



• **PLUS**
Awards shows
return.
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A BEACHSIDE RETREAT /// SOCIAL CLUB GYMS /// PROSTHETICS IN CINEMA

TAKE A HIKE
Four-hour treks are
the centerpiece of
The Ranch program.



WELLNESS

BRANCHING OUT

A TYPE-A WOMAN GIVES UP COFFEE, ALCOHOL AND SUGAR, AND
EMBARKS ON SIX DAYS OF STRENUOUS EXERCISE AT THE RANCH MALIBU

BY MICHELE MCPHEE

COURTESY RANCH MALIBU; EMMY: VALERIE MACON/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES





WORK IT OUT

THESE NEW PRIVATE GYMS FEEL MORE LIKE SOCIAL CLUBS
BY MERLE GINSBERG

● L.A.'S PRIVATE members clubs are growing healthier by the minute. Now, gyms are getting a face-lift — and body lift — with novel hybrids of workout spaces and fancy clublike social and wellness experiences.

Germany-based RSG Group (behind Gold's Gym) opened the luxuriously large Heimat, with a spa-like Zen vibe, on La Brea and Sycamore in 2022. The group introduced locations of John Reed Fitness (us.johnreed.fitness) in DTLA in 2021 and Santa Monica last year — but its new WeHo locale is a gym for the nightclub set. “West Hollywood’s a sexy city,” says chief operating officer Colin Thomas. “And John Reed’s a sexy party — dance music pumping all the time. Forget iPods; we have a DJ at night. It gets louder.” The spacious, impeccably designed club (\$150 per month) features snakeskin-print fabric-covered walls, oversize velvet throne lobby chairs and all-new weights and resistance machines.

Venice wellness club Hume (hume.la), coming this month, offers three floors for spa, yoga, Pilates, mat and meditation classes (unlimited for \$400 a month), plus recovery therapies, a rooftop terrace, a café, co-working space and a half-floor of gym equipment. “This is the new Venice,” says a Hume rep. ■

BETTER DAYS

1. The scenic courtyard garden at The Ranch.
2. Daily massages ease tired muscles after hikes.
3. Plant-based meals by head chef Meredith Haaz are served in the main house and kitchen.
4. A 6 a.m. stretch at The Barn.



HE RANCH MALIBU, a wellness retreat secreted high in the hills above the Pacific Ocean, promises a transforma-

tive experience: a high-end detox from chemically altered foods and the toxicity of daily life.

For this Type-A woman who carries two phones — who has never lost what my late mother lovingly referred to as my “baby fat,” and what my sisters call being “fluffy” — six days at this California spa that has become the go-to place for Hollywood A-listers, corporate titans and brides-to-be to get in shape offers a challenge.

Can I shut off my phones, stop doom-scrolling, ignore work and spend most of the day doing physical exercise? Did I mention this detox offers no coffee, wine, sugar or pasta? Don't they know I'm half Italian?

But I have never been one to back down from a challenge. So on a beautiful Sunday in late October — a windows-down kind of Malibu day — I hit the Pacific Coast Highway, turn right onto a hill and climb up a narrow, winding road surrounded by the Santa Monica Mountains. I also miss my turn into The Ranch, have to pull a U-ey in a narrow driveway ... and smash up my borrowed Crown Vic on a rock wall.

Arriving stressed and jacked up on the double espresso I drank on the way, I wonder: Will I survive six days as a blissful vegan? I am about to find out.

DAY 1

A temple bell rings at 5:30 a.m. The high-end bedding is cozy as hell, but I leap up and head in the dark to The Barn (think Indian ashram meets Equinox), to stretch and set an intention for the day. Mine: *I can do this.*

I note there are no fellow fluffy people. Most look like elite athletes. They are “alumni,” who check into The Ranch multiple times a year. They are terrifying.

After breakfast, we are off for our first four-hour hike.

Italians have a joke about how few marriages end in divorce in the old country. Instead, there are a lot of “hiking accidents,” aka *Divorzio all'italiana*. I want to Italian divorce myself off a cliff an hour into this hike. My back hurts, my head hurts and my feelings are hurt as everyone else scrambles past me on the path.

I collapse into bed that night knowing the temple bell will be ringing before dawn once again.

DAY 2

I smuggle turmeric ginger tea into my room to trick my coffee addiction. It helps.

1-4: COURTESY RANCH MALIBU
GYMS: COURTESY JOHN REED FITNESS; HUME

Today I'm ready as I fill the bladder of my backpack, remembering the reminder that crackled over the walkie-talkie: *Water. Water. Water.*

When we arrive at Leo Carrillo — the beach where Sandy famously said goodbye to Danny in *Grease* — I am fueled by decaf tea and misty air as we climb. There are no thoughts of hurling myself off a cliff. I feel limber, lighter.

Remember that smuggled tea? Well ... let's just say I now need a new laptop.

Karma?

DAY 3

By now, I've gotten to know some of the other 18 guests in the group: My new Irish friend, Frances. Married big-shot CEOs. A restaurant owner. They are not so terrifying after all.

It dawns on me that once your body starts feeling good, it's addictive.

DAY 4

The best hike of the week is an ocean-side trek uphill through meadows filled with wildflowers, the smell of maple syrup wafting from their buds. It ends with lunch on Point Mugu Beach as dolphins swim past.

DAY 5

On a meditation hike, I chant: “*May I be filled with love and kindness. ... May I be well. ... May I be peaceful and at ease. ...*” for miles — then think: *Wait? Who am I?*

DAY 6

Down six pounds and 14 overall inches, my skin dewy with the vegan glow, I decide this feeling is one I want to keep.

The Ranch Malibu, 12220 Cotharin Road, 310-457-8700, theranchmalibu.com



JOIN THE CLUB
John Reed Fitness (top) and Hume Venice reinvent the classic gym model.