



SHA WELLNESS CLINIC

ALICANTE, SPAIN

WEIGHT
LOSS

COMPREHENSIVE THERAPIES WITH LASTING EFFECTS

It's impossible not to wonder why a swathe of real estate with views of Benidorm seemed like the perfect spot for a health clinic. But the towering condo-blocks of the Costa Blanca didn't deter owner Alfredo Bataller when he built and opened his medi clinic 12 years ago. And it certainly hasn't put off SHA's guests, including Kylie Minogue and Olga Kurylenko, who've been filling the 92 slick suites and 65,000 square feet of wellness space ever since, with 40 per cent of them returning within 18 months. Following his own serious health diagnosis – which improved dramatically after diet and lifestyle changes promoted by macrobiotic specialist Michio Kushi – Bataller built SHA to encourage guests to become CEOs of their own health. And while the food here is no longer macrobiotic, Kushi's name is still assigned to the most restrictive of the three Mediterranean- and Japanese-based, calorie-varied diets, balanced according to SHA's food model: rich in grains, vegetables and legumes, with a little seafood and no sugar, eggs, meat or dairy. While the majority of people come for weight loss, other popular plans

THE IN-HOUSE NEUROSCIENTIST IS ACHIEVING IMPRESSIVE RESULTS WITH NASA-DEVELOPED EQUIPMENT

include Sleep Recovery and Anti-Tobacco. Also in demand is the Stress Management programme to tackle burnout. Like other clinics, SHA treats people using a blend of Eastern and Western philosophies. But it's the sunny antithesis to many of its chilly northern European counterparts, where accessing good health can occasionally feel like a punishment. SHA is comparatively joyous. If it weren't for the guests wafting about in towelling robes, it could be mistaken for a flashy beach club. Next door are 11 family-friendly villas, some with outdoor barbecue kitchens and futuristic glass lap pools that seem to float mid-air. In the hydrotherapy area, folk get chatty between trips to the sauna and vast jet pools. Most unique is in-house neuroscientist Dr Bruno Ribeiro, who is achieving impressive results using whizzy NASA-developed equipment; during transcranial direct current stimulation, electrodes are popped through a cap to stimulate parts of the brain and help to diagnose and address depression, addiction, insomnia and even Alzheimer's. And though the medical element is at the core of the schedules, with treatments such as immune-system-boosting ozone therapy, there's also a dedicated aesthetic department and raft of hi-tech facial and body therapies including Thermage and VelaShape. In a dream world you might pick up SHA and pop it in the healing setting of unimpeded nature. But it's easy to forgive the location after experiencing the successful matrix (delectable healthy food, encouraging staff, innovative treatments) that makes attaining that holy grail of wellness, longevity, a real possibility. **INSIDER TIP** Squint hard enough at sunset and you could almost be gazing over downtown LA. And SHA is expanding to Mexico and the Middle East in the future, so you can soon access all the magic with no squinting needed. **BOOK IT** Healing Holidays (+44 20 7843 3592; healingholidays.com/conde-nast) offers a seven-night Rebalance programme from £4,099 per person, full board, including flights and transfers. Healing Holidays exclusive: book a seven-night programme and receive a room upgrade and one 50-minute massage.

