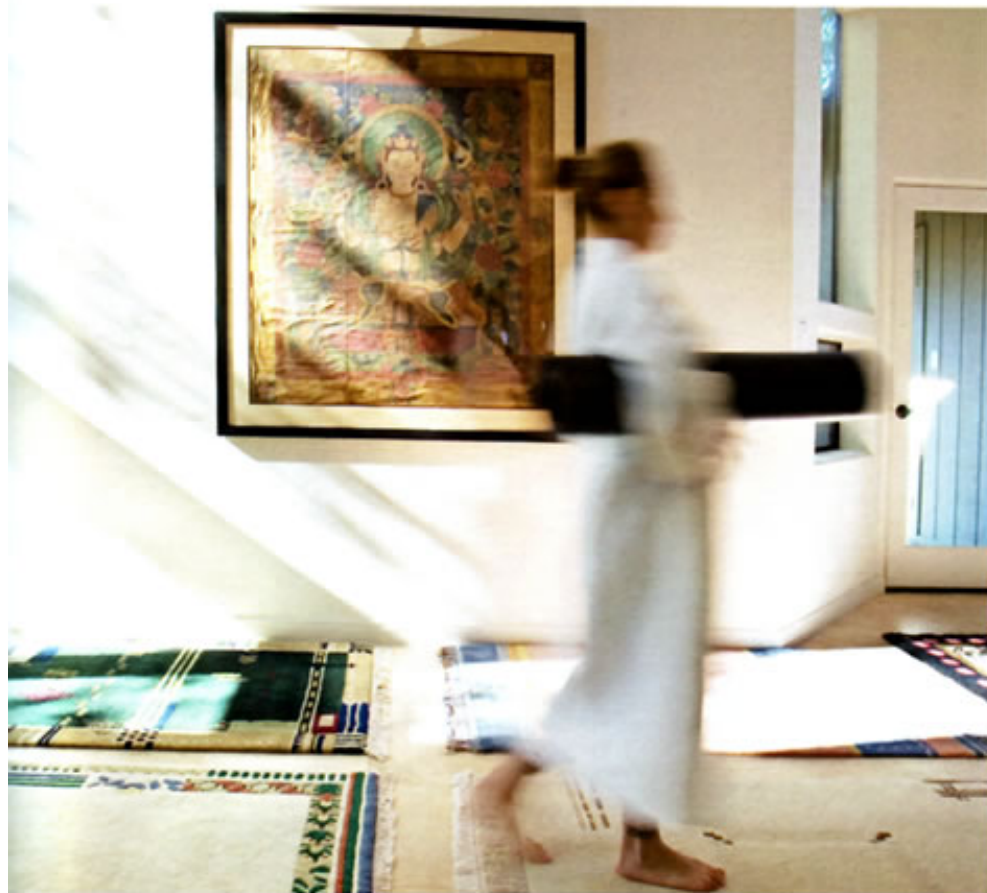


Nama-Stay!

Looking for a spa with results? The new Blue Pearl Laguna promises to change your life

| By Stefanie Phan | Photography by Edward Duarte |



THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE OM Clockwise from left: The cozy yoga room at Blue Pearl Laguna; the dining room; one of 12 bedrooms in the Laguna Canyon yoga retreat center.



"There's really no avoiding it," Katresha Moskios says to me as I settle into my room at Blue Pearl Laguna yoga retreat. "You will change." Tucked in Laguna Canyon, husband-and-wife team Geo and Katresha Moskios own one of O.C.'s best-kept new secrets. With 25 years running yoga retreats worldwide, the couple turned down Steve Wynn on an offer to work in Vegas ("The only people to say 'no' to Steve Wynn are us hippies," jokes Geo) to open Blue Pearl Laguna 11 months ago.

The all-inclusive retreat begins in the B&B-esque boutique spa, in one of 12 rooms—each with unique décor and a private bathroom. My first day begins with a glass of warm alkaline water and lemon (to balance my body's pH level) before entering the yoga room, which features colored lights sometimes incorporated into class for its healing properties. If you've dabbled in yoga in O.C., you've heard of Geo. The renowned yogi, who studied with Indra Devi and Swami Vishnu-Devananda in India, has taught 35 in-demand years and is the creator of Power Yoga.

After his class, I'm served half a grilled pear, sliced strawberries, a spoonful of plain yogurt and nuts. I ask if it's the first course. Granted, the plate is gorgeous and everything is organic, fresh and vegetarian, but it's a far cry from the three-egg omelet I would have ordered, considering the hike that follows. "People are surprised

that even though the servings are smaller, they don't get hungry," Katresha insists. I cleaned—almost licked—the plate, and she was right; I was satisfied.

Led by certified guides, each day usually consists of two hikes—a rigorous two-hour path post-breakfast and a calming beach walk before dinner. The hikes (providing much-needed cardio and toning) reminded me why I moved to California from NYC—we have a breathtaking backyard. After a light lunch, it's time for the daily hour-long massage, meditation facial and infrared sauna. The treatment trifecta draws out toxins and impurities, and incorporates co-owner Katresha's oils and creme. (The former model and Chanel spokesperson developed the all-natural skincare line after a devastating car accident left her face unrecognizable.) Another yoga class precedes dinner, which is followed by the night's energy, dreams or meditation workshop before bed.

It may seem New Age-y, but from the alkaline water down to the eight-hour-daily activities, the focus on cleansing keeps Katresha's promise of change intact. One week is ideal, but a three-day weekend is an accessible intro. Be warned though—"We've had people stay as long as a month," Katresha says. **B**

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