

THE AUSTRALIAN 

In the Zen zone

A chic new retreat less than two hours from New York City promises comprehensive wellness programs and great food.

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Exterior of Shou Sugi Ban House. Picture: Fredrika Stjerne

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A chic new retreat less than two hours from New York City promises comprehensive wellness programs and great food from the playbook of Noma co-founder Mads Refslund.

Fashioned from faded timber and slotted discreetly into the moneyed terrain of the Long Island town of Southampton (next door to the Parrish Art Museum), Shou Sugi Ban House is the brainchild of former corporate lawyer and long-time Hamptons resident Amy Cherry-Abitbol.

The retreat is set across 1.2 meticulously landscaped hectares offering personalised residential programs as well as day visits, with 13 guest suites or “studios” set around the main saltwater swimming pool and extensive wellness facilities. These include a large spa with hydrotherapy and watsu pools, roof-top deck, fitness centre and tea lounge.

The main “barns” are linked to the Hamptons-style beach cottage suites by meandering paths and coastal-inspired gardens. Inside, colours are monochromatic and the mood decidedly Zen, with elements of wabi-sabi reflecting Cherry-Abitbol’s long association with Japan (her two sons were born there).



Fire pit at Shou Sugi Ban House. Picture: Fredrika Stjerne

Each suite has a private garden, fireplace, Kobe-style bed made by a local design firm, organic mattress and Japanese soaking tub.

The look may be pared back but attention to detail is top-notch: organic skincare products courtesy of Kyoto-based Kotoshina; custom soaps and lighting designed to complement your circadian rhythm.

The retreat's seasonal menus have been designed in collaboration with Refslund and supported by an onsite organic vegetable garden. In autumn, meals can be taken in the cherry orchard.



Bedroom at Shou Sugi Ban House. Picture: Fredrika Stjerne

From \$US4650 (\$6872) for three nights, fully inclusive; from \$US325 for a half-day.

- shousugibanhouse.com