

## GAME CHANGERS



### CANYON RANCH ARIZONA, USA

**IN BRIEF** An all-American fat burner with a macho-minded edge

**THE LOWDOWN** This desert retreat has been offering dietary guidance for over 35 years and has two resorts in the USA. This one is located just outside Tucson in the Sonoran Desert, spread over 150 acres at the foot of the Santa Catalina Mountains. The climate is perfect - dry heat, cool early mornings and evenings; the sense of surrounding space and freedom is exhilarating. The adobe buildings are set among colourful flowers, pretty rock gardens and enormous saguaro cacti. Although 240 guests can stay at a time, it never feels crowded. The rooms are generous in size and unremarkable in decor, but that's fine as you're only ever going to be in them to shower, change and sleep. On arrival there is a session with a nurse who will advise on a programme of activities. Drop-in classes include fun salsa, hardcore heart-burning cardio, fit-strip, ta'i chi, tennis and golf. There's an unusual emphasis on exercise, as compared with European spas, and the gym is outstanding. Everything from the calorie-counted meals in the two restaurants through to walks or bicycle rides is included. Treatments in the gigantic spa complex, health consultations and spiritual-guidance sessions all cost extra. As do the courses on stress and mood management (the Ranch experts recently

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co-authored *30 Days to a Better Brain* with Richard Carmona, former United States Surgeon General). The resort's remarkably healthy octogenarian co-founder, Mel Zukerman, lives on the property. Once an overweight, over-stressed builder, he founded his new home because he couldn't find a male-friendly spa where he could get in shape. If you are a man whose business life entails too many long lunches and cocktails, you will benefit enormously from a stint here. Book consultations with exercise physiologist Kent Waller and nutrition expert Kiely Wilkins. By the third day your muscles should ache; meaning a massage is essential (ask for Renee Stuckler). If you follow the reasonable advice doled out on the Ranch, you should leave lighter; our tester lost eight pounds in a week.

**INSIDER TIP** A week before you're scheduled to arrive you will be sent an activities listing. Study it carefully, plot and plan and return by email. It will save hours of frustration after you have arrived.

**BOOK IT** Healing Holidays (+44 20 7843 3592; [www.healingholidays.co.uk/condenast](http://www.healingholidays.co.uk/condenast)) offers four nights from £2,649 per person full board, including flights, transfers, daily fitness classes and an allowance of around £90 to be used towards spa, sports and integrative wellness services.