

in association with
Healing  Holidays

Condé Nast Traveller

THE SPA GUIDE 2017



TOP-TO-TOE M.O.T.

THE MOST EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR A REASSURING ONCE-OVER

VILALARA LONGEVITY THALASSA & MEDICAL SPA ALGARVE, PORTUGAL

WEIGHT
LOSS

IN BRIEF A FULL BODY OVERHAUL WITH PREVENTATIVE TESTS AND A SERIOUS DETOX

What if, rather than waiting until you develop symptoms or get sick, you see a doctor while you still feel healthy and full of beans? You have tests – bloods, essential elements, heavy metals, a bio-physical examination that reveals your metabolic age and fat versus muscle ratio – to discover what's really going on inside. Then, if you show possible tendencies towards certain illnesses you can follow a programme, or implement lifestyle changes to head off problems before they arise. The idea of staying one step ahead when it comes to health is at the core of wellness brand Longevity. Nearly three years ago, it paired up with long-established Algarve hotel Vilalara. The latter already had a reputation for its thalassotherapy treatments – in which the healing properties of seawater are used to rebalance the body's trace elements such as magnesium and sulphate through warm multi-jet baths and pressure showers – but the addition of such a serious medical centre really upped the ante. Many guests come for the four- to 14-night detox programmes, but everything from skin deep-cleansing to a cardiovascular check-up is on offer. IV infusions and ozone therapy, where 100ml of blood is taken, mixed with oxygen and then injected back in to strengthen the immune system, work well together. If you have a history of Alzheimer's in your family, Dr Joana Santos might recommend a brain screen to check your

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neurotransmitters. There's osteopathy with the brilliant Ricardo Rosa who gently manipulates your bones so they crack naturally back into place. And nutritionist Ana Horta devises meal plans to keep good eating habits going when you head home. A brand-new piece of diagnostic equipment measures the length of telomeres (the tips of the chromosomes which protect DNA from deteriorating); the longer they are the better. They shorten with age but also due to factors such as stress, smoking and a poor diet. There is so much to take advantage of here that days drift by – but do look around. The grounds are

pretty, with a small lake, multiple pools (some heated and with salt water), tropical gardens and day beds for afternoon naps. Ideal, then, for when you crave some

downtime to process all your new-found health knowledge and make plans to overhaul your life.

INSIDER TIP Book in for a power hike across the cliffs and past tiny secluded beaches with personal trainer Diogo Eloi.

BOOK IT Healing Holidays (+44 20 7843 3592; healingholidays.co.uk/condenast) offers a five-night quick detox retreat from £2,289 per person, including flights, transfers, a detox or liquid-diet meal plan, and all treatments and activities as per the programme. **HEALING HOLIDAYS EXCLUSIVE** Receive a 10 per cent discount on extra treatments or consultations.

