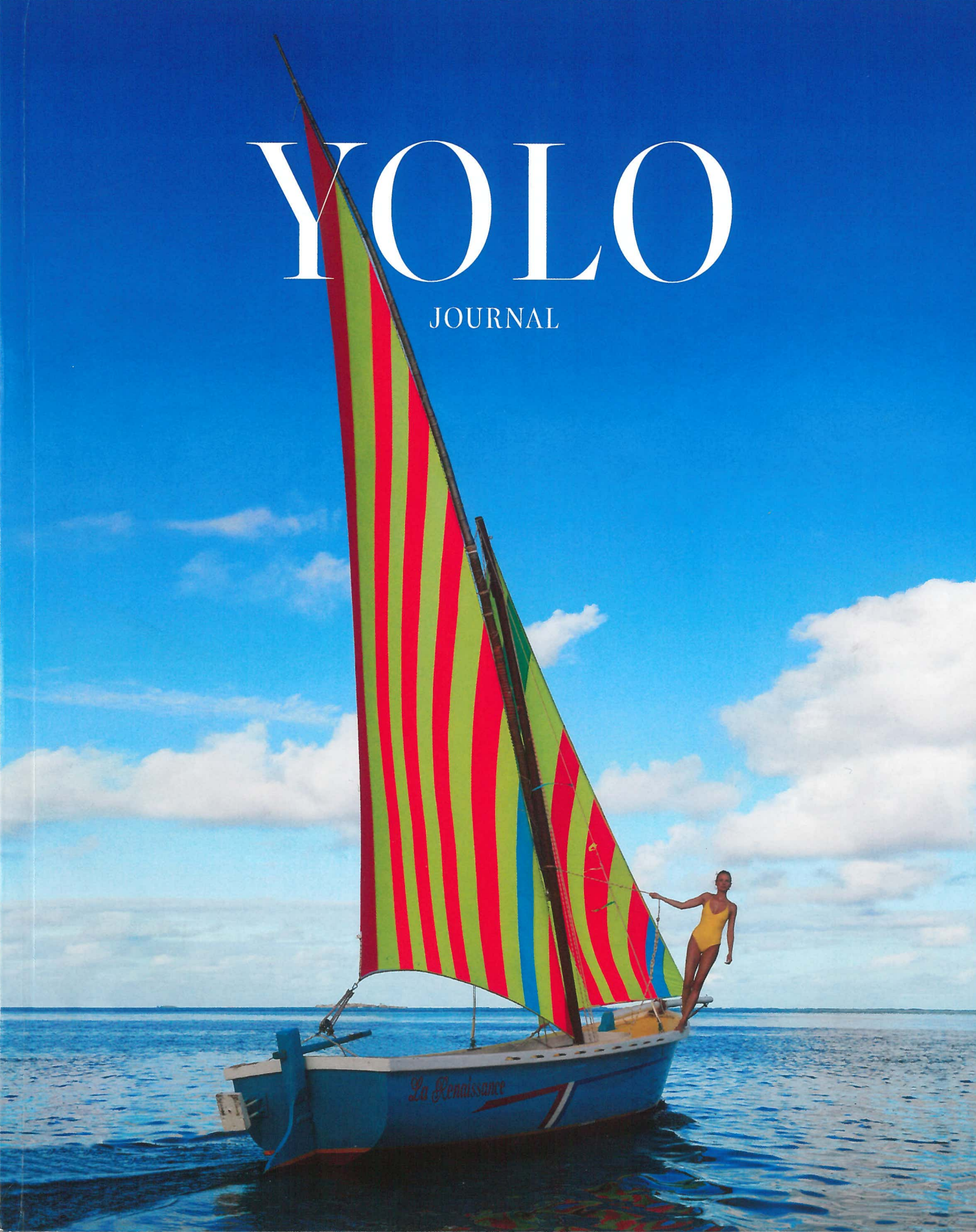


YOLO

JOURNAL



SHOU SUGI BAN HOUSE

Photographs by Fredrika Stjarne

Words by Yolanda Edwards

I've always wondered why we can't have a super sexy wellness retreat in the States, when there are so many in Europe and Asia. There are any number of luxury hotels with amazing spas, and there are plenty of the more earthy and spiritual-type retreats. But I'm surprised how behind we are in the States integrating high-end hotels with really smart wellness programs. I finally found this at the relatively new Shou Sugi Ban House in Watermill, New York. While I was skeptical that there could be a place that felt like a sanctuary in the middle of the Hamptons, they have done an amazing job with the property. The entrance, the landscaping, the architecture—it's like entering some kind of

Japanese-meets-Austrian-meets-New-Mexican utopia. Every element has been so thoughtfully considered, you forget where you are and fall into its rhythms. There are only 13 rooms, each with a Japanese soaking tub and fireplace, and quiet, restrained decor. We had sound baths, infrared saunas, plenty of yoga and meditation. We had some of the most delicious food ever, mostly vegetarian, from a menu created by Mads Refslund, Noma's co-founder, based on sourcing hyper-locally and only cooking what is in season. At first, I was worried about how programmed my weekend would be there, but I pulled a Hans Kastorp in *The Magic Mountain*—all protest... and then all in.





