



# Condé Nast Traveller

THE WORLD MADE LOCAL

SEPTEMBER 2022 £4.99

THE FOOD SPECIAL

## Delicious trips

*Ripe for the picking*



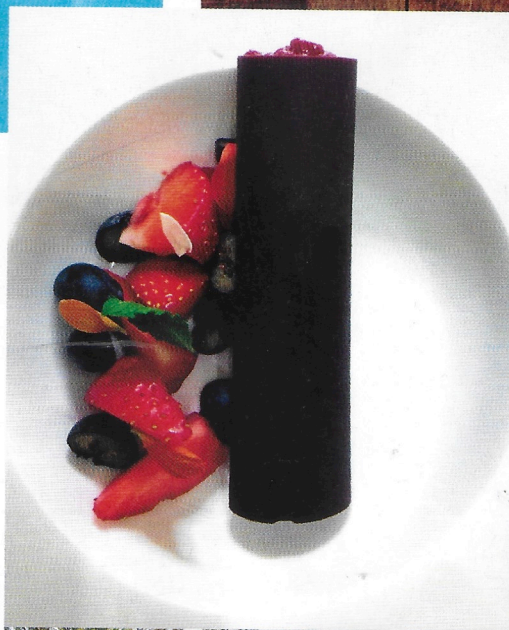
*Plus*

MELBOURNE'S THRILLING  
NEW RESTAURANT SCENE  
WHERE TO STAY WHILE  
BAR-HOPPING IN SAN SEBASTIAN

A FRESH TAKE ON  
TRADITION IN LADAKH  
COMBING THE DEVON COAST  
FOR THE BEST SEAFOOD

MEET THE GLOBAL PIONEERS  
CHANGING HOW WE EAT  
FROM ACCRA TO ALENTEJO





*Clockwise from top left:  
Palazzo Fuggi pool;  
brown rice with  
mushrooms, and  
entrance to MasQi;  
tiles, and chocolate roll  
with berries at Palazzo  
Fuggi. Opposite,  
clockwise from top left:  
clean eating; farmhouse,  
and restaurant, MasQi*







HEALTH FIX

## — The Food Special —

# ALL WELL AND GOOD

DAISY FINER SURVEYS THE SPA SCENE  
TO DISCOVER THE LATEST IN THE WORLD  
OF SUPER-OPTIMISED NUTRITION

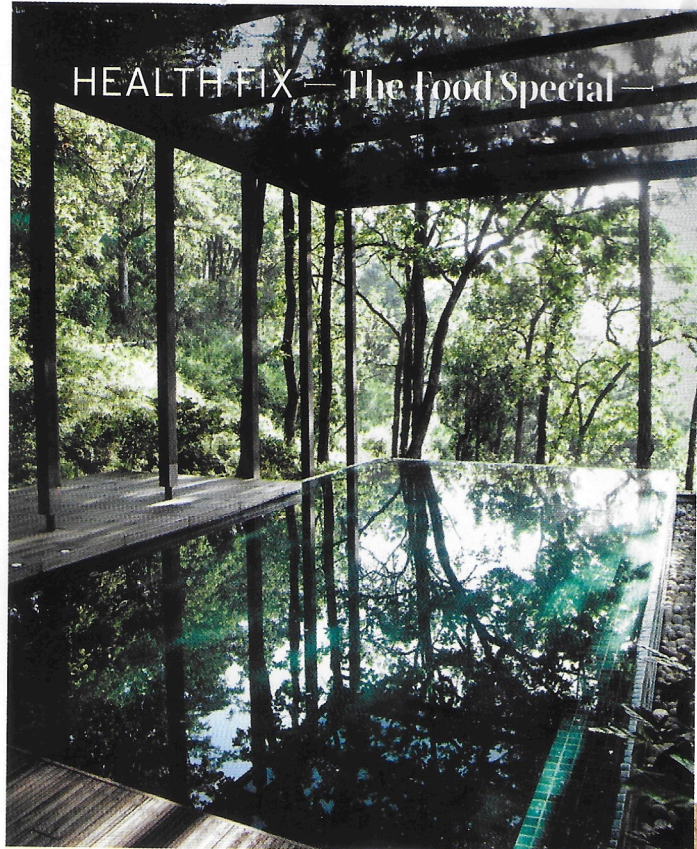
“LET FOOD BE THY MEDICINE and medicine be thy food.” So said Hippocrates – and since ancient times, humans have drawn on nature’s bounty not just for sustenance but also for healing. Ayurveda, India’s millennia-old wellness system, is based on the belief that everything in nature has a medicinal value. As I learnt at Ananda in the Himalayas, even humble ingredients such as nutmeg can be stirred into warm milk to aid sleep, or mixed with saffron to lift the spirits.

Destination spas have long put nutrition at the heart of their ethos. When Edmond and Deborah Szekely opened the world’s very first such retreat, Mexico’s Rancho La Puerta in 1940, it offered vegetarian meals under starry skies, homemade germinated wheat crackers and juicing – and others have followed suit ever since. After all, what’s the point of a lymphatic massage if it’s followed by a can of Pringles?

