

Bal Harbour

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THE FALL
COLLECTIONS





At The Ranch Hudson Valley, meals are a family affair to foster deeper connections.

a kinder, gentler ranch

California's famously grueling health brand The Ranch has arrived in the lower Hudson Valley, albeit with a less structured and more mindful approach to wellness.

BY DEBORAH FRANK

Mention The Ranch Malibu to any health-conscious, fitness-obsessed East Coaster and most likely they know of it, and a good portion have experienced one of its programs. These Ranch alumni wear their success in completing the original week-long bootcamp detox as badges of honor (literally pins gifted to each participant that they display on their backpacks), and can't wait to return and do it all again. So when it was announced that the Southern California retreat was setting up in their backyard less than an hour from New York City, many wondered whether they would ever need to fly cross-country again to take those thigh-burning hikes and attend back-to-back core and HIIT classes just to qualify for a minuscule snack. We decided to investigate.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP
The property's 25 guest rooms have distinctly different decor; the culinary team gets creative with a 1,400-calorie-per-day vegan menu; the Great Room is just one of many places where guests can cozy up with a book.



The difference was evident upon arrival: a deliciously thick welcome smoothie; a gentle stretch class "to help your body and mind arrive at the program;" no weight and body measurements unless you want them; and a two-hour guided hike that's really more of a trail walk followed by a "relaxing mindfulness meditation." The ultimate shocker was the coffee available at breakfast, "but only then." Those caffeine-withdrawal headaches are no longer a prerequisite.

Still, The Ranch Hudson Valley is not a walk in Ringwood State Park, which is right off the property. The first four-hour hike was categorized as Level 7 on a scale of 10, with long inclines, and everyone in our 23-person group was feeling it that evening. But participants had a choice between hiking for two hours or four. After a satiating hearty lunch (yet just 400 calories), Ranchers could opt for a low-impact exercise class, take a nap, rejuvenate in a hot and cold plunge pool, restore in an infrared sauna with stunning views of the 200-acre lakeside property, or add on services like colon hydrotherapy, IV therapy, hypnotherapy, acupuncture, reiki, or energy healing. It's all about longevity and establishing little daily habits, whether it's meditating, stretching, drinking tea, eating early, or getting to bed before 10 p.m. "It's the perfect getaway for a wellness reset," says Alex Glasscock, cofounder and CEO of The Ranch.

For those in our group that week, it was also the perfect bonding getaway: there were three mother/daughter couples and one Miami-based mother and son (it was the son who had convinced his mother to join him in

The historic lakefront estate has been reimagined by New York designer Steven Gambrel.



celebration of his 30th birthday). The cozy 25 guest rooms (no two are alike) facilitate a familial connection by giving the historic mansion an overall residential feel. Ranchers are encouraged to stop by the kitchen anytime, "like you would in your own home," even for a cup of herbal tea in the middle of the night when stomachs begin to grumble for food due to the limited 1,400-calorie, plant-based diet. Somehow, though, those moments of strict discipline from the original program seem so much more tolerable when the end goal is not necessarily weight loss or high-intensity fitness targets, but simply feeling good mentally and physically.

The abbreviated three-night, four-day or four-night, five-day programs are designed to deliver these results, and are especially effective for those who just cannot devote seven nights

and eight days to self-care. Once back to reality, an email arrives in your inbox with a curated list of wellness, fitness, and nutrition resources meant to inspire you to continue your health journey. The Ranch Hudson Valley Resources document lists where you hiked so you can return again on your own. It suggests movies like *Garlic Is as Good as Ten Mothers*, books like "Atomic Habits," podcasts like "The Doctor's Pharmacy," blogs like *Forks Over Knives*, and apps like EWG's *Healthy Living*, which rates more than 120,000 food and personal-care products to help you make better choices. Tips for incorporating the Ranch lifestyle at home and the much-requested recipes for the delicious meals eaten during your stay round out the experience and set you up for future visits to reset and recalibrate, whichever coast you're on.