

THE HEALTHY (BUT FUN) RETREAT

Think retreats are all chai and chanting? Try the Active Escapes fitness vacay in Bali, says Louise Cheung

GRIPE #1: "It's going to be hippy trippy." Other than some meditation post-Pilates and being gently woken each morning by the Balinese call to prayer, the most spiritual moment you'll have is being transfixed by the sunsets at one of the many beaches or cocktail bars. And if you head to the Rock Bar at dusk, you might want to sample the Spiced Rock cocktail while you're there, too...

GRIPE #2: "I really don't want to feel hungry for seven days." Breakfast, lunch and dinner are included in the cost of your holiday – but don't worry, you won't just be gnawing micro herbs all day. Instead, they serve healthy dishes in actual real-life sizes. It's not a detox week either: coffee and alcohol are allowed.

GRIPE #3: "I'd prefer a luxe holiday." Then opt for a four-poster king bed and outdoor ensuite. Every room looks on to a private pool, and times are set aside through your stay for relaxing, so you can follow up a boxing sesh with a chilled-out afternoon by the water. Did we mention spa treatments mark the end to every evening? Amaze.

GRIPE #4: "I want to be pampered." Easy: partake in the organised trip to

the cliff-top Ayana Resort and Spa. After a stairs and soft-sand challenge, there's 90 minutes of thalassotherapy in Ayana's aquatonic pool to enjoy. It's ideal post-workout, as benefits include relief of muscular tensions, improved metabolism and muscle toning, and a quality night's sleep.

GRIPE #5: "I don't think I'm fit enough." The workouts are guided by experts throughout the week and incorporate TRX suspension training, boxing, yoga, Pilates, cardio, and a morning tackling a rope course high in the lush rainforests of Ubud. Happily, the number

of workout sessions you try is up to you, and each one is taught at varying paces to suit individual fitness levels.

GRIPE #6: "I'm worried it's just going to be one long boot camp." That's a negative. Aside from the aforementioned poolside lolling and aquatonic escape, every day there are optional activities on offer. You can start off with a long run or a short stroll, or hit the golf course, try surfing, go horseriding, take a cooking class – even go shopping! **COSMO**

"You won't be gnawing micro herbs all day"

Work out with experts, then take a dip in the ocean or hit the shops!



Louise gets into the swing of things

Get active at the Ayana Resort and Spa, then pamper yourself with a treatment.



SPECIAL OFFER! Active Escapes is offering lucky *Cosmo* readers \$200 off any of its 2014 retreats*. There is a range of dates available from May until September, and you can choose a stay in Bali (prices start from \$2190) or the Maldives (from \$3100). Visit activeescapes.com.au for more and mention *Cosmo* when you fill in the reservation form.

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