



**WELL  
CHECK**  
REBECCA WADEY

# ON RETREAT

*Ensemble* co-founder and our resident wellbeing enthusiast, **Rebecca Wadey**, on the wellbeing products and practices she's enjoyed recently. This week, the power of the health retreat.

I am a health retreat junkie. I love turning up by myself into a slightly confronting situation, finding solace in the kinship of strangers (a demon shared is a demon halved, after all) and abdicating responsibility for the boring parts of life (cooking, cleaning, being on time) to other people. My first health retreat was in Koh Samui, Thailand, in 2000. I did two coffee enemas a day, drank nothing but pineapple juice and coconut water, and deliriously observed rats run through the floorboards and roof of my thatched hut at night.

Blessedly, Aro Ha is nothing like that. No attention to detail has been spared in this Scandinavian-inspired architectural masterpiece overlooking Lake Wakatipu in Glenorchy. Here, the landscape is the hero feature and the luxe buildings (including possibly the world's most Instagrammable yoga studio; Reese Witherspoon has practised in it) simply

serve to enhance it.

The daily schedule at Aro Ha goes something like this: Wake to a singing bowl outside your room at around 6am (time is a mere construct at Aro Ha, the leaders are vague on the finer details, and we are encouraged to not use our phones), yoga in said studio shortly thereafter, breakfast (all meals are plant-based, with up to 45% of the food grown on site, but substantial. The stand-out breakfast was a raw bagel with realistic 'salmon' of cured carrot with nut 'cheese' and sprouts), then an off-site hike followed by lunch, a massage, a lesson or learning of some kind (fermentation workshops, pilates, breathwork and journaling practices were all on offer) and/or time spent in their dreamy sauna and plunge pool with a view, before dinner followed by a specially crafted shot of lavender, tart cherry and magnesium, then yin yoga before bed. Honestly, it's a vibe.

And for anyone who is able to treat themselves to this luxury in today's world it's very well worth it.

But Aro Ha is sanguine about how practical it is to live like that (although the delightful, joy-filled and compassionate leaders all seem to readily embody the spirit, hiking around the motu together in their spare time), describing our time on the last day as 'an intensive', not a reality.

The retreat's emphasis on nature, fresh air, fresh water and breathing is inspiring; those really are the fundamentals of wellbeing; they've simply enhanced them for us in the most supercharged of settings. My late-40s' foggy brain came away feeling so refreshed and revived, I've yet to go back to alcohol or coffee. And to help me keep the vibes alive? Aro Ha handily has a YouTube channel that houses movement and breathing practices to remind us to breathe in the outside world. — *Rebecca was hosted as guest of Aro Ha*

## SUNDAY SHOP

# SMELLS GOOD

A spritz of a chic room spray will refresh the air, with plenty of fragrant options.

