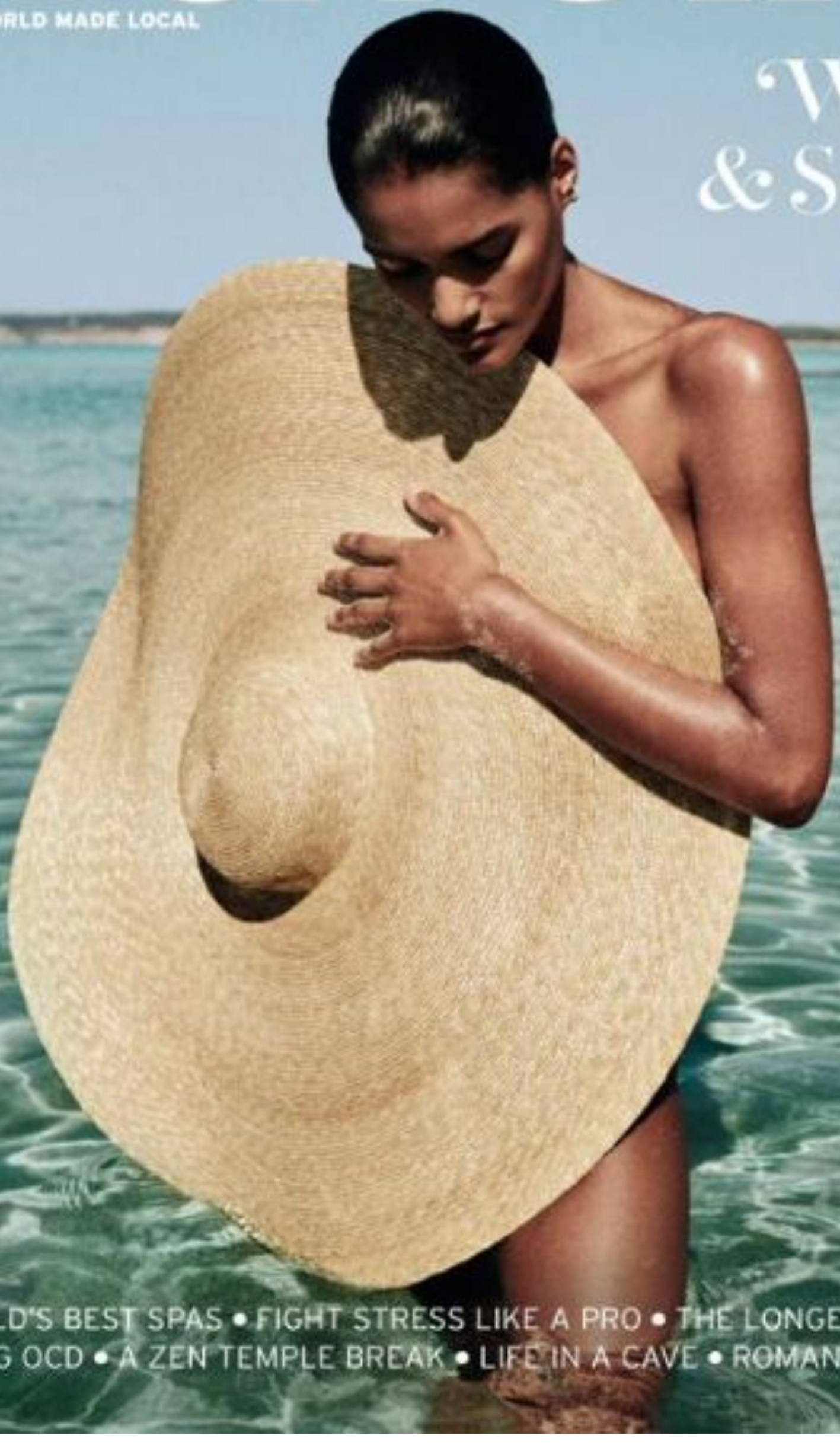
Condé Nast

Traveller

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Wellness & Spa Guide 2025



THE WORLD'S BEST SPAS • FIGHT STRESS LIKE A PRO • THE LONGEVITY HACKS OF 2025
TAMING OCD • A ZEN TEMPLE BREAK • LIFE IN A CAVE • ROMAN BATHING IS BACK

CALM COACHING

SPEND TIME OUTSIDE

"Take regular breaks during the day to step outside, stretch, or go for a short walk to reset your mind," says Dr Isabel Decurtins, a preventive medicine specialist at Switzerland's Bad Ragaz (resortragaz.ch). "Spending time outdoors, even for 15 to 20 minutes daily, can have an immediate calming effect."

