprawling landscape. Those looking for more extreme experiences can go rock climbing at nearby Mt. Lemmon (they swear no experience is necessary) or stay close to home and indulge in one of the three swimming pools.

**DON'T-MISS EXPERIENCE**  
It’s Not About the Horse

This experience promises to help you rediscover the life you were meant to lead. As bold of a statement as this might be, devotees of Wyatt tearfully recall the lasting change this therapy has made in their lives. Guests are invited to choose a horse (though you’ll quickly learn the horse chooses you) to work with. Riders take note—you never actually get on the horse. This is about interacting with the animal in order to understand how our internal dialogue and preconceived notions impact our successes and failures in life. Wyatt gently and wisely guides participants through the journey of understanding their patterns of learned behavior. Daily classes as well as four-day workshops are offered.

**RATES**  
Rooms start at \$525 and include \$175 in spa credits and all meals; rates for a villa start at \$2,500 per night. »



ALL IMAGES COURTESY OF MIRAVAL ARIZONA RESORT & SPA



## Mii amo

Mii amo is a haven within the spectacular luxury resort Enchantment, with only sixteen guest rooms and suites bordered by the red rock canyons for which Sedona is so famous. This spa can truly call itself a retreat: It's the kind of place where people are urged to write down their worries and discard them, literally and symbolically, in a wicker basket. (The staff promises they burn them.)

### ACCOMMODATIONS

Lodging ranges from the fabulous to the sublime. Every casita has its own outdoor patio and the Mii amo Luxury Suite has its own massage suite.

### THE SETTING

The location is splendid both physically and spiritually. Inspiration for the spa came from the stark beauty of the surrounding Boynton Canyon and the rich history of the local Native American tribes and their traditions.

### DON'T-MISS EXPERIENCE Inner Quest

Reflective of Native American ceremony and ritual, this treatment utilizes elements sacred to Native Americans and was developed by tribal elders for the

resort. Therapists are trained specifically for this treatment and blessed by the elders. The treatment is a combination of ritual and guided meditation. During the treatment you are wrapped in the Circle of Life blanket, which is used to create the warmth of a sweat lodge. The therapist will burn sweet grass to cleanse the room while leading you

through deep guided meditation.

### RATES

A three-night stay starts at about \$1,200 per night for a standard room. Rooms can only be booked for three-, four- or seven-night stays. Meals, two spa treatments per day and even a robe (yes, to take home) are included.



ALL IMAGES COURTESY OF MIIAMO, ENCHANTMENTGROUP.COM



## Cal a Vie

Cal a Vie is one of the poshest spas in this roundup. Not surprisingly, it's a celeb favorite. Here you'll rub elbows with the likes of Natalie Portman, Julia Roberts and Oprah Winfrey during yoga class. The heady mix of the lush surroundings, programs that are entirely tailored to you and four-times-a-day maid service make Cal a Vie a hidden gem—a really fancy hidden gem.

### ACCOMMODATIONS

There are only thirty-two villas on the property and each is a retreat in and of itself. After a day of hiking and exercise, collapse into a memory foam bed dressed in Frette linens. Enjoy the view of lavender coated hills from your private sundeck. A private villa is

included in every spa package; shared accommodations can be requested if you want to share with your bestie.

### THE SETTING

Think of an elegantly rustic Mediterranean resort full of antiques in a fairy tale setting just north of San Diego. Now add a



400-year-old candlelit chapel, lavender drenched hills and a classic orangery, and Cal a Vie is as much a dream as it is a destination. Did we mention the 5-to-1 guest to staff ratio?

### DON'T-MISS EXPERIENCE Personal Growth

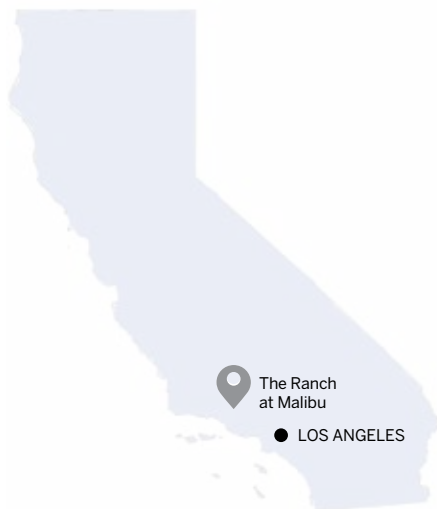
For Old Greenwich's Katrina Bischoff, the life-altering aspect of Cal a Vie wasn't a massage or nature therapy, but simply the daily hike that every guest is encouraged to take. "The first day it's only a mile, by the end of the week

you are hiking five miles, sometimes so straight up that you can touch the ground in front of you." She left the spa with a changed perspective about herself and her abilities. Another activity that has stayed with Katrina years later—the midnight yoga class she took in the candlelit chapel.

