

LONG WEEKENDS

CLOSE ENOUGH FOR A FLYING VISIT BUT SUFFICIENTLY FAR AWAY TO SWITCH OFF COMPLETELY

ANDRONIS CONCEPT

SANTORINI

From the nutritionally-balanced meals at the caldera-facing restaurant to the soothing Kallos spa, the entire focus at this slick island newcomer is wellness. Those who are serious about tackling issues (weight loss, detoxing etc) should make an appointment with the in-house therapist for a bespoke meal and treatment plan. Do try the Merveille Arctique ritual, which begins with a coconut and grape salt scrub and a wrap and ends with a hot oil and cold ball massage – the contrasting temperature does wonders for softening muscles and gets blood pumping. There's also aerial yoga under a slatted bamboo roof with views of white yachts bobbing in the blue; there are heart-soaring sunset hikes that include meditation stops; and a pummelling Thai massage in a cool, dark cave that doubles up as a cinema at night. Sign up for a lesson in cooking fava and tomato fritters using vegetables picked from the garden, play tennis or simply laze. However strict your health regime, be sure to break all the rules for at least one night for dinner at Lycabettus, the restaurant at sister hotel Andronis Luxury Suites in Oia. The food is sublime and the setting dreamily romantic.

BOOK IT: Suites from £215 per night. andronisconcept.com



FOUR SEASONS

MEGEVE

This is the first hotel in Megève to offer direct access to the Mont d'Arbois slopes – and it also happens to have the largest spa in the Alps, with six treatment rooms – including one VIP room for couples, complete with bath and sensory shower, relaxation area, sauna and hammam. A host of treatments is on offer to soothe tired limbs from hours spent out on the slopes, using products including La Prairie and Bamford. The indoor pool offers more relaxation for ski legs; you can bask in the balneotherapy area and watch the sun

go down over the mountains – huge floor-to-ceiling windows offer views over the peaks of Côte 2000 and Rochebrune. Join in a Woga class (water yoga) if you've not already done Snoga (snow yoga) on the slopes. And if you're not there to ski, the pool also has counter-current swim jets and in summer, the doors are opened wide to let the outside in. There's also a 24-hour fitness centre (personal trainers available), as well as a hair salon and barber. Watch out for special weight loss and detox programmes as well as visiting yoga gurus.

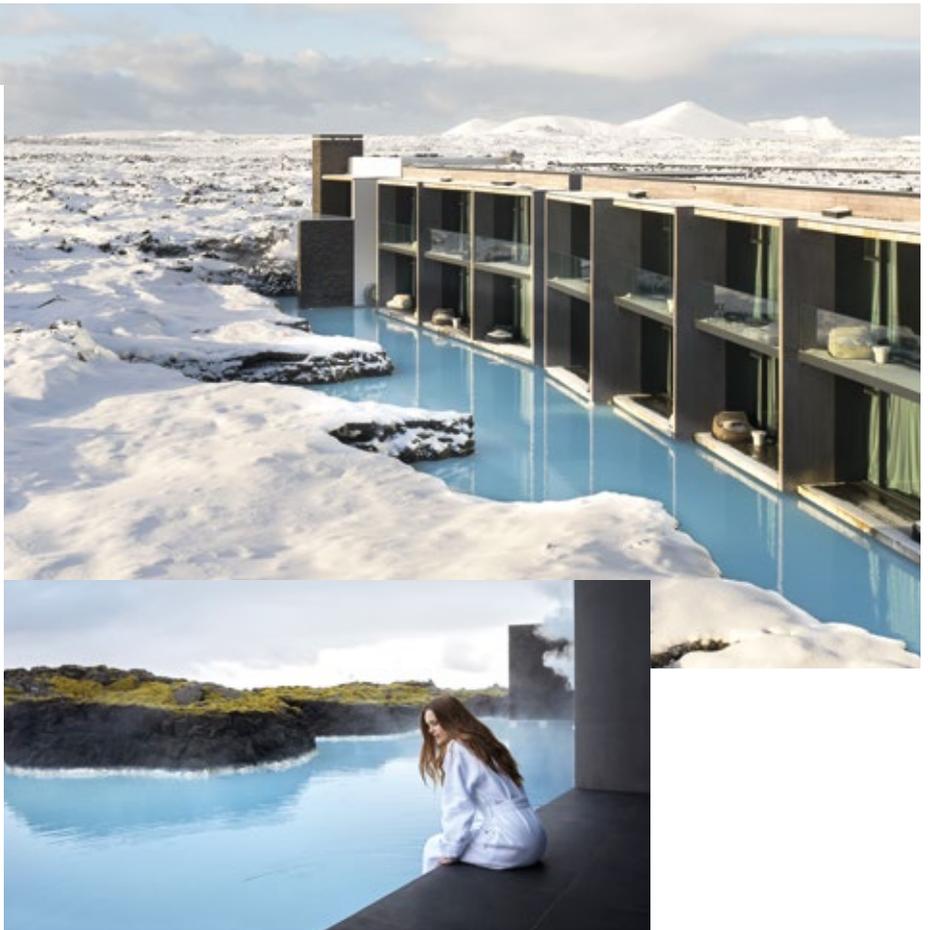
BOOK IT: Doubles from £730 per night. fourseasons.com/megeve

THE RETREAT AT BLUE LAGOON

ICELAND

Iceland's first super-modern luxury spa hotel was destined to make a splash. And gosh it's worth the wait. Carved into volcanic rock and surrounded by the milky, geothermal waters of the Blue Lagoon, this stunning newbie combines Nordic Zen with more than a hint of James Bond cool: clean lines, local natural textures, stunning terraces and views to an otherworldly landscape beyond. Inside the spa, a sanctuary of three interconnected chambers, awaits – offering a cleansing, three-step ritual based on the plants and minerals found in the lagoon (renowned for its healing waters, and used to treat skin conditions such as psoriasis). The Retreat's extraordinary 'in-water' treatment takes place alfresco in the lagoon itself. Cocooned in the arms of a therapist, your body is wrapped and marinated in layers of silica, algae and minerals before an underwater massage using the pressure of your own body weight and, finally, a guided float around the lagoon. A surreal experience, this is about as close to returning to the womb as you'll ever get.

BOOK IT: Suites from £1,029 B&B (retreat.bluelagoon.com). Return flights from London Heathrow to Reykjavik from £180 (icelandair.com)



F ZEEN RETREAT

GREECE

The magic is that you can rise at dawn, swim in the ouzo-clear ocean, watch the world wake up, amble to breakfast (smoothies, eggs, yoghurt and honey) and then head to yoga in the hilltop shala, to the consummately executed spa, to the open-air gym or just flop and drop by your private pool in one of the clean-lined new suites. The gardens are a wildflower dream and the interiors are sleek and modern. They've got all the colours and textures right, from the napkins down to the staff uniforms, which are so chic they're also for sale in the boutique shop. The spa offers treatments by Irish brand Voya (which majors in hand-harvested organic seaweed) and the Greek company BioAroma. Although you'll find wraps, scrubs, eye therapies, cellulite busters, manis and pedis, once you've fallen for the massages you won't veer off course. The therapists are exceptionally intuitive and know how to unravel stress-riddled shoulders. Hire a car and explore the island, where there are blissful beaches aplenty and simple tavernas. Return for moussaka and an outdoor movie night in the amphitheatre. A properly spoiling holiday that can be as healthy or as cocktail-laden as you like.

BOOK IT: From £155 per night B&B.

fzeenretreat.com

