



Time for action

James Franco stars in Danny Boyle's 127 Hours

SECOND LIFE

The career changers who followed their dream

AT ONE WITH NATURE

How man has survived in the wildest of places

FOOD & HOME

Rose Prince's recipes for January; a warm welcome in an old fire station

Four of the best detox retreats in Europe, by Francesca Syz

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CASTEL MONASTERO TUSCANY Set within an 11th-century hamlet 15 miles from Siena, Castel Monastero is an elegant retreat overlooking Chianti vineyards. Highlights include a Gordon Ramsay restaurant and the spa, housed in a farmhouse. Last spring it launched a therapeutic wellness programme designed by Dr Mosaraf Ali, the director of the Integrated Medical Centre in London, focusing on weight loss, detox and rejuvenation. The programme starts and finishes with a consultation, and combines nutrition and detoxification with daily yoga, massage, a personalised dietary programme by Gordon Ramsay (delicious), and the consumption of detoxifying powder to cleanse the body with copious quantities of fasting tea (distinctly un-delicious). Key treatments include the painful toxin-eliminating Marma massage, which focuses on the neck, and the cellulite-busting Trattamento Lipolitico mud wrap. Guests float home with notably higher energy levels, lower stress levels and substantially improved quality of sleep.

The details Three nights B&B, return flights and transfers plus Dr Ali's three-day detox and slimming programme costs from £2,275 pp; seven nights from £3,930 (0800-294 9320; classic-collection.co.uk).



LONGEVITY WELLNESS RESORT ALGARVE In a nature reserve by the quiet spa town of Caldas de Monchique, the 195-suite Longevity Wellness Resort, Portugal's first anti-ageing medical spa, opened last July. In partnership with La Clinique de Paris, founded by Dr Claude Chauchard, one of the world's leading specialists in preventive medicine and ageing management, the spa offers a range of holistic personalised wellness programmes, lasting from three days to one month. There is a four-day Longevity Executive Recharge, an eight-day Detox and Stress Management package and Dr Chauchard's 15-day Fast Slimming and Detox programme. All include full medical consultation, nutrition plans and related therapies and treatments such as the zingy Body Scrub with Sea Salts and Citrus Zest. A bold, modern concrete-and-glass structure, the resort adheres to eco-friendly principles, with grass roofs and solar panels. Its suites are more like apartments – each has a kitchenette with Smeg and Bosch appliances and living and dining areas. The restaurant, by Olivier da Costa, delivers excellent 'healthy gourmet cuisine'. **The details** Four-day Longevity Executive Recharge packages from £945 pp (020-8858 5877; beautifulbreak.com).

SHA WELLNESS CLINIC ALBIR, SPAIN Inspired by the owner Alfredo Bataller Parietti's experience of using macrobiotic principles to tackle and recover from a disease he had suffered since childhood, SHA Wellness Clinic fuses ancient Oriental disciplines with Western techniques. Stays combine a personalised programme of a modern macrobiotic diet (expect organic, locally sourced Mediterranean and Japanese fusion cuisine) with world-leading alternative health practices, natural therapies and relaxation. The seven-night, full-board Detox Holiday includes a medical check-up at the beginning and end, clinical analysis, consultation with a personal coach, shiatsu and other massage, colonic hydrotherapy, acupuncture, daily yoga, t'ai chi, cooking demonstrations, outdoor activities and a personalised post-treatment health plan plus two months of follow-up coaching. Other wellbeing-enhancing factors include the clinic's fresh, contemporary design and its setting, within a mild microclimate in the Sierra Helada National Park overlooking the Mediterranean. **The details** The SHA Wellness Clinic Detox Holiday costs from £1,880 pp, including return flights and transfers (0845-602 6202; wellbeingescapes.co.uk).



YEOTOWN RADIANT HEALTH RETREAT DEVON Yeotown opened last spring on 50 acres of organic farmland in the heart of north Devon. It has a fleet of experts in fitness, nutrition and yoga, and encourages guests to reconnect with nature by offering numerous exhilarating outdoor activities. Its signature programme, an intensive four- or seven-day detox called the Yeotox, focuses on helping you become healthier, lighter, happier and more vibrant, and involves a combination of private consultations with expert nutritionists (the locally sourced food is healthy and toxin-clearing and you will learn how to make it at home) and specialised massages, invigorating coastal hiking, cycling, sea kayaking, outdoor cross training, t'ai chi, meditation and yoga. Unlike many British health retreats, Yeotown is incredibly stylish. While fresh, contemporary bedrooms are situated in a converted threshing barn, meals are taken around a 19th-century oak farmhouse table in an A-framed dining-room within the main farmhouse. There is also a brilliantly situated meditation platform, down by the river's edge. **The details** The four-day Yeotox costs from £1,308 pp (01271-328581; yeotown.com). **Next week: ski-in, ski-out hotels**