

WELLNESS
DESTINATION
OF THE MONTH



Cocoon Medical Spa looks more like a tropical hideaway



The simple serenity of Nuala Retreat

BALI, INDONESIA

NUALA RETREAT AND COCOON

Fiona Baker discovers how to look like you've taken a healthy break

The object of a "wellness" holiday is to come back feeling fabulous – but what a bonus if you also look revived, rejuvenated, possibly younger?

The tropical paradise of Bali offers the ingredients to achieve this physical and spiritual nirvana by combining healthy eating, yoga, healing massages, cosmetic medical spa treatments and sunset alcoholic cocktails on the beach – at a very affordable price.

The beauty of Nuala Retreats, which sprang from the vision

of Byron Bay's Varney Magill, is that it's totally accessible and non-judgemental. Yes, you can go hard and fast and do back-to-back yoga, boot camp and meditation classes. Or you can arise to a gentle Hatha stretch, take a walk on the beach and eat big but healthily – and no-one will look down their nose at you.

While Magill also runs Villa Nuala – a stunning property with a pool and yoga/treatment pavilions in Umalas, a few minutes west of Seminyak – she's organised for the retreat to come to me at the Villa Jasmine

(villajasminebali.com) in the heart of pumping Seminyak. From this serene and plant-filled oasis, complete with a private pool and open-air living, Nuala Retreats arranges morning yoga, green smoothies, therapeutic massages and healthy breakfasts.

With the health part taken care of, it's time to make sure I look healthy. For this I head to Cocoon Medical Spa in Legian.

As a health journalist, I'm very aware of the health hazards of outsourcing cosmetic medical treatments, but after grilling the doctors and nurses at

Cocoon, those worries are quickly dispelled.

I'm shown around the ultra-modern and very Zen beehive-like complex, through which a stone and pebble pathway dissects a hallway of glass treatment pods. The treatment rooms are no-nonsense and medical, which also puts the panicker in me at ease.

Rather than just your basic facials and massages, Cocoon offers uber spa treatments such as microdermabrasion, needle-free mesotherapy, laser skin rejuvenation and injectables.

The doctors and consultants run through each treatment in my Cleopatra Gold 2 package, a 110-minute session that includes microdermabrasion and mesotherapy. They make sure I see they're using sterile and/or new equipment and tell me, in that blunt and comforting Balinese way, what it will feel like – and whether it's going to hurt or

THE RUNDOWN

The cost: As a body+soul special, a three-night yoga spa break with Nuala Retreats starts from \$1200 for twin-share accommodation, three meals a day, snacks and juices, massages, yoga and meditation classes, access to other activities, and airport transfers. The Cleopatra Gold 2 package at Cocoon Medical Spa costs \$147; saltroom halotherapy with a foot massage costs about \$25.

Getting there: Airlines fly direct to Bali from most Australian capital cities.

Tip: Plan an uber exercise program so you can eat big. The food is divine.

More info: cocoonmedicalspa.com and nualaretreats.com

sting or burn – but with a smile.

Later I enjoy a long massage in the Himalayan salt room (yep, a room made of salt bricks), which is said to relieve numerous respiratory conditions as well as eczema, dermatitis and psoriasis.

The treatments aren't necessarily much better than in Australia, but they're cheaper and the service is exemplary.

I emerge from the protected pods of Cocoon and the yoga pavilions of Nuala looking refreshed and revived – oh, and most importantly, younger.

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