

# Harper's BAZAAR



## Spas and Wellness Retreats Have a New Audience: The Pandemic-Weary

*A rundown of treatments designed for our stressful era.*

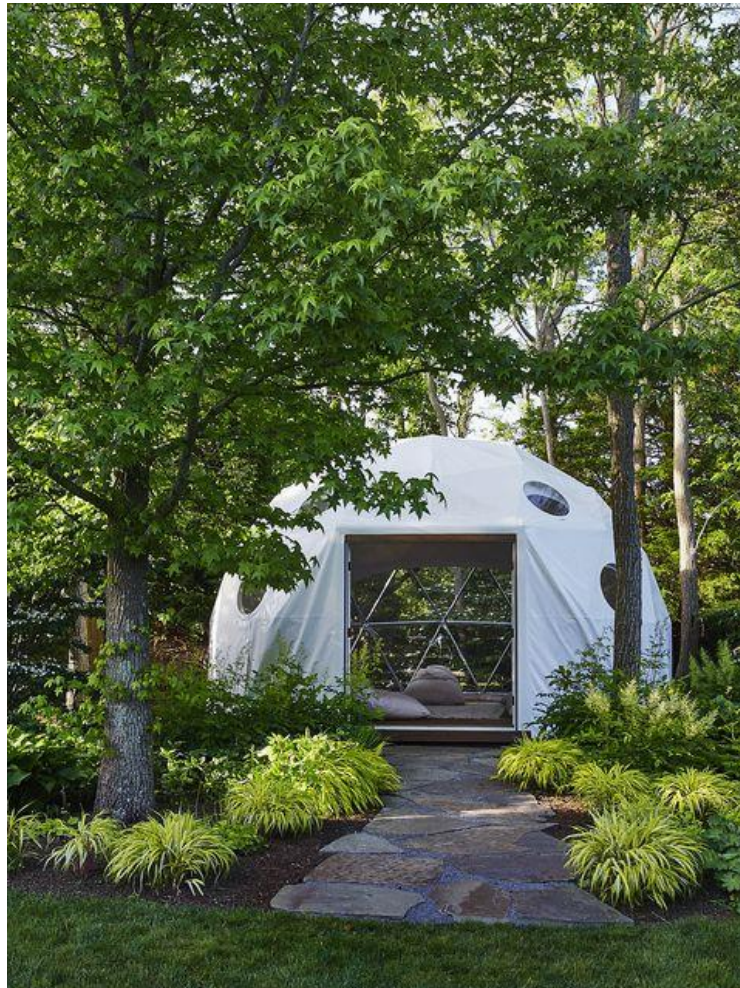
**B** TEXT BY MAURA EGAN / APR 14, 2022

**A**fter two years of isolation and the attendant anxiety, many of us need a head-to-toe realignment. “There was so much disconnection during the last two years that there is now a mental-health epidemic,” says Anna Bjurstam, who heads up the wellness program at Six Senses Hotels Resorts Spas. Luckily, spas and retreats are branching out far beyond massages to focus on new treatments to destress and restore.

# SLEEP

My story was similar to many in this pandemic era: sleep deprivation, sluggishness from hunching over my laptop, and dry, dull skin. At the Well at Mayflower Inn & Spa in Litchfield County, Connecticut, a health coach suggested the Full-Body Reboot (dry brushing, a clay body wrap, a lymphatic massage), followed by light energy work—specifically, craniosacral therapy. As my therapist gently touched different points on my body, my right leg started to jolt involuntarily, and there was tingling warmth in my feet. I soon fell into a light nap, my first in years. At Six Senses Ibiza, better sleep begins with a journal; each guest is given one to write down any worries before bed. “The number-one obstacle for good sleep is stress,” says Bjurstaam. “If you write it down, maybe you’re able to let it go.” The resort is known to drill down on the topic with multiday retreats, like the five-day Solving the Mystery of Your Sleep with L.A.-based clinical psychologist Michael Breus.

# SOUND



Jodie Webber, the creative director and head of healing arts at Shou Sugi Ban House, a Japanese-inspired wellness sanctuary in Water Mill, Long Island, says, “Sound can get to you at a cellular level.” The Sacred Sound Journey there weaves together vibrational frequencies from tuning forks, gongs, and Himalayan and crystal singing bowls (instruments with resonance your body can feel) for a grounding experience. Guests tilt their heads back in a pool a few inches underwater so their ears are covered and listen to sounds like musical chants and dolphins whistling as part of the Float Your Troubles Away treatment at the Six Senses property in Portugal’s Douro Valley.

## BREATHE



Breathwork, used in yoga to release stress, has been around for thousands of years, and recently it’s become a popular offering at wellness retreats. Mark Gerow, a trauma-informed spiritual coach, has created a series of breathwork classes at Miraval Berkshires in

Lenox, Massachusetts, for guests “looking for deeper healing.” His Syncing Breath and Sound: A Neurodynamic Breathwork Journey starts with dynamic breathing cycles. In tandem, participants listen to a selection of music as Gerow leads them through a guided meditation. “As people start focusing on their breath, they can slow down their body and open up the unconscious,” he says. At Sensei Lanai, a partnership between Sensei, the wellness company founded by Oracle cofounder Larry Ellison and physician David Agus, and Four Seasons, practitioners use data to optimize guests’ health outcomes. In their Mindset 1:1 with Biomarkers private sessions, a biofeedback device is used to measure a guest’s heart-rate variability throughout to show how emotions influence things like heart rhythm and the nervous system.