



Healthy breaks

This quarter we take a look at the week-long detox at Retreat-Biarritz, in South West France.

What's on offer

A detox and “deep colon cleanse”, which incorporates three days on just juice.

Where is the retreat?

It's located just outside Biarritz, in the South West of France, between the Pyrenees and the Atlantic sea. It's surrounded by spectacular scenery and easy to get to via cheap flights into Biarritz.

Who's behind it?

Fiona Robertson is the creator of the retreat as well as the Reiki instructor. A dynamic mum of two, she has poured heart and soul into this project – and it shows!

What is the essence of the retreat?

Says Robertson, “Anyone can do a detox

programme and fast at home, but our retreat provides a sanctuary free of the usual pressures and distractions. By getting down to basics again via the powerful tool of fasting, we open up ourselves to enormous possibilities of emotional healing and spiritual growth, as well as all the physical benefits of cleansing.”

What does a week at the retreat cost?

From 870.00 euros in a private studio apartment or 750.00 in a shared studio with a friend or partner. This includes accommodation, all juices and supplements for the detox programme, all food and drink, three therapy sessions (flotation, massage and Reiki), guided walks in the Pyrenees and trips into Biarritz and St Jean de Luz and transfer from Biarritz airport to the retreat. Additional therapies are 75 euros an hour.





Fiona Robertson explains how it works

“Fasting is a means of resting the digestive system. You do not eat solid food at all and you restrict the types of fluids you are drinking. This frees up energy for the body to undertake any necessary detoxification and repair work. Animals naturally fast when they are sick or injured, as do small children. Long before the word “doctor” came to be used, priests, elders and chiefs provided sanctuaries where people could go and fast.

On our programme, for the first three days of the week you are served a shake five times a day. This will very effectively sweep through your digestive system to release unwanted material. The shake is made from a mix of psyllium (a natural organic source of fibre), bentonite clay (which draws out toxins from deep inside your cells), and apple juice. It is a

miracle shake as everything that comes into contact with it will be absorbed and eliminated along with it. Regular enzymes and probiotics are taken to loosen any obstacles in your digestive system and help the shake do its work more effectively.

Enzymes, probiotics and the evening vegetable broth (a rich source of electrolytes) are wonderful at helping to purify the blood, break down fats, cleanse the colon, replace good bacteria, maintain proper cholesterol levels and keep your energy levels at their peak. While we usually start life with a relatively healthy intestinal tract, the effects of infections, antibiotics, alcohol, stress and poor diet very often devastate healthy bacteria and enzyme levels, which can lead to health problems.

To speed up the elimination of toxins we teach you how to take an enema. This

will improve the removal of waste as well as lighten the load on your whole body by 100%. The enema is an easy way to gently inflate the colon with warm water and flush out old matter and get the muscles toned and working effectively.

The four days after the three-day fast are as important, if not more so, than the fast itself, as they involve the slow re-introduction of foods by food group. We educate you about the importance of living, whole and raw foods using practical demonstrations.

We spend time personally coaching you and creating a menu that can be used when you return home, including favourite meals with a raw twist. These help you incorporate more raw and high living food content into your daily meals. That way you can go at your own speed and enjoy what you create.”

My week on retreat

By Suzanne MacCarron, Recovery and Addiction Centre Manager

This is a place where you are forced to rest and I was a little scared before I came as I knew I would find that false floor I'd been keeping up for so long. With the help of Fiona, Reiki, massages and reading perfectly timed articles (that Fiona handed to me using her intuition as to what was going on for me), I discovered I could remove that false floor once and for all.

I went home with so much more than clean insides. As I experienced the week, I opened up to the ability to listen to my body and what it is telling me it really needs. If I sit quietly and stop the chatter I can hear it and it's not that scary now. I was taught to totally and utterly accept myself and what that really means, feels like and how to experience it.

I came to realise that clothes, alcohol, the internet and TV were the distractions I use to save me from the feelings I don't want to listen to or acknowledge. I gained a new sense of self worth and belief in myself and my ability to cope with my busy and sometimes chaotic life. Fiona set me tasks to do by myself to help me work out what I really want from my future. I did these in as much detail as I could. I thought big and got a fantastic feeling of freedom with this new vision clear in my mind.

The fast and colon cleanse enabled me to clear out all the rubbish and emotional debris, and I learned how to rebuild from my foundations up with healthy living foods and positive imagery that will allow me to remain open to change.

I was not hungry at all and the therapies, including the walks in the mountains, were all perfectly timed. I have never been so cared for and had to do absolutely nothing. This was the real holiday that I have never allowed myself to have before.

I slept more than I have ever slept before. I felt part of the family here and also had the privacy to cocoon myself in my apartment whenever I wanted to. I shall miss this place, but I know I can always come back when I am ready to grow and change some more.

I lost the weight I wanted to lose, I feel lighter and much brighter, and I made some huge decisions whilst I detoxed. I gained so much knowledge that I am excited to go home and clear out the old to bring in the new.

Retreat-Biarritz is open year round and runs weekly programmes of Fasting and colon cleansing or hands-on raw food preparation. For further information about programmes, availability and prices please see www.retreatbiarritz.com or call 0033 559 54 56 35.