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## SPY SOCIETY

ON THE CASE WITH  
LASHANA LYNCH

## DYNASTY DARLINGS

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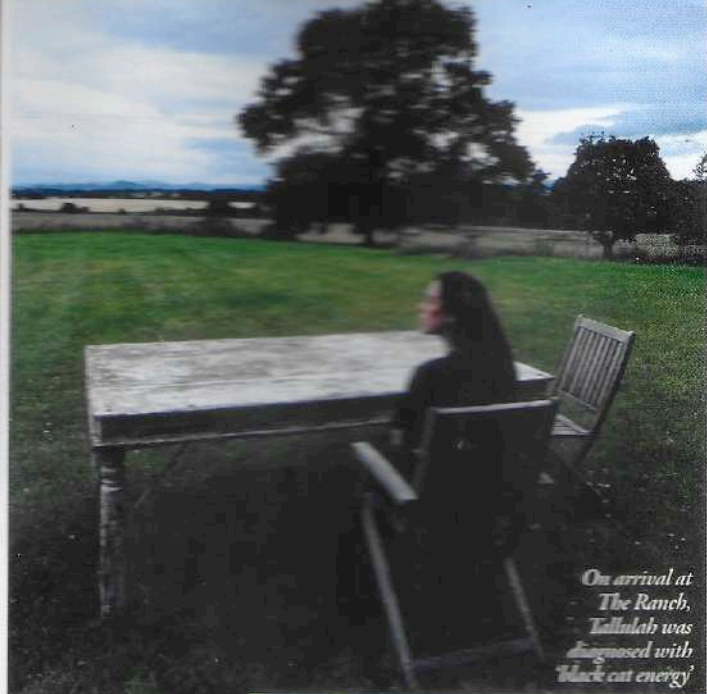


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## *Spa Guide 2024*

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On arrival at The Ranch, Tallulah was diagnosed with 'black cat energy'!

# Ranch out

The celebrity favourite in Malibu has now hit upstate New York. Does The Ranch Hudson Valley measure up?

By TALLULAH HARLECH

**THE RANCH HAS LANDED** in upstate New York. Sprawled across 200 forested acres, its scene is set by a grand hunting lodge-style manor house built in 1902 by JP Morgan for his daughter as a wedding present when she married the great-grandson of US founding father Alexander Hamilton. Just an hour's drive from NYC and you're in its woods, next to huge lakes.

The success of the original The Ranch Malibu – described as more lo-fi than this upscale new operation – has created a serious demand for intensive and immersive 'resets' in nature. When I arrived, I was invited to recalibrate to 'Ranch Time', and within three hours I'd been told I had 'black cat energy', or BCE. I had to Google this term just to check, but it seems accurate: emotional sensitivity, introspection and an aversion to conformity.

A detailed packing list had arrived prior to my stay, along with guidance on how to eat, sleep and exercise in the lead-up. The majority of my life is about wellness, so the suggestions were how I already lived. Aside from one thing: the CamelBak water-carrier. Not on-brand. I grew up on the border of Wales, so I am used to walking for hours across tricky

terrain, and my conclusion was: I don't need this. But it turned out to be a necessary requirement, even more than walking boots – some guests hiked in trainers – and while I naturally had my On boots, I had to borrow a staffer's CamelBak.

Mornings here begin at 5.30am, when you are awoken by singing chimes outside your bedroom. Shortly after, everyone meets in the ballroom – its enormous fireplace ablaze – for a stretch as the mist rolls across the grounds, followed by breakfast with great quantities of coffee. After this, in-house caffeine is swapped for herbal teas and a turmeric/ginger homebrew. But hikes are The Ranch's *raison d'être*: the nature, the time to yourself.

Some walk together, others pace alone. I did both. Boringly competitive and controlling, I was at the front every day – though I'm not sure I could have sustained that pace for a seven-day stretch, as is the norm in Malibu. (I was only in for the four-day experience.) The treks were challenging, with rocks,

streams and inclines; a moment to catch Manhattan's skyline peeking out over the forest-top, devour a homemade nut bar and then march on.

Back at The Ranch, afternoons are spent enjoying your daily full-body massage and soaking in the bath, enhanced by Epsom salts and fresh herbs snatched from the downstairs Mud Room. (The Ranch also offers IV therapy, colon hydrotherapy and acupuncture.) Dinner is eaten at a long communal table after a moment of silent gratitude. The vibe is organic gourmet-vegan, limited to 1,400 calories a day, and while I'm a rice-salad-broth person, the creative takes on pizza and lasagne were loved by the Americans.

By the end of the trip, I was pleasantly tired and ready to go back to the city – in a good way. I'd slept well; I'd loved the hiking; and the staff had been unbelievably kind. Upstate is very beautiful and I could actually see the experience being enjoyable with a partner, even romantic in a way. But boy, did I need some rice and salad. □

A four-night programme from £2,357, full board, ([theranchlife.com](http://theranchlife.com)).



Daily hikes in the surrounding forest are The Ranch's *raison d'être*.



Afternoon activities: a fitness class and full-body massage

## TALLULAH'S ESSENTIALS



Obsidian Face Roller, £245, SUZANNE KAUFMANN



Hero top, £275, SYLVA



Magnetic 70 Eau de Parfum, £135 for 50ml, VYRAO



Rested capsules, £60, DIOME



Skipping rope, £196, SIENNA



Cloudwander Waterproof Hiking Shoes, £170, ON