

**BRITISH**

GENTLEMEN'S QUARTERLY  
APRIL 2020 £3.99

'There was  
SMOKE and it  
was like, "BYE."  
See you. I'm  
checking OUT''

World exclusive

# DANIEL CRAIG

His last Bond. His last interview

Story by Sam Knight  
Photographed by Lachlan Bailey



# Wellness

Edited by  
Paul Henderson

To infinity and beyond. Your wellbeing journey begins here...

In association with

Healing  Holidays

Victoria Pendleton is **Kamalaya's** jungle queen, p.130. The new **Chiva-Som** experience, p.136. Reach the Himalayan high life at **Ananda**, p.142 and 'The Cure', live at **Vivamayr**, p.145

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# Editor's Letter

**W**elcome to *GQ* Wellness. It's been a long time coming but, when you consider that the retreats featured in our first healthy travel supplement are life-affirming, life-changing and possibly even life-extending, we think it's been worth waiting for.

And in our quest to find the world's best resorts, we left no hot-stone unturned.

From Austrian "cure" clinics and medi-spas on the Costa Blanca, through to luxury Asian escapes and even a yoga retreat nestled in the foothills of the Himalayas, for our team of "spa-ficionados", no Thai massage was too firm, no mindful meditation too relaxing, and no aromatic body scrub too indulgent.

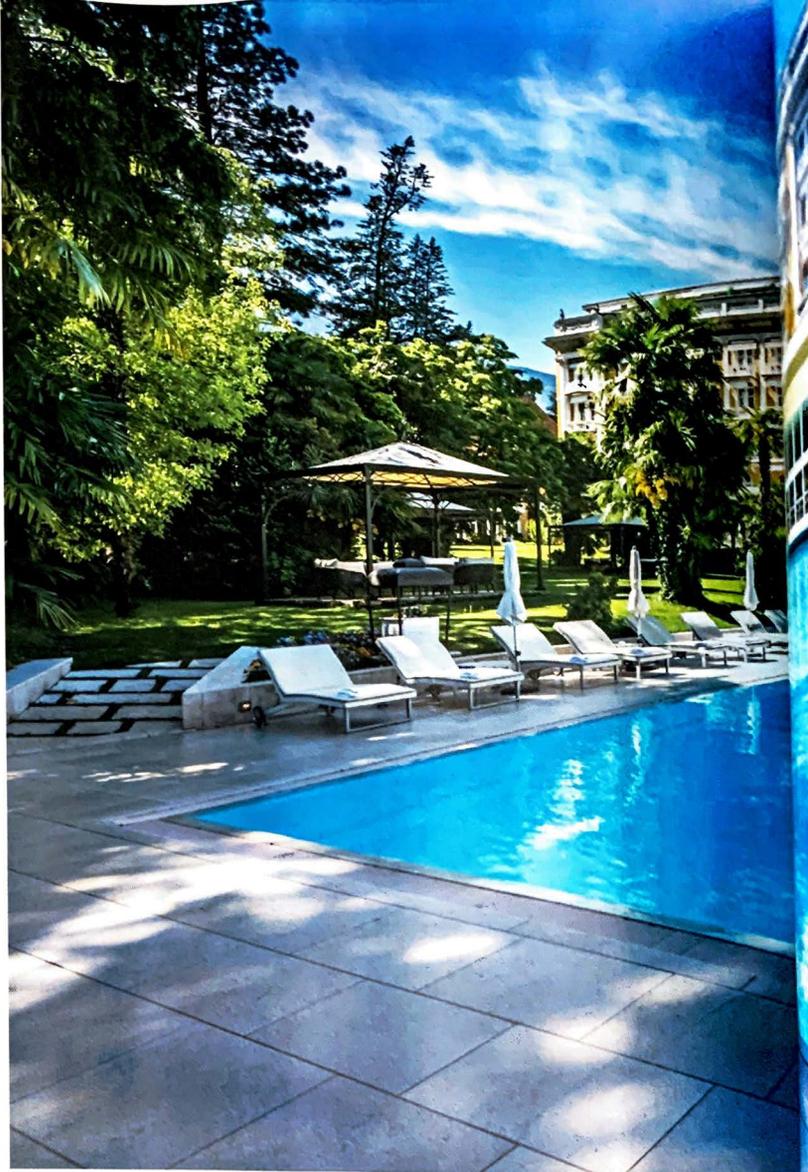
Of course, it wasn't all pampering and purifying. As serious wellness warriors will know there is no gain without a little pain. We signed up for the diet plans, the digital detox and the colonic irrigation without complaint (and only minimal tears), emerging from our experiences a little older and wiser, but looking younger and healthier.

