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BEACHSIDE ZEN

First impressions upon arriving at **Shou Sugi Ban House** (*shousugibanhouse.com*), a wellness destination in New York's Hamptons, are of calm serenity with a landscape inspired by the local dune scape and Japanese gardens.

A key design accent throughout is the resort's namesake, *Shou Sugi Ban* treated wood—an ancient Japanese method used in building material whereby wood is charred, scraped, then oiled to make it resistant to fire and decay. It dovetails beautifully with the stone and biscuit color palette.

The three-acre retreat, with its 13 guest studios, is unlike anything in the area, nonetheless anything that's a two-hour drive from Manhattan. When founder Amy Cherry-Abitbol conceived it, she was more concerned with anti-aging. "I didn't have the wellness concept in mind," she explains, "until I looked into longevity science, which is preventative as well." Her intent to create an intimate setting to experience the intersection of the scientific, the spiritual, and the intellectual has snowballed into something greater. It has taken on a life of its own beyond every thoughtful detail, like the pebble floor of the shower and the radiant heating; the Japanese soaking tubs and piped-in music; the filtered water from the spout and the custom-made mugs and plates from a potter in the Adirondacks.

The welcoming crystal left on the nightstand and the seasonal evening soak at turndown are there to relax and rejuvenate guests. The therapeutic bodywork and hydrotherapy sessions at the spa heal sore muscles, especially after a functional movement class that's more than the typical high-intensity interval training. The early morning tea ceremony, dawn beach walks, and meditative yoga set intentions for a stress-free day. And the nutrient-rich meals designed by Chef Mads Refslund, formerly of the lauded Noma in Copenhagen, support the gut and show that clean eating can actually satisfy cravings. Everything here has a purpose and nothing is wasted, right down to the vinegar made from stone fruit. It's all in an effort to impart not just a healthy lifestyle but a meaningful one. —D.F. →

