

TOWN & COUNTRY

SUMMER 2019

COLLEGE GIVING
AFTER THE
SCANDAL

WHERE'S
MOMMY?
A SUMMER CAMP
GUIDE TO
PLASTIC SURGERY

JACKIE O's
SECRET
COCKTAIL RECIPE

THE MOST
TOXIC
NAME
IN
PHILANTHROPY

THIS
WOMAN
WILL CHANGE

THE
WORLD

MELINDA GATES &
75 Others Who
Give Us Hope

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LOOKING GLASS

THE \$100,000 FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH

What price wellness? The world's most expensive spa just upped the ante.

By April Long

For nearly a century deep-pocketed wellness seekers have flocked to Montreux to check into Clinique La Prairie, a serene medi-spa nestled on a hillside overlooking the crystalline calm of Lake Geneva. They come to fill their lungs with salubrious Alpine air, of course, but there's a bigger draw: a much-whispered-about, eye-wateringly expensive "cure" involving injections of lamb fetus cells, believed by many to be a fountain of youth. Long renowned as the world's priciest wellness assist, the procedure runs between \$25,000 and \$40,000 when undertaken at the clinic, but starting this summer CLP is introducing an even more rarefied experience: a private

chalet in Verbier, that postcard-perfect ski village so beloved by British royals, at which top-tier guests can undergo the famously enigmatic treatment in pampered solitude.

Originally devised by longevity pioneer Paul Niehans, who founded Clinique La Prairie in the 1930s, the animal cell regimen became famous when Pope Pius XII claimed that it had brought him back from the brink of death in 1953. Pontiff-resurrecting powers aside, Niehans's claim that his injections could slow, or even reverse, the aging process made them catnip for celebrities, royals, and heads of state; CLP is discreetly mum about its client list, but documented

devotees have included Charlie Chaplin, Marlene Dietrich, Greta Garbo, Winston Churchill, the Duke and Duchess of Windsor, and Mick Jagger. Niehans's science of the lambs has evolved over the years; the extract is now a highly purified, biologically active derivative of black sheep liver tissue (CLP maintains its own flock) and is administered via an easily swallowed gel rather than a jab in the derriere. It remains the core of the clinic's marquee Revitalization program, which involves two doses of the proprietary elixir administered over six medically supervised days—after which patients can expect 18 to 24 months of renewed energy and bolstered immunity.

HOT SPOT
VERBIER

DETOX HERE

A six-night stay in the chalet starts at \$100,000 for the **Revitalization program**, \$90,000 for the **Master Detox**.
CLINIQUELAPRAIRIE.COM

The Montreux retreat has also undergone a series of uber-upgrades, with the addition of a state-of-the-art aesthetic medical center, staffed by more than 50 doctors specializing in everything from cardiology to dentistry, and a sleek multilevel spa that houses a heated pool with views of the Alps and 12 treatment rooms equipped with every imaginable high-tech device for revivifying face and body. (The famous La Prairie skincare brand was sold off in 1984; CLP's aestheticians now use an exclusive line called, imaginatively, Swiss Perfection.) With only 39 rooms and suites and a staff-to-guest ratio of 6:1, the retreat has an atmosphere of quiet seclusion and attentive luxury. But when your average guest is worth about \$30 million, there's always impetus to raise the bar.

That's why, last year, CEO Simone Gibertoni began pondering how he could create something even more exclusive at a place where exclusivity already reigns supreme. "We have clients coming in who travel on private planes with their own chefs and doctors," he says, "so we thought, How can we give them an experience that's even better than what they're used to, but with the services of Clinique La Prairie?" He selected the Verbier chalet, which will be available only from the end of April to the end of September, for its

WHAT'S ON THE MENU

5 must-dos at CLP

1. DEEP(ER) TISSUE

Get your guts palpated with a digestion-aiding **Visceral Manipulation Massage**.

2. GRAVITY CHECK

Meditate on the **Zerobody Bed** (a weightlessness-simulating water mattress).

3. SHAPEWEAR

Slip into the mechanical **Balancer Pro Pants**, which knead away lower-body bloat.

4. WAIST MANAGEMENT

Strap on a **Fitsonic ultrasound belt** to supercharge calorie burn during your workout.

5. AURAL HEALTH

Try a **singing bowl "sound massage"** with a healer.

proximity to CLP's Montreux HQ and for its laid-back—but seriously posh—vibe.

The property's ski lodge—chic interior—think soaring ceilings, mirrored fireplaces, and plush sheepskin throws—encompasses a gleaming state-of-the-art kitchen, four bedrooms (including a master suite with a soaking tub), a screening

room, a wine cellar, a gym, a massage cabin, a sauna, a hammam, and an infinity pool. Outside, there's a cedar hot tub and a vast porch with a view of Mont Blanc and all the unsullied mountain air your lungs can gulp. But lest you flinch at the \$100,000 per week price tag, know this: You'll also benefit from a private chef, there to prepare CLP's innovative, Michelin-worthy vegan-leaning cuisine, plus an on-site personal trainer, massage therapist, and driver—and, of course, those magical Revitalization cell extracts, to be administered by an MD. If black sheep mojo isn't your thing, the chalet is also available to participants in CLP's weeklong Master Detox Program, which strikes gluten, dairy, sugar, alcohol, and caffeine off the menu.

The only possible downside is that more autonomy means more self-monitoring. After a required visit to the main CLP facility to undergo a battery of diagnostic tests to personalize your diet and fitness regimen, once you're ensconced in your Alpine playhouse you are left to your own devices. That means you don't get the withering frown you'd receive when begging for coffee on the Master Cleanse at the clinic. And there is the wine cellar. But if you succumb—well, you can always return next summer to buy yourself a few more years of healthy living. «

French Accents

Nothing says beach chic like a product with a Parisian pedigree.



LA ROCHE-POSAY ANTHELIOS 50 MINERAL SUNSCREEN-GENTLE LOTION (\$30), LAROCHE-POSAY.US; LANCOME LE FRENCH GLOW BRONZER (\$45), LANCOME-USA.COM; CLARINS REFRESHING AFTER SUN GEL (\$32), CLARINS.COM; CHANEL LE VERNIS LONGWEAR NAIL COLOR IN AFTERGLOW (\$28), CHANEL.COM; SISLEY PARIS HAIR RITUEL PROTECTIVE HAIR FLUID (\$90), NEIMANMARCUS.COM

SUNSET STRIPE
Brigitte Bardot
sur la plage,
circa 1955.