This is not just travel to broaden the mind, but also to shrink the waistline and make your stress and worries disappear. All of which means *GQ* Wellness is seriously good for your health. Enjoy the journey.

**Paul Henderson,**  
Editor *GQ* Wellness

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Best for detoxing

## Fit for a KING

Palace Merano in South Tyrol is where a little hard work can help you rediscover a version of yourself you forgot existed

Story by **George Chesterton**

**P**alace Merano is the epicentre of the health and lifestyle philosophy of guru Henri Chenot, and although it has all the hallmarks of a grand hotel, it is really more of a hole in the time and space continuum, from which you reappear a week after entering a decade younger. It's

a remarkable hub of committed and skilful staff, wonderful facilities and tiny food portions.

Merano is in South Tyrol, a formally Austrian region now part of Italy, nestled within a basin at the entrance to the Passeier Valley. It's flanked on three sides by mountains that are perfect for long, challenging walks to burn off

Between yoga, treatments and meditation there's still time for the pool in Ananda



Best for yoga

# There's no place like OM

A visit to the palatial peace of Ananda in India provides a setting as wonderfully restorative as the treatments themselves

Story by Naomi Annand

When it comes to yoga retreats I'm a gnarly old veteran. I've been on them and run them more times than I can count and in all manner of places: English country houses, ashrams in the Moroccan desert, hilltop hideaways in Sri Lanka. I thought I knew all there was to know about yoga retreats.

And then I went to Ananda. Housed in an old viceregal palace perched high above the city of Rishikesh in the foothills of the Himalayas, the spa has taken the yoga retreat and elevated it to new dizzying heights: the classes are one-to-one, the chefs create an ayurvedic menu tailored to your personal energetic profile and the setting is unparalleled when it comes to meditative tranquillity.

Ahead of my stay, I had been told to prepare by waking at 6am each day for a week and downing a cleansing

drink made from boiled cinnamon sticks, cumin seeds and ginger. And so I arrived expecting a spartan, monastic place run to a dogmatic timetable, but mercifully Ananda turned out to be the kind of retreat centre where the serenity comes with a smile and the rules aren't too rigidly enforced.

Having arrived in the dark, I woke in my compact but pleasant room to an awe-inspiring view from my balcony: in the foreground, the beautifully manicured gardens of Ananda, brightly coloured birds singing gaily in the trees; and in the background, a great sweep of mountains mistily purple and hazily blue. For anyone seeking enlightenment this surely would be the place to start the search.

Every stay at Ananda starts with a consultation with an ayurvedic doctor. According to the ayurvedic system we

are all born with one of three Doshas – Vata, Pitta, or Kapha – which governs the way we think, feel and look. In order to keep your Dosha in balance – and your mental and physical health in its optimal state – you need to eat, think and move in a way that works in harmony with your energetic profile. I discovered that I am Vata, information that was relayed to the chefs who then put together my menu for the week with an emphasis on Vata-friendly cooked foods. That meant featherlight rice pancakes (masala dosas), delicious dahl and warm turmeric drinks for breakfast. For lunch and dinner, I asked for a menu heavy with Indian food – others were eating east Asian and European dishes – so that meant fresh and flavoursome curries served with parathas, rotis and rice.

Quickly, my days settled into a gloriously simple pattern. I would start the day early with a group yoga class, and then, after breakfast I would head to a one-to-one session at an open-sided shala in the woods where the air was fragrant with lemongrass and the sound of running water soothed the senses. Over the course of each session we worked through every joint, all of it a world away from hot sweaty gym-style yoga so often practised in the West.

After this I would have some free time to use the gym or just laze about the pool reading my book. One day, I took a trip to the Ganges and on another I went on a mountain hike to a temple with views of the Himalayas.

