

BIB

Interview



Shou Sugi Ban House: A Sanctuary for Your Soul

BY ALICIA ZHANG

Tucked away in the serenity of the Hamptons lies a minimalistic, Japanese-inspired sanctuary. [Shou Sugi Ban House](#) is your gentle answer for a noisy mind, a tense body, or a hungry soul. We're only human after all! Looking to the earth, ocean and sky for guidance, Shou Sugi Ban House is the ultimate reset button for anyone seeking perspective and tranquility.

Jodie Webber, the retreat's creative director, helped us navigate a visit at Shou Sugi Ban House. Join BWB as we walk through the spa's rituals, treatments and inspirations. From morning meditations and yoga flows to nourishing plates and hydrotherapy sessions, we're just about ready to move in full-time.



How to best prepare for a stay at Shou Sugi Ban House?

Release all expectations and prepare for a relaxing yet invigorating experience. We offer overnight retreat stays, as well as half or full-day spa rituals. In other words, guests can choose whether they want to come for a few days or a few hours. Either option allows you to step away from your typical routine to focus on self-care, well-being, mindfulness or deep healing. Whatever it is you need, we are here to provide it.



Packing essentials for a short getaway?

We really encourage you to pack lightly and keep it simple. Bring your personal essentials – yoga and workout clothing or casual pieces, for example. We want you to be as comfortable as possible during meals in the Main Barn or tea tastings in the Healing Arts Barn. You should bring sneakers for fitness classes, walks and excursions, as well as shoes that are easy to slip on and off around the property. We provide a robe and Japanese slippers in your size in your room.

You will need a bathing suit for our coed, indoor hydrotherapy circuit and thermal suite, as well as our outdoor plunge pools and saltwater swimming pool. We highlight the importance of hydrotherapy and the healing properties of water and hydration. As a result, we integrate them into our programs year-round.

Signature dishes at Shou Sugi Ban House?

We are proud to say that Michelin Star Chef Mads Refslund designed our culinary program. As such, our menu is innovative and plant-rich, focusing on the best of the season. In addition to incorporating items from our own on-site gardens, our team works closely with local farmers and purveyors to source ingredients.

Refslund thoughtfully chose our menus to encourage a reflective and nourishing environment. We plan each meal with careful attention and serve them communally in our demonstration kitchen – an integral part of the Shou Sugi Ban House experience.



No two meals are ever alike, especially since we change preparations according to seasonal ingredients. There are many popular dishes, but a few that stand-out include the following: nasturtium leaf tacos with duck and miso-glazed cauliflower, a chilled heirloom tomato soup garnished with chive blossoms, nasturtium flowers and Thai basil, charred avocado and citrus ponzu. The morning buffet breakfast is a daily highlight for many of our guests: farm fresh eggs, house-made tofu, ricotta, porridge and miso soup, as well as a selection of berries, compotes, nut butters and fresh juices.

Could you describe the highlights of a spa day, a weekend getaway or a week-long stay?

The highlights for each guest are very individualized and depend upon specific needs and wants. For some, an afternoon at the spa is immersive and peaceful; for others, three to seven days can enable a more transformative experience. The longer timeline may allow them to focus deeper on healing and well-being, or to reset and return to a healthy fitness and clean eating routine.



What are morning rituals like at Shou Sugi Ban House?

During our Signature Reset Retreats, the mornings begin in the Healing Arts Barn with our signature Tea Meditation. This is our modern take on a traditional tea ceremony to encourage our guests to start their day with a mindful practice. After that, our resident yoga instructor leads a gentle stretch and yoga session in the Meditation Hall. Then, we take a short drive to one of our beautiful, local beaches for a brisk, meditative walk along the ocean. Finally, we return to the property for breakfast together in the Main Barn.



What will you offer this winter season and what will you have planned for the summer?

We've designed multiple opportunities for guests to experience this unique destination. In addition to scheduling spa rituals and healing arts treatments, we have several overnight retreat formats. For example, some of these include our Custom Escapes, our multi-day Signature Reset, and Mind & Body Cleanse retreats. In addition, visiting experts and partners will be leading some soon-to-be-announced retreats, as well as experiential events and a speaker series.

This summer, day and overnight guests can also curate their own itineraries from a comprehensive schedule of activities. Choose from yoga, meditation, fitness, hikes, tea tastings or special workshops to customize your unique retreat. ♡