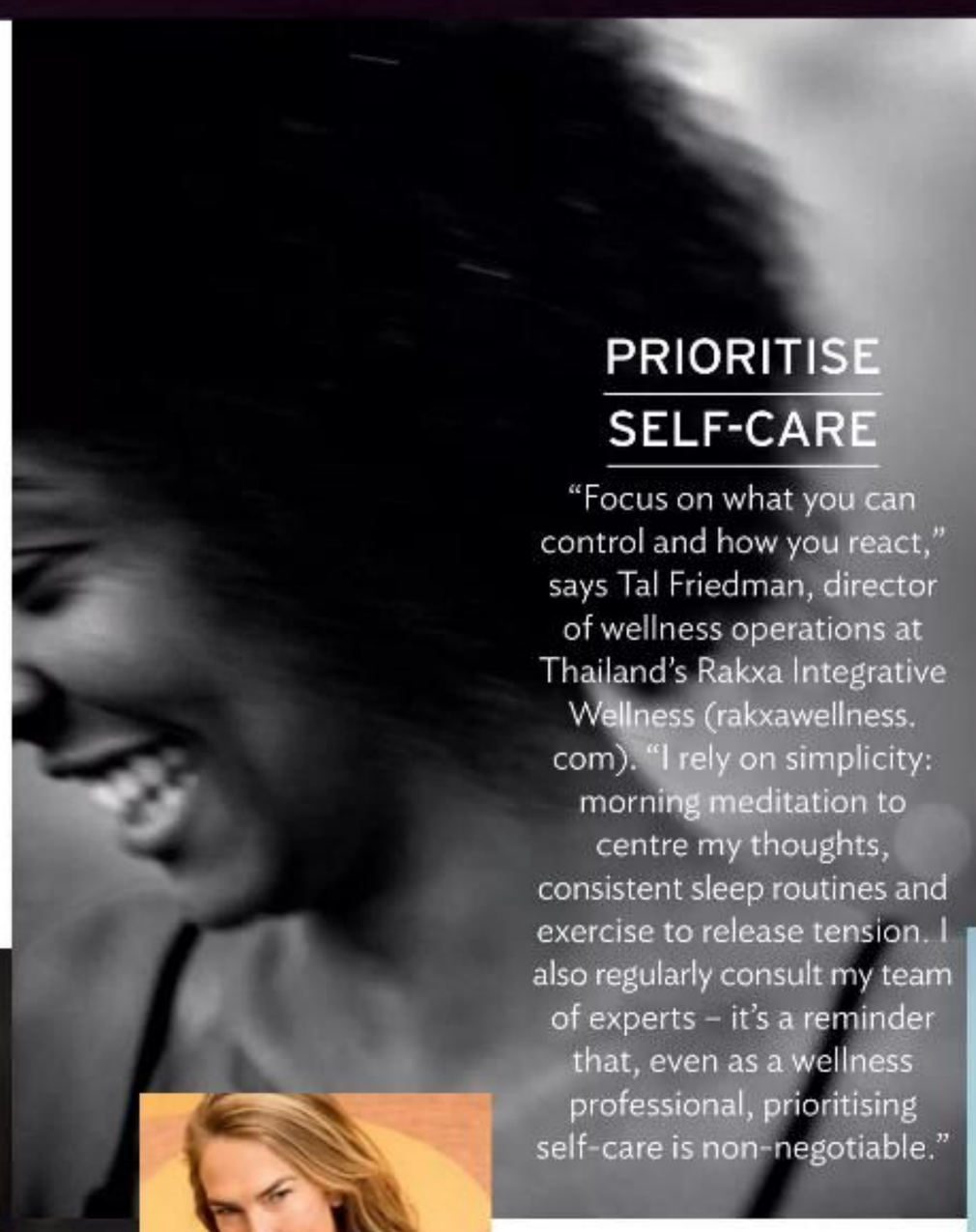
CREATE A CONNECTION

"True stress relief comes from reclaiming authenticity and quality in our daily lives," says Patrizia Bortolin, a spa concept creator at Preidlhof (preidlhof.com) in Italy. "Take time to cook your own meals with the best ingredients you can find, savouring every bite with joy, calm and the warmth of meaningful connection. Surround yourself with people who make you feel good."

DIP YOUR HANDS IN ICE WATER

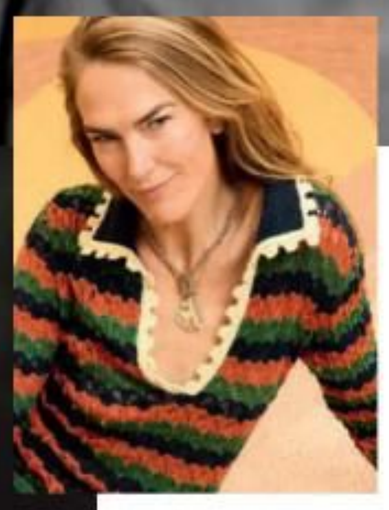
"If stress hits suddenly, try a quick ice water dip for your hands," says longevity doctor Ingrid Yang (ingridyang.com). "It activates the 'mammalian diving reflex', lowering heart rate and encouraging relaxation by stimulating the vagus nerve. The cold immediately pulls you out of spiralling thoughts, slowing your breathing and shifting you into a calmer state. Simply plunge your hands in ice water, or use a cold pack on your wrists."





