



Retreat yourself

LEAH CASSADY recently enjoyed a five-day retreat — run exclusive by women for women



I'VE ALWAYS liked the idea of a health retreat, to learn more about yourself, your body and your capabilities. I'm not a particularly active person, not due to a dislike of it, more so due to setting time aside for it. So the idea of attending a five-day Reset Retreat to understand stress and how best to deal with it, sounded perfect.

With a combination of work, chores and of course worries such as money or sleepless nights due to children etc. we can all spread ourselves a little too thin. How much time do you take for you, to actually address any issues and maintain a healthy lifestyle? If you're anything like me, not much! A retreat gives you that time, what

else are you going to do when you're away from work and surrounded by likeminded people and experts who are there to help you achieve more.

The company

The Body Retreat are the UK's only luxury health and fitness retreat company run exclusively by women for women.

Set up in 2009 by Julie Brealy and Juls Abernethy as Brealy Bootcamps, the company recently rebranded to better suit their ethos.

Having been through their own weight loss and fitness journeys they realised that there is no such thing as a "quick fix" to a healthy lifestyle and so set about creating something different.



Having ran over 150 health and fitness bootcamps, helping thousands of clients, they designed them with a set of key pillars at their core – exercise, nutrition and behavior.

The Body Retreat aim to help you change any negative behaviors that may be holding you back rather than just pushing you throughout your time spent with them.

How was it?

The retreat I attended was their five-day Stress Re-set Retreat which took place in Somerset. With a stunning venue and gorgeous scenery it really does help you to escape and make you feel relaxed.

This retreat focuses on optimizing nutrition, balancing your hormones and fine-tuning your system. It involves plenty of low impact exercise alongside a safe and simple detox plan including nutritious real food. You also take part in specialised behavior sessions such as hypnotherapy and mindfulness.

When you arrive you receive a welcome pack with a water bottle, body brush, canvas bag and t-shirt, all things to make use of on your stay and after. Once you've settled in you all gather on the comfy sofas for the welcome talk.

During my time there my days started at 6.30am with a hot lemon and ginger drink (rather tangy) before using our new body brush and heading out for our morning circuits, each of which focused on a different part of your body. We then continued with our swim and sauna sessions which were to be repeated in the evenings, before breakfast and our daily hikes.

Our surroundings were spectacular and taking it all in really made the hike just that much more enjoyable! Our days also included various fitness sessions, from yoga and Pilates to boxercise all delivered by experts in their field. Most of these I wouldn't have had the opportunity to try

and a few of which I discovered an unknown fondness for and intend to pursue further.

The evenings gently wind down to help prepare you for hypnotherapy and sleep, and there are even a few nights when you can indulge in a massage or beauty treatment.

Food

The food was delicious! Being a fairly fussy eater, and not the only one, it was daunting to have no control over your own food intake for five days. Yet I found no issues and ate everything including nutty and spicy dishes, both of which are on my dislike list.

Including meals and snacks such as Thai Prawn Soup and Fruit Crumble it certainly doesn't sound like the immensely healthy and nutritious diet I was expecting.

Whilst there, we were able to learn more about nutrition, about not just what to eat but also when and how to eat it.

Nutritional Therapist, Kate Delmar-Morgan delivered a nutrition workshop which was so interesting. Did you know eating fruit or fruit juice causes your blood sugar level to spike and therefore your body stress as it overworks to counteract it?

Kate explained all of this and more as well as what you can do to aid your body and lower your stress levels, like eating fruit with seeds or nuts to help you digest the sugars slower.

All this information really sparked my interest in getting more hands on with my own food and they even pack you off with a snack and your lunch as well as sending out the recipes for everything you ate whilst there!

The atmosphere felt really supportive and informal, we could ask questions about anything and were given tips and tailored workouts. The Body Retreat also has a very active post programme support network. For more information visit the website www.thebodyretreat.co.uk.

WIN!

A weekend retreat

STAFFORDSHIRE Life has teamed up with The Body Retreat to offer one lucky reader the chance to win a weekend away — worth £595!

The prize — based on shared occupancy — can be taken at any weekend retreat up to and including June 2014.

The prize includes all food, drink and snacks on the retreat programme but does not include transport to the retreat.

To enter, all you have to do is answer the following question and send your name, address, email address and daytime telephone number to: Retreat Competition, Staffordshire Life, The Publishing Centre, Derby Street, Stafford, ST16 2DT.

Question: In which year was The Body Retreat set up?

By entering, you agree that Local World may offer you products and services by post, email, SMS & telephone. See our terms and conditions online at [/Lifestyle/Competitions/Competition-rules-06112012.htm](http://Lifestyle/Competitions/Competition-rules-06112012.htm). Local World would also like to allow selected third parties to contact you — please clearly mark your entry with an X if you DO NOT wish to be contacted. Those entrants who do not mark their entry with an X will receive a thank you for entering the competition from The Body Retreat, which will include a discount or special offer.

The closing date is October 31, 2013.

Please note: the competition is only open to those women aged 18 and over.