

TOWN & COUNTRY



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THE O.G. ISSUE

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LOOKING GLASS

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Group dining in a former orangery at the Ranch Hudson Valley.

Coffee, Tea, Almonds, ME?

A famed fancy-but-tough fitness retreat opens in the Hudson Valley. The long hikes are intact—but something new on the menu will keep you buzzing. BY APRIL LONG

ELLEN MCDEMNITT (THE RANCH HUDSON VALLEY)

The stories are legendary. Fueled by exactly seven raw almonds, you will hike—rigorously, unrelentingly—for four hours every day. You will be awakened at 5:30 a.m., and you will not be permitted so much as a drop of caffeine. At dinner you will be presented with a microscopic portion of a transcendently delicious vegetable, but to ask for seconds would be to risk a withering stink eye. And yet, you will love every minute of it.

Since opening in 2010, luxury health retreat the Ranch Malibu has been a mecca for well-off wellness seekers eager to lace on their Moncler Trailgrip sneakers and pony up roughly \$9,000 for its signature seven-day program of exquisite torture and existential renewal. Alumni rave about the results—pounds lost, energy restored, perspective gained—and more than half of those who check in once return to do it all over again. Transformation, evidently, can be addictive.

This spring, the much anticipated opening of the Ranch Hudson Valley will enable East Coasters to gain what's known as "the Ranch glow" without having to hop on a plane. Situated on a historic lakefront estate on 200 acres of rolling, forested hills less than an hour from Manhattan, the new outpost will remain true to the OG's dedicated detox philosophy, but with a few crucial changes. For a start, briefer sojourns—there will be three-night and four-night options—will appeal to make-it-snappy New Yorkers, and for those who shudder at the thought of a four-hour wilderness trek, there will be a kinder two-hour alternative.

"I don't want to say we're making the program softer, but you can definitely individualize it more," says Sue Glasscock, co-founder, with her husband Alex, of the Ranch Malibu. "We want to open the funnel. We don't want it to sound so rigorous or restrictive that it prevents people from coming." What will stay the same: afternoon exercise classes, daily deep tissue massages (who would argue?), and communal dining. "The group dynamic," Alex says, "is a superunique thing that we do. It's part of the magic."

One look at the Ranch Hudson Valley's dining room, a light-flooded showstopper in a former orangery with windows overlooking the lake, and you won't argue with that, either. In fact, guests may find even the four-day retreat too short, what with such a *Saltburn*-esque manse at which to gawp. Built in 1902 by J.P. Morgan as a wedding gift for his daughter when she married Alexander Hamilton's great-grandson, the house is a handsome behemoth of locally quarried stone,



Does your gym look like this? Fitness classes are held in the Great Room.

BEST CASE SCENARIO

Now that you don't have to smuggle coffee, you'll have more space to pack these.



« THE RANCH GRAPEFRUIT SAGE BODY SCRUB (\$62), THERANCHMALIBU.COM

» ELTA MD UV AOX EYE BROAD SPECTRUM SUNSCREEN (\$50), ELTAMD.COM



» VACATION CHARDONNAY LIP OIL SPF 30 (\$16), VACATION.INC

» LANCER EYES WIDE OPEN HYDROGEL PATCHES (\$50), LANCER.SKINCARE.COM



with grand staircases, reading nooks, and a Norman-style fireplace. The decor was overseen by New York designer Steven Gambrel, and the 25 guestrooms—each named after a Ranch staff member's pet—are plush, homey, neutral-toned sanctuaries.

The Glasscocks were tipped off about the property by their friend Michael Bruno, founder of 1stDibs and owner of the nearby Valley Rock Inn. Since the 1940s it had been in the hands of Ukrainian nuns, who painted the interiors a riot of bright colors but left the architectural features untouched. (The sale, Alex says, had to be approved by the Vatican.) Once the paint was stripped, only one major addition was made: a vast solarium complete with indoor swimming pool, cold plunge, infrared sauna, and treatment rooms for massages, colonics, cryotherapy, and energy healing. On the grounds, an original Gilded Age pool has been restored, and a large organic garden has been planted so as much of the menu as possible can be produced on-site.

While the famous dietary restrictions remain in place—goodbye sugar, gluten, meat, dairy, booze, etc. (although Sue stresses that "you *can* ask for seconds!")—there is one headline-making concession: Both locations of the Ranch now allow—whisper it—coffee. "In the same way that we've adapted to the fact that people won't leave their rooms without their phones, we're introducing a healthy, organic caffeine option," Alex says. "It's an evolution."

"Our alumni have started to confess," Sue says. "Turns out they've been packing coffee-makers and sneaking it in all these years! They're like, 'Thank you.'" FROM \$3,275 FOR 3 NIGHTS (PER PERSON, DOUBLE OCCUPANCY), THERANCHHUDSONVALLEY.COM