

DOSSIER *weekly*

TRAVELS, CONVERSATIONS & OTHER NICE THINGS

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Together Again

A retreat at Waldorf Astoria Los Cabos Pedregal reveals itself to be both a restorative escape and a portal to a better self.



For Your Hotel Files
From the Marais to Stockholm to Melides, interior designer Andee Hess unpacks five hotel lobbies she's traveled the globe to see.



Time After Time

Photographer Arianna Lago contemplates how Italy's Ligurian coast ties its past to its present, and hopefully its future.

A DISPATCH

Together Again

Alessandra Berge



Photography by Alessandra Berge

The opportunity to visit the Waldorf Astoria Pedregal Los Cabos for a wellness retreat came to me amid an apartment move and New York heat wave. It was too hot to do anything besides lay inside my cramped apartment and stress about how I had to pack it all up, so I happily jumped on a plane.

Landing at the Los Cabos Airport is a notoriously bumpy affair, and the drive from there is long, through a barren, mountainous landscape. The Waldorf Astoria is the light at the end of the tunnel, literally. Its entrance is a long, dark underpass illuminated only by the glimmer of the ocean peeking out at the end, which seemed like a mirage at the end of my journey.

As a California girl, I'm not truly comfortable unless I'm near the ocean, so that first glimpse, followed by a room with an unobstructed view of aquamarine waves, provided a very welcome promise of the ease to come.

During my visit, the resort was hosting its first wellness retreat in partnership with Alo Moves. The collaboration is an organic evolution for the property, which is already well-known for its spa, and the weekend-long itinerary featured a holistic range of offerings. From yoga classes taught by Alo Moves instructors to reiki and sound healing experiences to a skincare masterclass, it served up something for all types, as well as all wellness (or stress) levels.

I didn't realize just how stressed I was until I began to unwind that first night with a bedtime soaking ritual. Laced with juniper, rosemary, and honey, the bath reflected the spa's overall menu of organic treatments, which draw upon "the ancient and innate intelligence of traditional Mexican Folk Healing — known as *curanderismo*." This approach incorporates time-honored rituals, herbs, and energetic healing. Its results, in my case, were nearly instantaneous. Usually my mind is racing before bed, but the scent of juniper and the equalizing salts cleared my thoughts, nearly causing me to fall asleep in the bath.

As for the treatments, I opted for The Restoring Moon, a 110-minute signature treatment comprising full-body exfoliation, a mud wrap, and a lymphatic massage. The tensions and toxins that seemed permanently embedded in my muscles disappeared. Following my treatment, I alternated between the sauna and ice room, where I was mesmerized by the flakes falling from the ceiling. I woke the next morning more energized than ever, shockingly ready for yoga.

While not officially part of the wellness agenda, the hotel's considered cuisine also played its part. Travesía at Su Cocina, an eight-course tasting menu, showcases Mexico's vibrant, varying flavors in the form of tacos, with the jicama taco with fried oyster and aguachile remaining fixed in my memory. But El Farallon is the hotel's crown jewel, tucked into the cliffs and offering a specialty of freshly caught seafood with champagne.

My visit reminded me of the not new, but always true notion that wellness is about more than just healthy food and exercise; it's about taking care of the mind, too. But dedicating time to your body also does do wonders for the mind. Feeling reset, I returned to the city with the intention of remaining in that balanced state. I now, truly, begin my morning with a virtual Alo Moves class and dedicate time to unwind when I feel the stress amplify. And if things get too far out of balance, I know that there's a place out West where I can begin my day with sunrise yoga and end it watching the sun set over the ocean.