

Glorious Goa

Want to soak up serene surroundings while rejuvenating your body and soul? Check into The Beach House in South Goa for a memorable holiday to kick-start your healthy lifestyle.



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Goa is fast becoming the go-to place for holidaymakers looking to relax and rejuvenate on golden beaches.

Bollywood's stars have long been fans of the remote getaway – when Amitabh Bachchan takes a break from the spotlight this is where he heads to enjoy family time in the sun, while sultry star Lara Dutta recently said 'I do' to Mahesh Bhupathi in the idyllic surroundings.

However, there's more to do in Goa than top up your tan, as HELLO! discovered when we visited visits the picturesque paradise to shape up at The Beach House.

Just a short three-hour flight from Sharjah, The Beach House in Sernabatim, South Goa, is a

rebalancing retreat for the mind, body and soul. It's the ideal place to help you get into shape for summer, and beyond.

The Wellness Retreat Centre hotel was opened by Ajit Patel, an entrepreneur and former pharmacist, in 2009 to encourage visitors to Goa to enjoy a healthier lifestyle.

The vibe here is all about comfort – the large and airy beach huts, filled with comfy sofas and plenty of inspirational reading material, are surrounded by lush greenery.

You won't find anything to tempt you back into bad habits in the mini-bar, either – it's stocked full of mineral water, while fruit platters are offered instead of the usual calorie loaded fare.

Left: Enjoy rest and relaxation at The Beach House, designed to revive the body and soul



Guests are encouraged to relax in the large living room, connected by a staircase to the bedroom and bathroom.

While long walks on the beach beckon, the reason for staying at the retreat is to focus on health, and prior to arrival a strict set of guidelines is given to guests, encouraging them to prepare and condition their body to what lies ahead.

The Beach House is run on three concepts of wellness; the physical, the physiological and the psychological. The three are interconnected and, according to founder Ajit, all complement each other. It's all about balancing these in perfect harmony for the ultimate feel-good factor and a team of specialists is on hand to provide assistance to guests so they can reach their goals.

Doctors, nutritionists and hypnotherapist professionals are all based at the retreat and, combined with ayurvedic assessments, nutritional advice and life coaching, offer a comprehensive wellness package.

All the programmes are tailor-made according to an individual's needs and lifestyle. After completing the programme, a follow-up diet and wellness plan is given to each participant.

Day one

We arrive at The Beach House at 6.30am and have a quick nap before a 10am breakfast of muesli served with hot lemon and water to cleanse the system. Since it was assessment day, the programme

included recording data for blood pressure, body fat, BMI, weight and height along with bone density and pH tests.

The evening was filled with a helpful seminar on how to deal with stress, followed by a meditation session.

Day two

We rise and shine at 7.30am and begin the day with a dry skin body brushing to exfoliate, while sipping hot water and lemon to cleanse the system, which helps give skin a healthy glow. Yoga and a breathing session are first on the agenda to help stretch the body and calm the mind.

Breakfast is a delicious smoothie made with banana and cinnamon along with a wheat grass shot.

There were more health talks to inspire guests and the mid-morning snack time consisted of beetroot and apple juice topped up with an apple cider vinegar and honey drink.

Lunch was a Moroccan chickpea salad with honey and lemon dressing. Healthy food never tasted so good! The afternoon involved relaxing with a lymphatic massage to drain away toxins, which managed to put me to sleep.

Our dinner of warm pumpkin broth was followed by a seminar on how to balance acid and alkaline. A soothing meditation session followed before a glass of almond milk and we were off to bed for a great night's sleep, a result of feeling healthier already! ▶



Above: The spacious and airy villas are nestled right on the beach

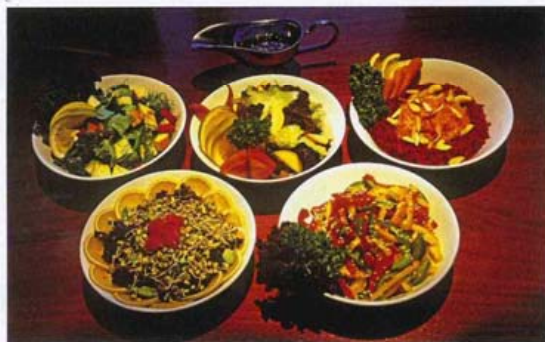


Above and below: Stress is soothed away by the calming neutral colours in the villa that is surrounded by lush greenery





Guests can enjoy morning yoga sessions upon rising, indulge in massages (right) and look forward to delicious healthy food throughout the day (below)



Day three

Despite some early morning rain, we begin the ritual of hot water and lemon, supplements and yoga followed by a papaya and apple smoothie and wheatgrass shot.

The day's discussion, hosted by Arjita Kumari, an Ayurvedic doctor and Yoga teacher, focused on the liver and explained its important role in achieving glowing health.

Guests were offered a chakra assessment while yet more fresh carrot, orange and ginger juices were poured.

Reflexology was part of the afternoon's agenda, just before a spot of crunchy sprout, pistachio and pomegranate salad was served for lunch.

The rest of the afternoon was filled with a nutrition consultation where a doctor explained the importance of a healthy diet and exercise, which is the ultimate key to a long, and healthy, life.

A Tai Chi session was followed by a dinner of red pepper tomato and basil broth along with a liver drink concoction to cleanse the system.

Gemma Ferns, a Tai Chi instructor, conducted an interesting talk on cravings and self control, followed by another meditation session.

While my three-day stay was all too brief, it kick-started me on the road to good health. I lost one



kilo and my stress levels reduced immensely – I'm already planning my next trip!

A trip to The Beach House would make the ideal pre-wedding getaway, or a destressing mini-break for those who live life in the fast lane and are in dire need of some rest and relaxation in lush surroundings.

Fact File

- The Beach House offers retreat packages from three to 14 days. For more information and bookings, visit: www.thebeachhousegoa.com
- For flight details, contact Air Arabia on www.airarabia.com

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