## It was a world away from the sweaty gym-style yoga so often practised in the West



Ananda near Rishikesh blends modern facilities and peaceful spaces with the splendour of a viceregal palace

Then I was guided through gayatri mantra chanting and pranayama breathing, before finishing with a long calming meditation.

In the final treat before dinner, it would be time for my daily treatment. On the first day, this meant abhyanga, a blissful, two-therapist, four-hand, full-body massage with medicated essential oils. On the second day, I had a reflexology session during which the therapist correctly diagnosed an ongoing shoulder condition. On subsequent days I had a kundalini back massage steeped in aromatherapy oils; a Shirodhara treatment, which involves stress-busting hot oil being poured over your head, and, finally, a Rose quartz facial to balance my chakras.

Anand is my married name. My husband claims it means “divine bliss”. But he has one “n” too many and Anand almost certainly means “someone from the Scottish town of Annan”. It is the Hindi Anand which means “divine bliss” and after a week at Ananda I felt worthy of the name. *Yoga: A Manual For Life*, by Naomi Annand (£20, Bloomsbury) is out now.

### The poses

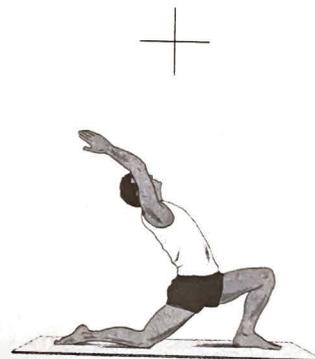
## Three moves for the morning

Start the day the Ananda way with these beginner body shapes.



### Standing side bend

A brilliant pose for those who will spend a lot of their day sitting down as it opens up the space between the vertebrae and awakens the side body.



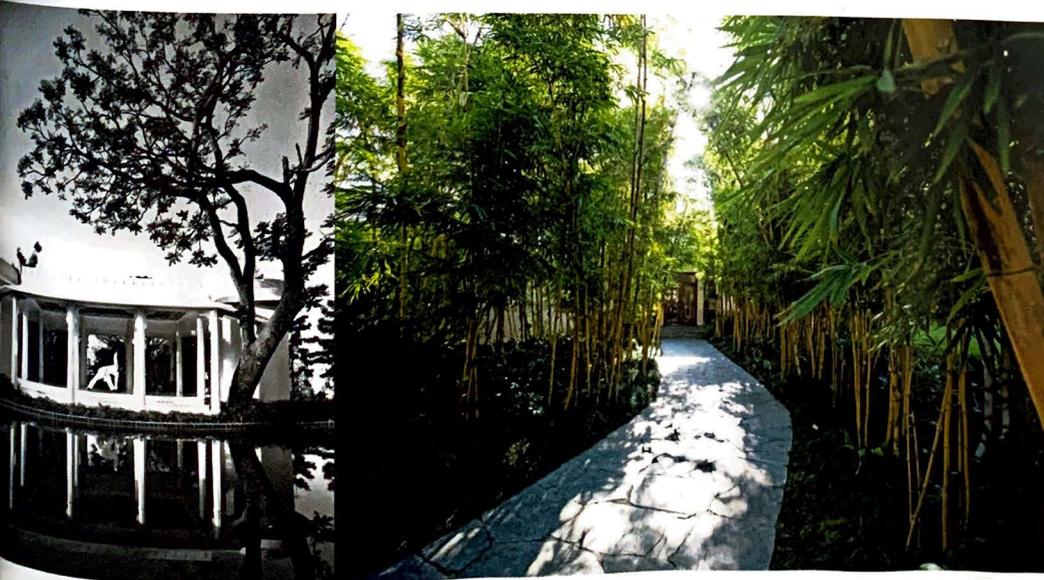
### Low-lunge with a back bend

An invigorating pose that opens up the respiratory muscles and gets your system going.



### Cat pose

Helps to power up your abdominal muscles, and stimulate your digestive system.



Healing Holidays can arrange a 7-night Comprehensive Yoga programme from £3,099 per person sharing, including British Airways flights, transfers, full board accommodation and inclusions of the Comprehensive Yoga programme. For more details, visit: [healingholidays.com/gq](http://healingholidays.com/gq) Tel: 020-7529 8549.