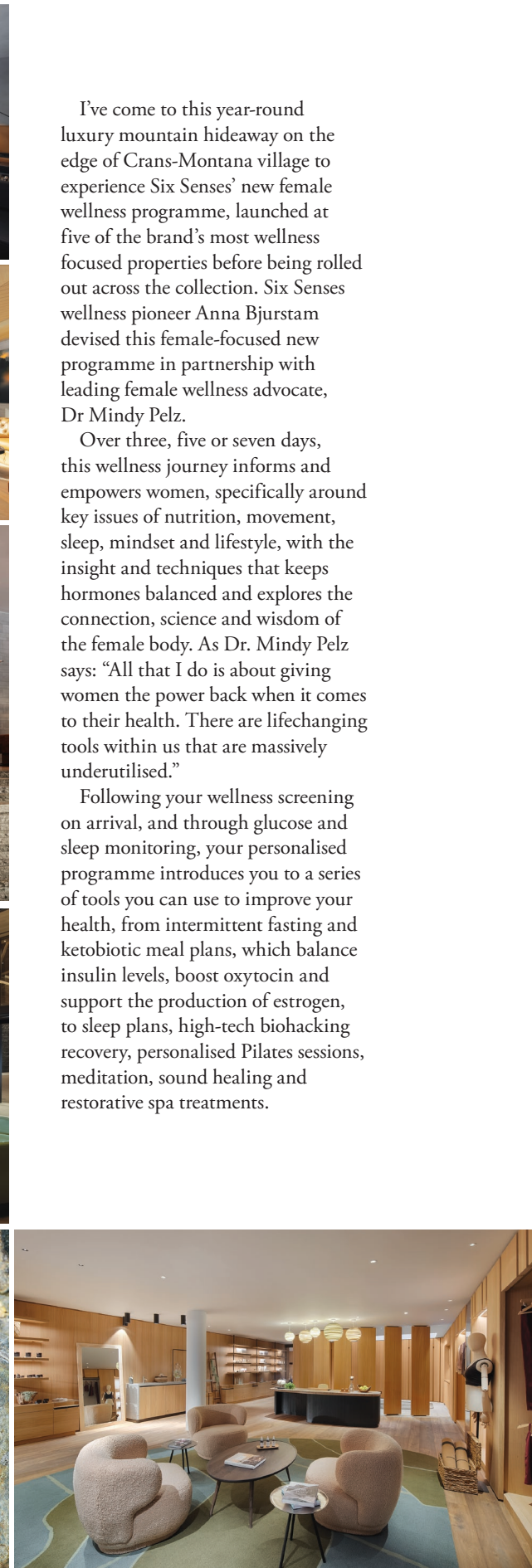
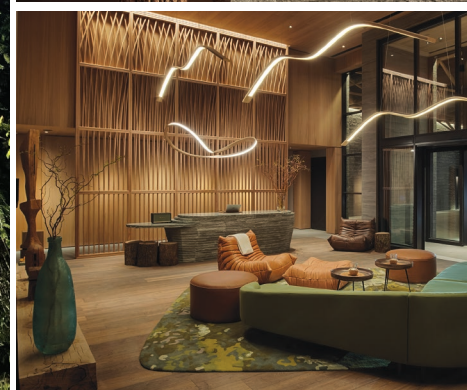
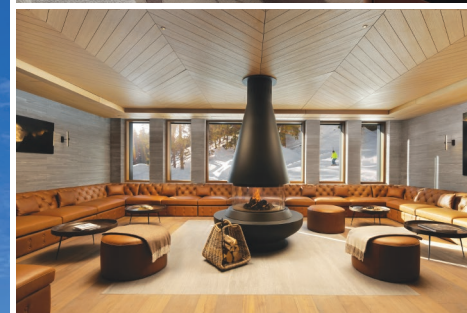


HIGH ALTITUDE HEALING

FEMALE WELLNESS TAKES CENTRE STAGE HIGH UP
IN THE SWISS ALPS AT SIX SENSES CRANS-MONTANA.

| by Lauren Hill



Take a moment to stop and listen to the sounds of the mountain: the waterfall, this stream, the birds singing,” says our guide on this morning’s mindfulness walk up the mountainside of Crans-Montana, reached via the world’s longest single-track funicular, in the breathtakingly scenic Swiss canton of Valais.

