

PALACE MERANO

Merano, Italy

Do not be seduced by the old-school glamour of Northern Italy's most legendary spa hotel. Past the ornate chandeliers, the swathes of marble and explosions of orchids lies a steely approach to wellness that takes no prisoners. Their infamous detox method is not for the faint-hearted: fasting for 30 hours on broth gives way to marginally more filling fare (delicate, organic vegetable risotto) – with a daily side of hydro-mud therapy. This much-lauded ritual involves bathing in essential oil-rich waters, a detoxifying seaweed and clay wrap, plus a bracing (and rather undignified) rinse-down with a power hose – excellent for jet lag and cellulite. The daily massages incorporate suctioning cups to reduce inflammation and sweep away toxins, while stern white-coated doctors prescribe blood tests, full body scans and personal training sessions. It's gruelling, yes – but the climate is year-round sublime, and the forest views from the new Castello rooftop suite are nothing short of transporting. Most guests lose half a stone in a week, and new-found healthy habits remain intact long after departure.



Healing Holidays (healing-holidays.com) offers a seven-night Detox programme, from £4,999, including flights and transfers.