What we are witnessing now is a collective awakening around what good food really means today: local, seasonal and sustainable; good for us, but more importantly good for the planet. As Satish Kumar, founder of Devon’s pioneering ecology-focused Schumacher College, says, “an eco-ecology rather than an ego-ecology”. This year, Deborah Szekely celebrated her hundredth birthday. Maybe this has something to do with The Ranch’s ever-evolving slow-food manifesto – now with organic gardens, a cookery school, a new four-week Soil-to-Table residential programme – and the most divine ricotta cheesecake, velvety with berries and lavender.







From top: pool at Ananda in the Himalayas; hummus toasts at MasQi; watermelon pulp

➤ I believe adopting a more plant-based, planet-friendly diet is not just a flash-in-the-pan trend, but something that will continually gain ground. Look to the example of holistic hideaway Preidlhof in Italy's South Tyrol province, where kitchen and restaurant leftovers are given to local farms to be fed to their pigs. Or The Alpina Gstaad, home to a Six Senses spa, 350,000 biodiversity-supporting bees and a plastic-free kitchen, where chef Martin Göschel uses leftover bread to make pizza and pasta. "I now have many young employees in my team and am caught up in the next-generation idea of taking care of our environment," he explains. He's also revised the vegetarian menu and ensures all ingredients are sourced within 25 miles of the hotel.

Provenance is key not just to an ingredient's carbon footprint, but to how it can make us feel. That's why Sonia Ferrer is so particular about where she sources ingredients for her boutique macrobiotic hotel, MasQi The Energy House in Sierra de Mariola (expect a more intimate, earthier experience than at Spain's other macrobiotic player, SHA Wellness Clinic). "We have to understand that when someone is centred and living in peace, it depends an enormous amount on what they're

eating," she says. "Food that has been sitting in a fridge for too long or is overly processed is energetically dead." MasQi's brownies are made from sweet potatoes and its pomegranates are harvested biodynamically; the farmer optimises their energy by placing crystals among the crop and drumming, shaman-style, before picking them in alignment with the moon's phases. Meanwhile, at Long Island's Shou Sugi Ban House, Noma co-founder Mads Refslund serves up super-powered biodynamic produce such as fermented chickpeas, courgette flatbreads and house-made silken tofu – the ideal accompaniment to tea meditations and personalised consultations on the best foods for skin health.

Savvy hotels, not just dedicated wellbeing destinations, are also increasingly looking to leading meat-free pioneers. The So Wild restaurant at Soneva Jani in the Maldives is the brainchild of raw-food game changer Diana von Cranach, author of *Rawfully Good*, and for years the queen of Bali's clean-eating food scene. Ninety per cent of its food is picked from the resort gardens. Also in the Maldives, the plant-based Botanica restaurant at One&Only Reethi Rah is curated by American chef Matthew Kenney, who sees himself as "crafting the future of food". Even in the world of wellbeing some star spas stand out. In Thailand, Absolute Sanctuary in Koh Samui is as legendary for its superfood-rich juices as it is for its daily rota of yoga and reflexology (and at a more accessible price than the country's beloved grandes dames such as Kamalaya and Chiva-Som).

It's not just in Asia that good things are brewing. The purification temples of Europe are raising their game too. When I

## MY TROUT WITH BEETROOT AND HORSERADISH DIP REMINDED ME OF THE WOLSELEY - EXCEPT IT WAS PRECEDED BY EPSOM SALTS

recently visited Austria's The Original FX Mayr, my breakfast of fresh trout with beetroot and horseradish dip reminded me of The Wolseley – except it was preceded an hour before by Epsom salts. Long gone are the endless days of spelt bread rolls.

Science is increasingly part of the equation. At Italy's Palazzo Fuggi, chef Heinz Beck (of three-Michelin-starred La Pergola in Rome) has masterminded the creation of more than a thousand dishes, every single one approved by top medics to ensure balanced perfection. No wonder The Ranch Malibu – where nutrient-dense meals power guests through its hardcore fitness weeks – has chosen Fuggi as the base for its first European outpost. Meanwhile, at Switzerland's stellar new flagship Chenot Palace Weggis, a fast-working programme of exquisite three-course lunches and dinners still leads to astonishingly reduced waistlines, and can also include the add-on Chenot Molecular Lab blood test, which assesses gene activity. Results are honed into precisely recommended lifestyle changes centred on food choices.

Personalised "diagnostic" eating is on the rise, from 3GL metabolic testing at Euphoria Retreat in the Peloponnese to Daios Cove in Crete, where PNOE biometrics tests will assess your breath for 12 different biomarkers before recommending optimum foods. The future tastes bespoke. Out with punishing regimes and fad diets, in with modernised foodie cleansing escapes that marry science with nature. It's no wonder the current spa scene tastes so satisfying. **T**

*Healing Holidays offers trips to leading spas worldwide, including Chiva-Som, Palazzo Fuggi and Euphoria Retreat; [healingholidays.com](http://healingholidays.com)*