



## GRAND RESORT BAD RAGAZ

WEIGHT  
LOSS

BAD RAGAZ, SWITZERLAND

THE GRANDEST MEDI-SPA SHOWS A MORE HOLISTIC SIDE

If spas had DNA, Grand Resort Bad Ragaz would be Mitochondrial Eve. Its thermal waters were discovered way back in 1242, and it was a place of pilgrimage long before 1840, when the waters were piped into town. This is a spa in the old European tradition – social as well as sybaritic, hedonistic as well as healthy. For anyone who likes their wellness experience serious with a side order of decadent excess. It's big, really big; unashamedly glitzy in places, confident in its pedigree. It very nearly bustles. For the Swiss, it's home from home – the largest and most comprehensive spa in the country – a place to wind down with the family (children are fully welcomed), to eat well, to natter in the sauna. Global guests tend to be on a mission to consult the 70-strong team of specialists (the medical centre has its own operating theatre and laboratory). Dermatologist Dr Brigitte Bollinger zaps fat and freezes frowns in the anti-ageing clinic. She's renowned for her light hand on fillers. Many sneak in for a Vampire Plasma Lift or a full-on nip-and-tuck under the guise of taking the waters. The beauty of this place is that nobody knows what you're up to. Sports physician Dr Christian Schlegel is another draw – top athletes, including Roger Federer, swear by him. However the Tamina Therme spa is the real knockout – it soars with the splendour of a gleaming white temple and it's well worth braving the busyness. Sauna is raised to an art form here, with resident masters manipulating heat and fragrance alongside complicated towel-waving. And yet for all of that noise and bluster, the all-encompassing keep-everyone-happy nature of Bad Ragaz, it is also somewhere to retreat to and to

**TO GET IMMEDIATE FOCUS ON INNER MINDFULNESS, ONE PARTICULARLY INTENSE RITUAL BEGINS IN TOTAL DARKNESS**

recuperate. The four haki treatments are a great example of this. Created by musician and physical therapist Harald Kitz (and with their own dedicated treatment space), they are designed specifically to clear the head, via a series of pressure points on the shoulders, neck and skull, plus vibrational work and rhythmic pulling and stretching. The Reconciliation ritual is the most intense of them all. To get immediate focus on inner mindfulness, it begins in total darkness in the Room of the Senses. Negative thoughts are then washed away in the thermal water Rain Hall. A massage

and full-body warm-oil treatment follows before the tension-relieving haki head treatment to finish. It's a wanton melange of deep bodywork, sensory overload, navel-gazing and mystical mindwarp. Of course, you could do a

Greta Garbo here, but it would rather be missing the point. If you prefer your spa as a paean to pristine purity, stick to that other Swiss paragon, Clinique La Prairie. Bad Ragaz, by contrast, is a Vanity Fair of a destination – an exuberant, multi-faceted, big-hearted, full-of-surprises ride. It's a chance to relive the golden age of spa, a multi-sensory experience that is the antithesis of austere.

**INSIDER TIP** Book an early-morning haki Flow deluxe session (in which you're floated and stretched in the thermal water, like watsu) and have Tamina Therme all to yourself, as the treatment takes place before the doors open to the public.

**BOOK IT** Healing Holidays (+44 20 7843 3592; [healingholidays.co.uk/condenast](http://healingholidays.co.uk/condenast)) offers three nights from £895 per person, including flights and train transfers.