

SCOUTING SYBARITE

TO GOOD HEALTH

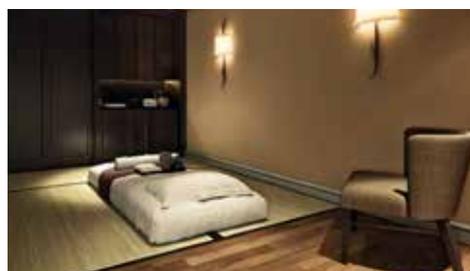
Five new princely pampering retreats are reinvigorating Europe's grand spa tradition



Clockwise from above: the plunge pool in Baden-Baden's new Villa Stéphanie; night falls upon Cyprus's heritage-inspired Antara Palace spa; the pool and deck area resides alongside a stunning alpine panorama at Lonhea; the minimalist-chic interiors of The Gainsborough Bath Spa

Like medieval castles and Michelin-star restaurants, Europe's grand destination spas are practically embedded in the Continental character. But fortunately for those craving an indulgent escape, the spas are also constantly evolving – and newly opening. On the serious end of the spectrum, Switzerland's intimate **Lonhea** (lonhea.com) recently opened with a cluster of Modernist mazots in the village of Villars-sur-Ollon. After a four-hour consultation analysing everything from digestive activity to sensory motor skills, guests are given a personalised programme focused on “creating health” from the resident Dr Michel Golay. Think alpine hiking, daily massages, aromatherapy saunas and seasonal, prebiotic cuisine; there's even a take-home heart-rate monitor for remote check-ups post-departure. The seven-suite **Antara Palace** (antarapalace.com) – a new Hellenistic-style spa with silk furnishings and tropical gardens on ancient healing grounds in Cyprus – takes a more decadent approach, offering themed wellness retreats (including one inspired by Aphrodite, Greek goddess of beauty and love) along with helicopter transfers, personal butlers, complimentary cocktails and private chefs. Meanwhile, Alexandra Champalimaud has been tapped to design England's **Gainsborough Bath Spa** (thegainsboroughbathspa.co.uk) on the site of a Roman bathing complex. Upon opening this summer, it will be the UK's only hotel with access

to natural hot springs, featuring 99 old-meets-new guestrooms and a spa village complete with colonnaded pools and a fountain room where guests can sample the mineral waters. Germany is seeing a spate of openings, starting with the 15-room, 5,000sq m **Villa Stéphanie** (villastephanie.com) at Baden-Baden's iconic Brenners Park-Hotel. Originally built in 1890 as a royal residence, it's soon to be reintroduced as a contemporary spa and health centre. On the premises: a 500sq m sauna, kneipping baths, a private ladies spa and a separate medical facility, not to mention the sunken garden, library and salon. Farther east, in Bavaria, **Schloss Elmau** (schloss-elmau.de) already boasts four spas, a concert hall and Western Europe's largest hammam, but it will unveil its crowning jewel later this year: a six-storey stand-alone wellness retreat housing 47 suites, two restaurants and a private spa with sweeping mountain views. ♦



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: ESTHER QUELLE; GIANLUCA COLLA; © THE GAINSBOROUGH BATH SPA; © VILLA STÉPHANIE