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# AESTHETICS & BEAUTY



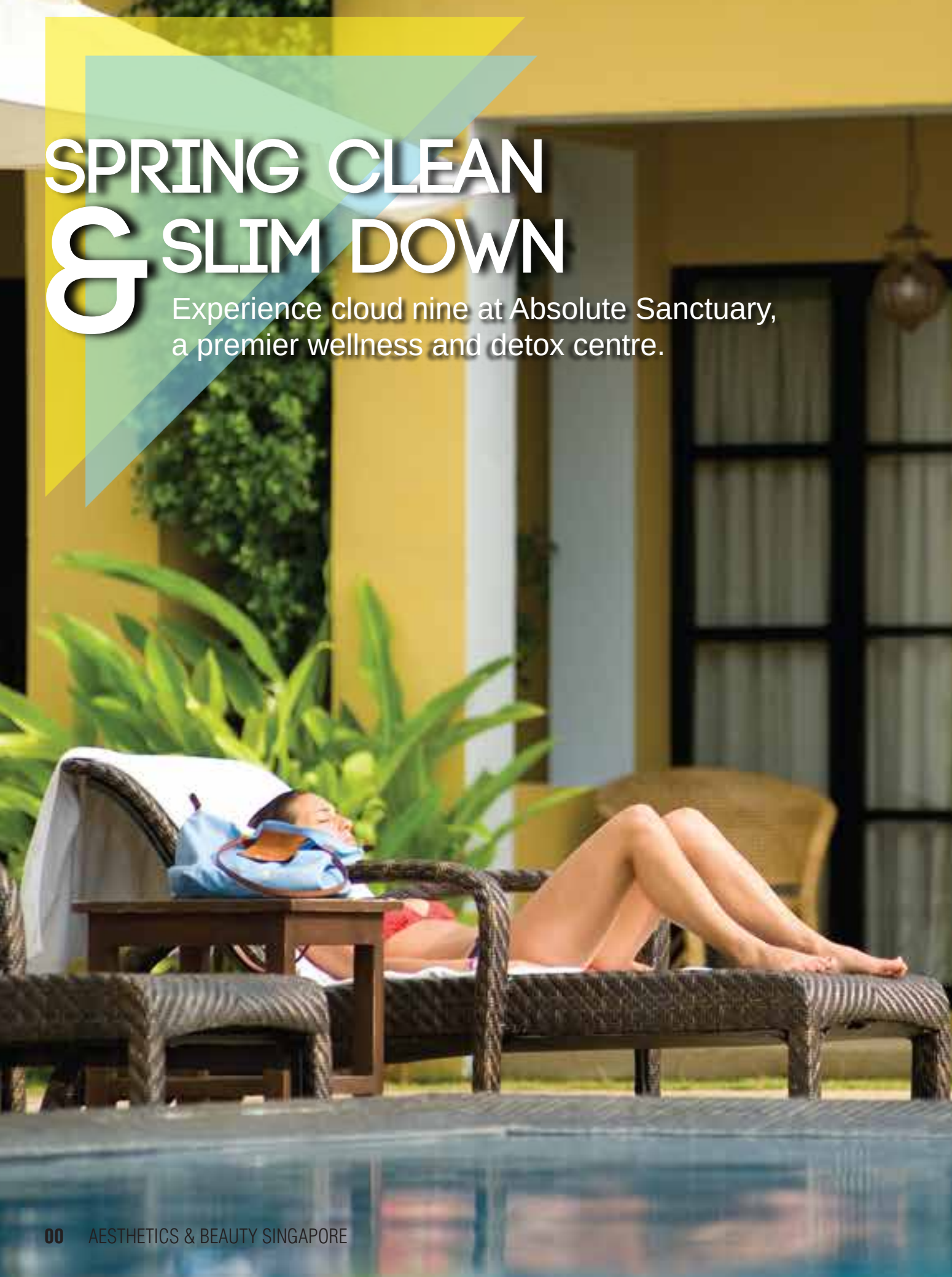
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# SPRING CLEAN & SLIM DOWN

Experience cloud nine at Absolute Sanctuary, a premier wellness and detox centre.



