

WAG

BY DEBBI KICKHAM / NOVEMBER 2020, TRAVEL / NOVEMBER 9, 2020

YOUR 'OM' AWAY FROM HOME ---



I could write an entire article here just about the bed. The bed that I just experienced at the luxe Miraval Berkshires Resort & Spa in Lenox, Massachusetts, a Hyatt property, was so comfortable that I'm dreaming about it when I'm awake. Here's what sets it apart: It has a lovely down comforter, but underneath is a secret weapon — a down featherbed that sits atop the mattress. The comforter (\$1,825) is Swiss batiste filled with Hungarian down, and the featherbed (\$1,200) is filled with down and cotton ticking that prevents the feathers from mixing with the down. (You can buy the set online.) Translation: Your sleep in this unique Miraval bed will be beyond the best. The only other place in the world where I've experienced such a bed was at a posh resort in Germany — and I've been travel writing for 30 years. I just sank into it and slept like a baby. I'm wildly impressed that Miraval has such an inimitable bed for all of its guests. It's no wonder that it's Oprah's favorite spa.

Just opened a few weeks ago, Miraval is already a hit — and, I don't need to tell you, a true luxury in these unprecedented times. It's dedicated to offering authentic wellness experiences that support your mental, physical and spiritual well-being, and that has never been more important. There you can find solace, tranquility and respite while you recenter yourself to stay grounded and to be inspired. Each day affords an opportunity to be renewed, excited, challenged and nurtured. I say bring it on.

My recent stay included a wonderful session with Annie Kay, an award-winning author, nutritionist and dietician. The class I took with her was on Mindful Lifestyle Transformation, in which she explained how to use a mantra in meditation. Applying a great analogy, she said, "Mantra shakes up your 'snow globe' and the snowflakes inside. We can make the snow land in a little different place, to change your energy field." She explained how yoga often uses Sanskrit words like "om," meaning "creation," as a way to focus the mind and the breath. Yoga, she said, "is a dance of doing and being....A mantra is gorgeous energy medicine." I loved every minute with her and look forward to reading her book, "Every Bite Is Divine," which was a finalist for three national book awards.

I also spent a lot of time in the Life in Balance culinary kitchen, where the chickpea-chocolate chip cookies were fantastic. It was great fun to watch Program Chef Adrian Bennett showcase a plant-based barbecue. One of his creations was making seared cauliflower “steaks” in a simple soy sauce. His “Just Cook For Me” class was informative and deeply delicious. I’m still salivating over the quinoa “meatballs” in a tomato sauce. In fact, one couple was so impressed by the presentation that they booked a second “Just Cook For Me” on the spot, for the very next day.

Miraval has that effect on you. I also heard raves from two guests, who had experienced a sound energy healing that they said was the absolute best part of their trip. No matter where you are in consciousness, Miraval has well-being activities for you, from mala-making (a mala is Tibet’s answer to the rosary) to Chinese astrology, to even hatchet-throwing, where you learn to combine breath, focus and intention. There’s also an entire wealth of fitness activities, from hiking to kayaking, yoga and Happy Hips, a unique-to-Miraval offering created at the Arizona Miraval property. Also wonderful — the little yellow rubber duckies you find around the resort, which are outfitted with a spa robe and hair wrapped in a towel!

The posh pamperings at Miraval are equally terrific. I experienced a Tulsi rose facial that featured locally harvested flowers and herbs, resulting in a luscious farm-to-face session. But I absolutely thrilled to the Manuka honey pedicure I received from Bridget, whose warm, sunny personality shone through. All of the staffers at Miraval wear name tags that also include a word that describes themselves. Bridget’s was “creative,” but she really should have the word “ebullient,” as she just exuded optimism and charm. My experience with her was a highlight.

My stay ended with another class by Annie, a Holistic Metabolic Tune-Up, where I learned that food is medicine, and that eating more fruits and vegetables, and a Mediterranean diet, is really the only way to go. The “magic bullet,” Annie stressed, is movement, especially strength training. “Motion is the lotion,” she explained — and I was on board for all of it.

So I have a new mantra, but for now, let me simply chant, “Miraval is marvelous.” How did I ever live without it?

For more, visit miravalresorts.com.