

COUNTRY & TOWN HOUSE

Ayurveda,
yoga, ancient
wisdom and
spiritual
sustenance



THE INDIAN WELLBEING GUIDE

Edited by
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SOUKYA, Bengaluru

A Holistic Medi-Centre For Results

What do Sting, Deepak Chopra and Queen Camilla have in common? They have all stayed at Soukya, a world-class, purpose-built health centre near Bengaluru. But don't let the big-name roll call fool you into expecting something glitzy. The prettiest plantation-style compound is exquisitely simple, a natural beauty with the sort of discreet old-world charm that immediately soothes frazzled hearts. Though the surroundings alone are not what guests come for. They come instead for the holistic approach to wellbeing. From low energy, depression, anxiety, hormonal issues and insomnia to addictions, arthritis, diabetes, Long Covid, Parkinson's and beyond, founder and homeopathic practitioner Dr Mathai offers remedial relief to seekers from all over the world.

One of India's leading holistic health experts, known as the father of alternative therapies, Dr Mathai believes in an integrated, layered approach to health. This is exactly what Soukya delivers. After a series of initial one-on-one consultations (addressing everything from health history to personality, emotional state and niggling ailments), your case is then discussed by a clutch of in-house doctors and a meticulously curated



programme designed. Most guests stay for at least a week; for dramatic life-change a month is recommended. Expect a regimented routine. Days start with 7am yoga in the black oxide shala. No alcohol or smoking is allowed, talking is banned in the dining room and lights out is recommended at 9pm. You don't come here to party.

Instead, enjoy the deepest and purest of rests, nourishing vegetarian food and tenderly delivered Ayurveda. Traditional therapies are undertaken in the morning, luxuriously layered one after the other, perhaps interwoven with some naturopathy and lasting as long as three hours. Just when you are wondering if you can ever stand again, it's time for a shower, maybe a coconut water, then lunch and likely a rest. It's astonishing how tiring relaxing can be. The afternoons call in yet more therapies: stomach packs, reflexology, acupressure, acupuncture. By day five, you are literally floating.

The gardens are equally magical and fill you up on the inside. Over 120 organic herbs and vegetables are grown on-site. The whole place is a model in self-sufficiency. Every morning a bell is rung and Dr Mathai, his wife (a nutritional therapist) and all the staff gather for morning prayer, which creates a potent atmosphere of medicinal spiritualism. Give this place a week of your life, watch time slow, feel your cells settle. 'Come into silence so you can truly know yourself,' says Dr Mathai.

Soukya is an incredible investment in your future self, a rare jewel that you will treasure, polish and want to return to. *DF*

BOOK IT: From £2,669pp for a seven day programme, full-board, including transfers. healingholidays.com