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Our bodies are exposed to toxic substances through food and modern city living. When these toxins overwhelm our detoxification pathways, our bodies react by falling sick or giving us aches and pains. This can even result in diseases in the long run.

That is why I think we should check ourselves into a detox retreat occasionally to clear accumulated waste products and stored toxins from the body. After hearing rave reviews about Absolute Sanctuary in Koh Samui, I booked myself for a 5-day Detox Package which involves three days of juice cleanse and two days of raw food or vegetarian food. For someone who loves food and is addicted to her daily coffees, this can be torture, but I convince myself that my body will thank me at the end, and jump on a plane.



Upon arrival, we are greeted with a liver flush drink to stimulate liver detoxification and gall bladder emptying. Made up on lime juice, ginger, garlic, extra virgin olive oil, paprika and orange juice, this reminded me of chicken rice chilli! Our juice cleanse started the next day and for the next three days, we were given four detox drinks, two nutritional shots, one coconut and endless vegetable broths daily – for breakfast, lunch, dinner and supper!



*I still craved food and suffered badly on the first day with a pounding headache and lethargy.*

The detox juices consist of an array of yummy cold-pressed juices that are made on the spot. Mixed with psyllium and bentonite clay which act as an intestinal cleanser and detoxificant, my favourites were watermelon, mint and basil as well as pineapple, lemongrass and mint. However, as delicious as they were, I still craved food and suffered badly on the first day with a pounding headache and lethargy.

At Absolute Sanctuary, they use coffee, apple cider vinegar and probiotic infusions together with highly purified reverse osmosis water for their colon hydrotherapy. This is a treatment where warm water infusions are passed into the colon via a pencil-thin tube to remove hardened matter and other undesirable particles such as old bile, fermenting food particles, gas pockets and mucous from the colon. As scary as it sounds, the treatment was actually very relaxing with a nurse assisting and giving me abdominal massages. Maybe it was seeing all the gunk come out of my body or the fact that I was getting coffee, but I felt much better after my colon hydrotherapy!

To keep their guests' minds off food, Absolute Sanctuary offers an extensive list of activities from yoga lessons and gym classes to alternative therapies such as reiki, astrology and flower essences. There is also free shuttle service to the main town and to the nearby beaches. Not wanting to push (or tempt) ourselves, we did gentle yoga lessons, indulged in detox massages and laid out by the pool.

Not everyone who stays here is on a detox programme. You can also enjoy their popular spa cuisine menu featuring raw and vegetarian food from their restaurant, called the Love Kitchen. The food is kept light with minimal seasoning to let the freshness of the vegetables come through. Great if you want to feel virtuous and manage your weight. I indulged a little and became hooked on their savoury gado gado which is an Indonesian vegetable salad tossed in a piquant peanut sauce and served with organic brown rice. My companion was addicted to their Jungle Brownie – raw brownies made from dates, cacao and coconut oil! There is also an alternative menu featuring white meats like chicken and fish cooked in healthy ways.



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I felt much better on the second day – my headache was gone, I was no longer hungry, my body felt light and my mind had an unusual clarity. It felt like I was on cloud nine and I admired the resort's lush surroundings and Moroccan-style architecture with a fresh eye. Absolute Sanctuary is also well-known for their yoga retreats. Their ambassador is famous yoga instructor, Briohny Smyth and she happened to be holding a Teacher Training yoga course together with her husband, while I was there! As a yoga fanatic and fangirl, I was naturally stoked!

At the end of my detox programme, I left Absolute Sanctuary 1.6kg lighter. What's even more important than my weight loss was the peace inside, knowing that I had given my body and mind the pampering they deserve.



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