

ULTRATRAVEL

OUT OF THIS WORLD

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BEST FOR A COMPLETE BODY OVERHAUL The Ranch Malibu, Malibu

By Casey Gillespie

At the heart of the wellness lifestyle is the desire to reconnect with our natural surroundings, give up our vices and improve our eating habits. While many health retreats offer those things, few are settled in such an awe-inspiring setting as The Ranch Malibu, nestled three miles above the Pacific Ocean in the bucolic Santa Monica Mountains.

All-inclusive and health-focused, programmes provide the opportunity for a complete reboot and last four, seven or 10 days. The focus is on building physical robustness, reaping the benefits of optimal nutrition and reconnecting with nature, which has been shown to strengthen the immune system, lower stress and decrease inflammation in the body.

Guests undergo an immersive mind-and-body transformation, which includes eight hours of fitness activities daily. Expect a four-hour hike each morning, followed by an afternoon nap, various group exercise classes and yoga. A daily massage is also part of the programme.

The Ranch's cuisine is nothing less than five-star. They provide a 1,400-calorie organic, vegan diet, prepared from ingredients grown in their own garden. Dishes might include a warm-spinach and courgette lasagne, or a gluten-free pizza topped with fresh garden vegetables.

While the experience may sound intense, a bootcamp-style retreat it is not. Morning hikes often include activities such as lunch on the beach or silent meditation sessions. Cooking classes and tours of the organic garden are also on the agenda. Cryotherapy (used by athletes for muscle recovery but also touted for its fat-burning and metabolism-revving effects) is the latest innovative treatment on offer.

All-inclusive programmes from \$7,200 (£5,400); theranchmalibu.com