### RATES

The smallest package is a three-night stay that includes meals, room and two spa treatments for \$4,275 per person. And now we know why it's a celeb favorite. »

CALIFORNIA  
DREAMIN'



## The Ranch at Malibu

Looking for a results-oriented, no-messing-around spa experience? The Ranch is for you. Whether you want to lose weight, shed inches or just get in shape, this is the place. The program is “no options,” meaning you don’t choose between classes, you are given a schedule for the week (you can’t come for less than a week). The Ranch’s mantra? “Health is the ultimate luxury.”



**ACCOMMODATIONS**  
The program is limited to sixteen guests at any given time. Each guest enjoys one of the private cottages, which are described as “rustically simple.” And it’s worth noting that you won’t

find a Nespresso machine—caffeine, refined sugar and alcohol are all verboten here. A key component of the program is serious detox.

**THE SETTING**  
Set on an historic working ranch three miles above the Pacific Ocean, The Ranch at Malibu spans 200 acres in the Santa Monica Mountains. The sprawling grounds are designed to be rustic, yet refined and feature an open-air kitchen, certified organic garden, pool, jacuzzi and a massage “village.” It’s designed to be a sequestered environment with no cell service and limited Wi-Fi.



**DON'T-MISS EXPERIENCE**  
A New You

Guests visit The Ranch for physical transformation and most achieve it. Women and men routinely lose 3 to 6 percent of their body weight during the seven-day program. Days are tightly scheduled, starting with gentle Tibetan chimes waking you up at 5:30 a.m. Stretching and breakfast are followed by a four and a half hour hike. The menu is vegan, yet delicious, and designed to help

guests lose weight. The program is described as a luxury boot camp, emphasis on boot camp.

**RATES**  
From January to June the weekly rate is \$7,200 and July to December is \$6,800. All meals are, of course, included.

ALL IMAGES COURTESY OF THE RANCH AT MALIBU



INTERNATIONAL

## Rancho La Puerta

Rancho La Puerta is the oldest destination spa in North America, changing lives since 1940. Though it’s technically in Mexico, it’s really just three miles across the border in sunny Tecate (visitors fly into San Diego airport). Return guests cite the ranch’s soul and its ninety-four-year-old founder, who is likely its most authentic advertisement, as the driving force behind their passion for this charming old-school resort.

**ACCOMMODATIONS**  
There are eighty-six storybook casitas, and no two are the same. They are all decorated with handmade tile, Mexican folk art and colorful weavings. Some can accommodate three guests and all open onto gardens and large sun-filled patios.

**THE SETTING**  
In addition to the Mediterranean-style gardens, olive groves, ponds and fountains, Rancho La Puerta boasts the most extensive on-site hiking program of any spa, anywhere, with over twenty-five miles of trails.

**DON'T-MISS EXPERIENCE**  
The Kitchen That Sings

La Cocina Que Canta is the heart of the organic farm and the



place where lasting change happens. If you’ve always wanted to change the way you eat but didn’t know how, this is the place to learn. They’ve been growing organic food and serving up an almost vegetarian diet since long before it was trendy.

**RATES**  
Reservations are restricted to one-week packages; prices start at \$4,050 for a single and \$3,550 for a double, per person. All meals are included; spa services and cooking classes are à la carte. »





## Tabacon

Tabacon is set in the lush rainforest on the west side of Costa Rica's Arenal Volcano. The hotel and spa at Tabacon is not a traditional destination spa but with eighteen natural hot tubs, we think they deserve representation.

### ACCOMMODATIONS

All of the over 100 modern rooms have views of the surrounding rainforest. Many feature tubs and showers fed by the volcanic hot springs. Rooms can be

booked for just one night and children are welcome (children not allowed at the spa or Shangri-La gardens).

### THE SETTING

A river fed by natural hot springs winds

through the massive spa property, which is just a short distance from the hotel. In addition to the tranquil pools and cascading waterfalls, there is a thermal waterslide courtesy of Mother

Nature. At the spa, treatments are rendered in open-air bungalows.

### DON'T-MISS EXPERIENCE Hot Springs

The healing powers of hot springs have been used for thousands of years; they contain a variety of minerals, including calcium and sodium bicarbonate. The water at Tabacon is 97 percent rainwater and 3 percent magma (the fluid that forms lava). When you bathe in it, your skin soaks in the minerals, which promote better sleep and overall health. Not to mention it feels amazing.

### RATES

Rooms start at \$380 per night. Spa services are priced separately; day passes for Thermal Spas are available for nonguests.



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