

Condé Nast Traveller

THE SPA GUIDE 2013

THE BEST SPAS IN THE WORLD

WEIGHT LOSS IN ITALY

ASHRAMS IN CALIFORNIA

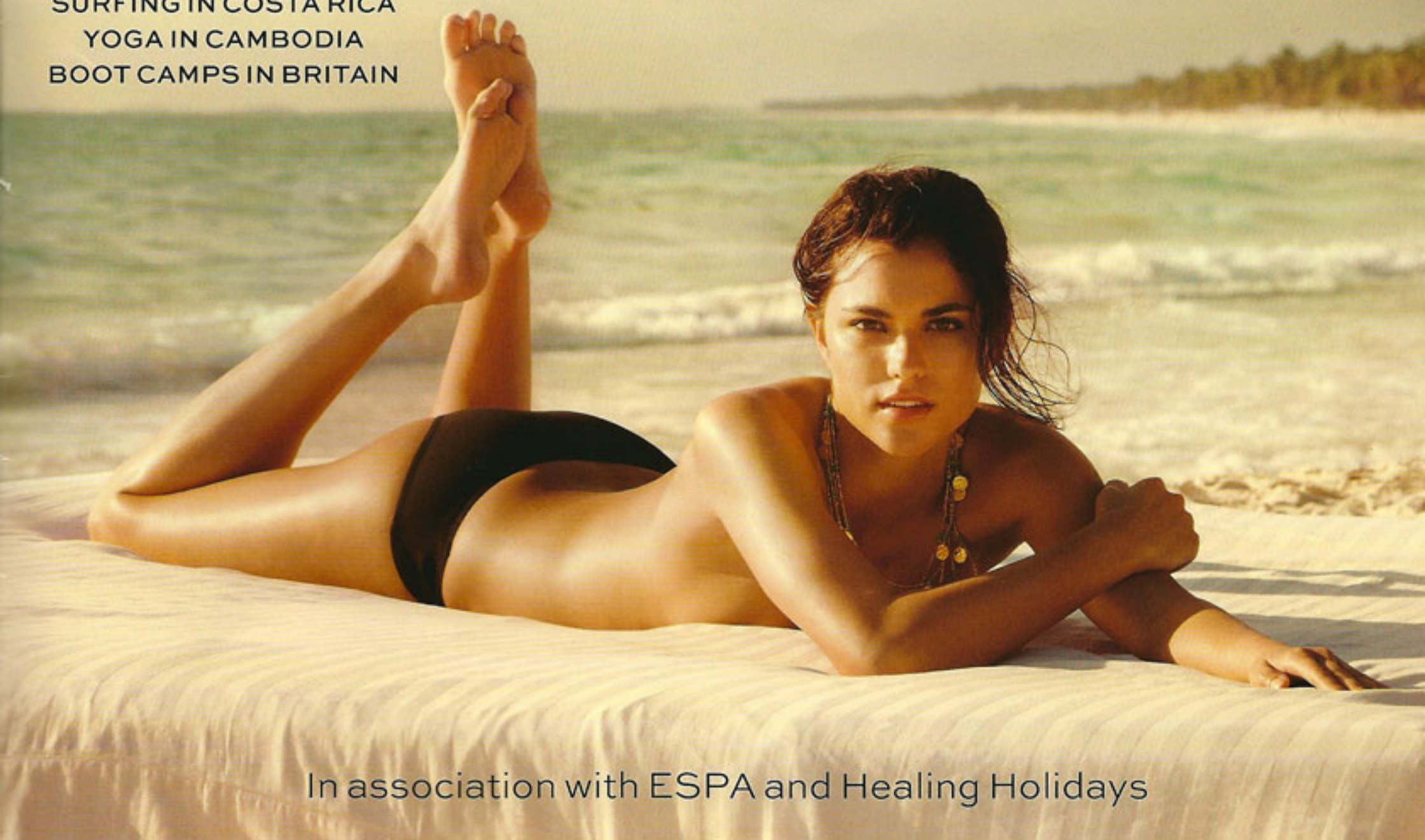
DETOXES IN AUSTRIA

AYURVEDA IN THE MALDIVES

SURFING IN COSTA RICA

YOGA IN CAMBODIA

BOOT CAMPS IN BRITAIN



In association with ESPA and Healing Holidays

CHIVA-SOM THAILAND

Issue: LACK OF MOTIVATION

Chiva Som is known as a Club Med for holistic junkies; and we Brits love the place. There's something about the routine and the rules which is school-day reassuring. Cameras and mobiles aren't allowed in public, and there's no alcohol before 6pm. You can smoke, but only in the designated spot (a favourite with Kate Moss). The daily activity schedule is tightly packed: pick from different yogas, stretching or bone-density classes, fitball, Pilates, step aerobics, aqua aerobics, abs express, gyrokinesis (yoga meets dance) and cardio training sessions. It's almost impossible to sit still. It's actually quite stressful – as well as weirdly exciting – working out the scramble of what you want to do when, especially when you factor in your daily Thai massage (a one-woman wrestling match that will leave you inches taller) and other astoundingly good treatments such as the famous Chi Nei Tsang (abdominal massage) with Ketsarin Moonsri. If you travel with a friend it can even get competitive (what, you're only going to do a colonic, spiritual healing, core work and the detox cooking class?). A crack squad of physios can assess your movements and recommend treatments; you can give up smoking, learn to box or get your back sorted out. The holistic and Asian sit alongside the modern and state-of-the-art. And forget thoughts of eating like a spa sparrow: the food here is a revelation, from lotus salad and buckwheat pancakes to green mango and bean-curd salad, and rock-lobster curry. You'll find yourself enthusiastically buying the cookbook and litres of coconut oil (one of the few fats you should cook with). There's an organic, low-sodium, low-sugar buffet, and everything is listed with its calorie, fibre,



protein and wheat content – it's incredible how fascinating it is to compare the virtues of various foods and suddenly quibble over 50 calories when you've been stuffing yourself with crumpets since November. But you see, this is a whole new you: revved up and ready to change. It's no surprise that nearly every guest comes back for more – you'll leave with more oomph than a Thai prawn curry.

TOP TIP A cup of fresh ginger tea followed by an early morning t'ai chi session in the pavilion – never again will you laugh at people in the park exercising more slowly than drunken tortoises. It takes all your concentration and afterwards your muscles will feel as if you've been slaloming. **BOOK THROUGH** Healing Holidays (+44 20 7843 3592, www.healingholidays.co.uk/condenast), which offers a seven-night programme from £5,015 per person full board, including treatments, flights and transfers. **TRAVELLER SPECIAL** Book this and receive a spa credit of 5,000 baht (about £110) and one complimentary treatment