“This whole region was built on the idea of cures. They understood that mountain air, high altitude air, is good for your respiratory system, so they built one of the first sanatoriums here, with the whole area then being developed into a destination known among Europeans as a respiratory cure. Still today, we know that this high-altitude environment is beneficial for your whole system.”

My guide is Renate Hermes, the wellness director of Six Senses Crans-Montana. “It’s interesting today, particularly from a Six Senses perspective where wellness is a core pillar, that we are in a destination built on this wellness concept.”

We’re following the Bisse du Ro trail, so named after the traditional ‘bisse’ waterway it follows. Built high into the mountain several centuries ago to bring the crystal-clear mountain water to the villagers below, this stream still flows

down to the lakes today. From here, viewpoints take in the high plateau, and as the trail leads further through the forest, Mont Blanc comes into view, with the Matterhorn visible if you continue up the mountainside. In these early summer months, yellow flowers grow in abundance by the pathway, purple flowers sprout close to the earth and moss covers the ground between a sea of tall fir trees, which the early morning sun pushes through.

“Sometimes we come here for meditation sessions,” says Renata, “I always think it’s important to take these small moments to reset. You need the space to take care of yourself emotionally. Nature is a part of that.”





Giving you a sense of place, the menus designed for this programme, like the rest of the cuisine at the resort's restaurant Wild Cabin, highlight locally sourced, seasonal Swiss ingredients like white asparagus, blackberries, mushrooms and salmon. The spa menu incorporates locally inspired treatments, from a Swiss Chocolate Wrap using purifying salts from the Swiss Anzeindanz Glacier, to personalised facials using products by the local family run clinic, Dr Burgener Switzerland. Making the most of this high-altitude setting, outdoor pursuits take you up the scenic mountainside, whether skiing in winter or setting out on foot or by bike in the summer months.

Throughout this programme, mindfulness plays an integral role: "Meditation and guided sound journeys are a part of the process too," says Renate. "We need to really support our innate healing capacity. We need these pause-and-reset buttons. Part of the intention of this programme is to give the power back to women knowing that there is so much at our fingers tips that often just starts with the mindful decision to pause and take the time to reset. From a physiological point of view, yes, aspects such as the fasting, how it affects the oestrogen, internal health and balance, are important topics, but just as important as the more physical side is the mental side. If that goes in synergy, we really set ourselves up to create a shift towards a self-regulated sense of balance and taking care of our physical and mental wellbeing."



When Renate asked on a call before I flew out to Switzerland how I felt I needed to improve my wellness levels, I didn't in that moment know how to identify what it is I needed to change. Having recently gone through pregnancy and childbirth, and now looking after a young baby, I knew I needed this reset more than at any other point in my life, but identifying what changes need to be made or how those changes can be realistically integrated into your daily life isn't always so clear. This is where the programme's personalised plan comes in, giving clarity in exactly how you can optimise your health, finding hormonal balance, and the realistic, sustainable ways that can be achieved, whether that's through fasting, the type of activity you do, sleep hygiene or mindfulness, among other practices.

I came away from this programme knowing how incorporating these techniques into my lifestyle can optimise my health in the long-term. This new knowledge, and the motivation to implement it, then comes in parallel with the immediate benefits of biohacking and other therapies made available during a stay in this regenerative environment.

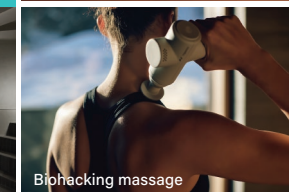
"On some level, we sense what needs to be done but we close that door very quickly because it disturbs our day to day running," says Renate. "We don't need to hit the wall first to make a change, so a part of this is to be preventative, taking on gentle, sustainable ways in which we can optimise our wellbeing one step at a time. A lot starts as a micro decision. This is an invitation to say, hey, it's okay to take time for myself." ■



Earth Lab with hosts



Earth Lab beeswax wrap



Biohacking massage