PRIORITISE SELF-CARE

"Focus on what you can control and how you react," says Tal Friedman, director of wellness operations at Thailand's Rakxa Integrative Wellness (rakxawellness.com). "I rely on simplicity: morning meditation to centre my thoughts, consistent sleep routines and exercise to release tension. I also regularly consult my team of experts – it's a reminder that, even as a wellness professional, prioritising self-care is non-negotiable."



TAP INTO MEDITATION

"I love Tonglen meditation, which is a Buddhist practice in which you breathe in the suffering and exhale peace and healing," says JJ Martin, *above left*, founder of La DoubleJ (ladoublej.com). "Then there's the Kundalini Activation Process, which accesses this dormant sexual energy in you that is used as a clearing energetic force – I have an almost psychedelic reaction every time I do it."

SCAN FROM SIDE TO SIDE

"Take a walk, allowing your eyes to gently scan from side to side," says Jane Ollis, founder of anti-stress platform MindSpire (mindspire.co.uk). "In early human history, it was essential for survival, letting us assess open spaces for food and potential danger. Then look ahead at the horizon. A wide view activates the parasympathetic nervous system, and lowers adrenalin and cortisol. These techniques tap into deep, age-old neural pathways – they're a science-backed approach to managing stress."

CURL YOUR FINGERS INTO A MUDRA

"Something as simple as mudras, or hand gestures, can help you relax and unwind," says Dr Arun Pillai, wellness director of India's Dharana at Shillim (dharanaretreat.com). "Prana mudra helps with stress, fatigue and insomnia. Touch the tip of your thumb with the tips of your ring finger and little finger while you stretch out the other two fingers. Do this whenever you need to calm yourself: on your commute, or at your desk."

WRITE IT OUT

"Putting our thoughts and feelings on paper lets us process our emotions and experiences in a safe private place," says Heide Ziegenbein, a hypnotherapist at Lanserhof Sylt (lanserhof.com) in Germany. "Set aside 15 minutes each day to write freely about your thoughts and feelings, especially those related to stressful events. Don't worry about grammar or structure. It can help reduce stress, improve emotional regulation and increase self-awareness."

START RUNNING

"I focus on techniques that train my resilience through controlled, short periods of stress," says Dr Jair Olivares Villanueva, clinic director at Sha Mexico (shawellness.com). "Running integrates breath control with physical exertion, creating a powerful synergy that helps me manage stress daily. Start small and gradually build up to running a 5K, a 10K or even a marathon. It can be transformative."



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BAVARIA, GERMANY

Lanserhof Tegernsee

THE MOST RIGOROUS RENEWAL IN THE ALPS

As my taxi rolls along the driveway, towards the sleek larch-wood and glass minimalist refuge by architect Christoph Ingenhoven, my foodie mind wonders what this place, known for its calorie restriction, has laid on for lunch. Resetting the digestive system is the main aim at this ultra-glossy medispa, which bases programmes on the Lans Concept: cutting-edge medical tech combined with specialists in naturopathy, psychology, psychoneuroimmunology (how the mind, nervous system and immune system interact) and chronomedicine (which considers the optimal times for medical interventions) to suit your body and mind's needs. This is turbo-charged Mayr, which takes the time-tested ethos to a different stratosphere. The Lanserhof Cure strives for a regeneration of the intestines, which is not an enjoyable process. I'm on the cusp of burnout (fatigue, insomnia and headaches), so Dr Kira Hanschitz, an internal medicine specialist, devises a plan centred around Lanserhof's three healing principles: resting, cleansing and "training", in other words, upping my fluid intake, eating earlier and chewing food 30-40 times. Mornings begin with a glass of warm water and Epsom salts to clear the digestive system, a ritual made better by cinematic views of the sun rising above the rolling Bavarian hills. Morning forest hikes are followed by breakfasts of porridge and maple syrup with my fellow guests, who include retired CEOs and high-flying therapists. They help the days zip by, as do spoiling treatments and gentle yin yoga. During the detox pack and bath, I'm wrapped in thick seaweed clay and laid onto a giant, 40°C steamer that coaxes toxins from my pores. The first 48 hours are a blur of headaches and listless hunger, but by day three, the caffeine withdrawal has subsided, and by day five, bowls of delicious homemade soup (sweet potato topped with sunflower seeds) quash my obsessive food thoughts. By day six, energy restored, I'm swimming in the outdoor pool, feeling that Lanserhof has given me a much-needed reset, and a sense that I can achieve anything. SARAH ALLARD

Healing Holidays (healingholidays.com/condenast) can arrange a seven-night Cure Classic programme from £5,899 per person sharing, including transfers, full board and treatments

PHOTOGRAPHS: ENRICO COSTANTINI; MAXIMILIAN KÖNIG