



NELSON
Split Apple Retreat

Doubling as a luxury lodge, this destination retreat in the Abel Tasman National Park opens onto two golden-sand beaches, one with a rock formation that resembles a split apple. Wellness packages of between three and seven nights include a health consultation, nature hikes, cooking lessons, Pilates, massage and guided mindfulness meditation. You can also opt for a personalised programme; co-owner and chef Pen Lee make healthy dishes taste sinful, and her doctor husband Lee Nelson promises that blood tests on key health markers will improve. Good luck bearing yourself away from the infinity pool that spills over the horizon.

1 About five hours' drive north of Christchurch and a short flight or ferry trip and drive from Wellington, Nelson is New Zealand's sunshine capital. An arty, relaxed city known for its Saturday market, it's also a handy base to explore nearby beaches where you can engage in outdoor adventures like kayaking and scenic flights.

QUEENSTOWN
Aro Hā Wellness Retreat

If any place can inspire wellness, Aro Hā takes the cake. This multi-award-winning retreat at a sublime plan in Glenorchy offers "wellness adventures" that don't separate the body and the mind. It runs two or three group retreats each month except June. Typically lasting five, six or seven days, these programmes include nature hikes, yoga, body-strengthening classes, plant-based meals, spa therapies, massages, and mindfulness meditations. Founders Chris Madison and Damien Chaparro believe that reconnecting with nature and being present in the moment can create life-altering change. Most guests—especially honeymooners—fly in especially to staying in eco-friendly cabins with breathtaking lake and mountain views.

1 Less than two hours' flight from Auckland, Queenstown's New Zealand's adventure capital. The 45-minute drive from Queenstown to the small town of Glenorchy boasts scenery straight out of *The Lord of the Rings* films.

CHRISTCHURCH
Shunyata Retreat and Day Spa

Overlooking Diamond Harbour at its secluded bay, Shunyata meaning "openness" Retreat and Day Spa aims to help you ditch unhelpful behaviour patterns for a lasting change. Warm, welcoming owner Paru Clark, who speaks fluent French and Spanish, has trained in just about every wellness practice imaginable, and works one-on-one. While she can personalise retreats, the set packages are the most popular: from three-night testers to five- or seven-day cleansing, detoxing and weight loss retreats. Think yoga, meditation, counselling, sugar-free meals and bodywork sessions. You can also take or leave alternative therapies such as "The Journey", or you may prefer a pampering-only package or romantic couples' retreat.

1 Explore volcanic beaches and coastal walks near Diamond Harbour on Banks Peninsula's northern coast. It's a 10-minute ferry trip to the wee port town of Lyttelton and a 45-minute drive to Christchurch, where restaurants, cafes, art projects and a shipping container mall have risen from the rubble of the 2010 and 2011 earthquakes.

COROMANDEL PENINSULA
Tikapa Moana Eco Spa Retreat

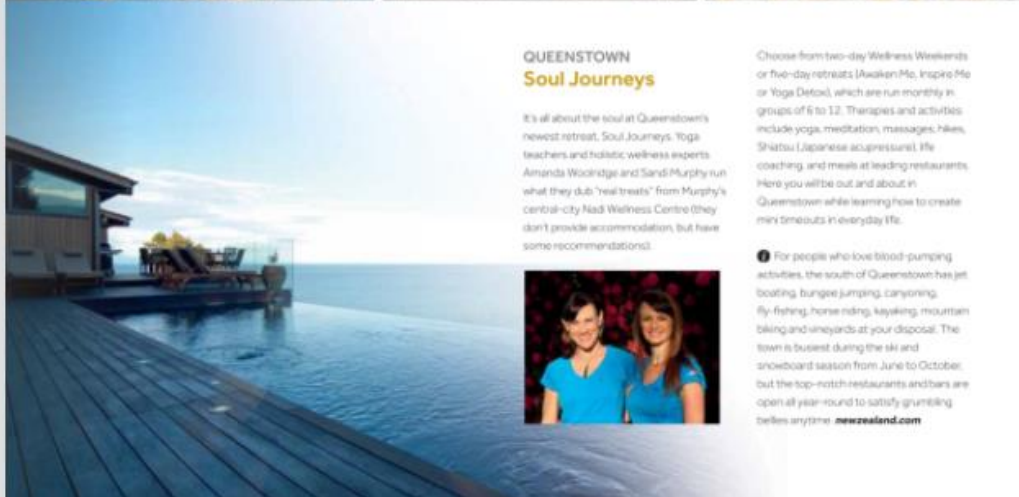
Marilyn and Bill Brownlee's organic lifestyle block doubles as a retreat for anything from time out to life change. You can decide how long to stay or ask about which treatments you want to try. The massages, which draw from Lomi Lomi (Hawaiian massage), reflexology and acupressure, can sure unwind those tired muscles. With her Watsu treatment, an aquatic therapy combining massage, Shatsu (Japanese acupressure) and joint mobilisation, Marilyn bends, stretches and swirls your body in dance-like movements in a solar-heated pool. Sweat out those toxins in the far-infrared sauna, savour the spa, devour the endless tamaritos and enjoy the feeling of utter relaxation.

1 The quiet, peaceful Firth of Thames (aka Tikapa Moana) has kayaking, cycling, a bird sanctuary and hot springs. It's a 90-minute drive south-east of Auckland's main metropolis and on the coastal route to the Coromandel Peninsula, where city folk flock to beaches and boats over summer.

The Wellness of it all

These high-end retreats in New Zealand are great jump-off points to kickstart your health and fitness lifestyle.

Flying off to another country for a wellness retreat is fast becoming a trend for travellers nowadays. In recent years, some of these high-end retreats have become primary destinations rather than just stopovers. Improving one's well-being is indeed not all about spas and massages anymore, but also bodywork like yoga and Pilates. Whether you want to recharge weary physiques, create healthy habits or make life changes, here are noteworthy wellness spots in New Zealand you could try:



QUEENSTOWN
Soul Journeys

It's all about the soul at Queenstown's newest retreat, Soul Journeys. Yoga teachers and holistic wellness experts Amanda Woolridge and Sarah Murphy run what they dub "real retreats" from Murphy's central-city Nad Wellness Centre (they don't provide accommodation, but have some recommendations).



Choose from two-day Wellness Weekends or five-day retreats (Awaken Me, Inspire Me or Yoga Detox), which are run mostly in groups of 6 to 12. Therapies and activities include yoga, meditation, massages, hikes, Shatsu (Japanese acupressure), life coaching, and meals at leading restaurants here you will be out and about in Queenstown while learning how to create mini breakouts in everyday life.

1 For people who love blood-pumping activities, the south of Queenstown has jet boating, bungee jumping, canyoning, fly-fishing, horse riding, kayaking, mountain biking and vineyards at your disposal. The town is busiest during the ski and snowboard season from June to October, but the top-notch restaurants and bars are open all year-round to satisfy grumbling bellies anytime. wwwzealand.com