

# lifestyles

SOUTH FLORIDA



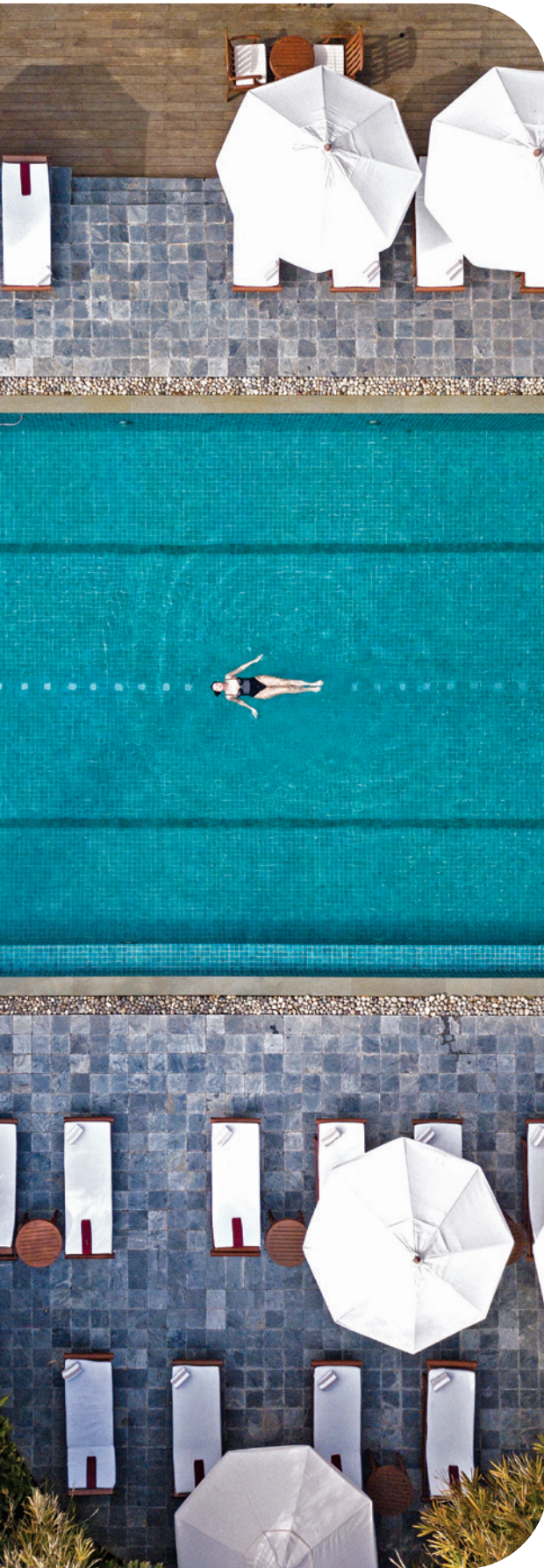
**BERKSHIRE  
HATHAWAY**  
HOMESERVICES  
EWM REALTY

A man in white is performing a yoga pose (Vrikshasana) in a pavilion. The pavilion has a blue ceiling with intricate white floral patterns. The floor is white and reflective. The pavilion is surrounded by trees and greenery. The text "escape. exhale. evolve." is overlaid on the bottom left of the image.

escape.  
exhale.  
evolve.

BEYOND RELAXATION, ANANDA IN THE HIMALAYAS  
OFFERS SOMETHING FAR MORE PROFOUND: **CLARITY.**

By Anetta Nowosielska



## TO CALL THE JOURNEY FROM RISHIKESH TO ANANDA IN THE HIMALAYAS “CINEMATIC” WOULD BE AN UNDERSTATEMENT.

It is, in fact, an odyssey that borders on the mythical. As the winding road ascends, the dense Sal forests part to reveal a vision so opulent it could have been conjured by a maximalist: a palatial estate, once the grand residence of the Maharaja of Tehri Garhwal, now reimagined as one of the world's most venerated wellness retreats. But Ananda is no mere sanctuary for affluent escapists in search of Instagrammable serenity. It is something altogether more radical—a place where ancient wisdom and modern luxury converge to offer not just respite, but revelation.

### A RETREAT UNLIKE ANY OTHER

Before guests even arrive, the transformation begins. A detailed wellness questionnaire probes every aspect of one's existence—sleep patterns, stressors, digestive quirks, emotional triggers—forcing a level of introspection that, for many, is unfamiliar. Upon arrival, an Ayurvedic physician conducts an in-depth consultation, diagnosing one's dosha—an intricate classification of body and mind types that defies the Western penchant for reductive binaries. This isn't a one-size-fits-all wellness retreat; it's a meticulously curated experience, tailored to the individual with the precision of an artisan.

“The location itself plays a vital role in the healing process,” explains Dr. Sreelal Sanka, head of Ayurveda at Ananda. “The Himalayas have long been revered as a source of spiritual energy, drawing sages, yogis, and seekers for centuries. This profound natural energy fosters inner calm and allows guests to immerse themselves in a deeply transformative journey.”

It is no wonder that luminaries like Oprah Winfrey have sought solace here—twice.



COURTESY OF ANANDA IN THE HIMALAYAS

## THE SCIENCE AND SPIRITUALITY OF HEALING

At Ananda, the disciplines of Ayurveda, Traditional Chinese Medicine, physiotherapy, and emotional healing don't merely co-exist; they intertwine seamlessly, addressing not just symptoms but the deeply buried roots of imbalance. Days unfold in a carefully sequenced rhythm, each treatment a thread in the larger tapestry of renewal.

Morning begins with a steaming herbal infusion delivered to one's private suite, overlooking the vast Himalayan expanse. Then, a series of meticulously designed therapies commence—abhyanga massages, where warm medicated oils are worked methodically into the skin to purge toxins both physical and emotional; Chidakasha Dharana meditation, a practice of inner vision designed to cut through the veils of mental clutter; and regression therapy, a deep dive into the psyche that often unearths unexpected emotional truths.

"This individualized approach ensures that every therapy aligns with the guest's unique constitution and needs," Sanka explains. "Ananda offers a holistic experience integrating Ayurveda with yoga, meditation, and nutrition, creating a healing synergy that addresses the mind, body, and spirit."

The philosophy here is not one of mere indulgence, but of equilibrium—balancing science with tradition, luxury with authenticity, comfort with transformation.

## WHERE FOOD BECOMES MEDICINE

The recalibration extends beyond the therapy rooms. At Ananda, food is not simply sustenance—it is a form of medicine, meticulously aligned with one's dosha to nourish the body and restore balance.

A delicately spiced vegetable laksa, a sugar-free vegan lemon cheesecake that somehow manages to feel decadent—each dish is a masterclass in equilibrium, sourced locally and crafted with an understanding of nutrition that predates modern dietetics by centuries.

"We present these traditions in a setting that aligns with modern luxury," says Mahesh Natarajan, Chief Operating Officer. "Our spa environments are designed for comfort, our wellness cuisine is both therapeutic and gourmet, and our programs integrate the latest scientific

research. This balance allows guests to experience the depth of authentic healing while enjoying world-class hospitality."

## A MENTAL REWIRING

Yet, the most profound transformations often take place not on the massage table, but in the mind. Each evening, guests gather for Vedanta talks led by a senior disciple of Swami Parthasarathy. Unlike the saccharine self-help doctrines popular in the West, these lectures are rigorous, unsentimental, and refreshingly devoid of mystical posturing. The core tenet is not to suppress emotions but to observe them with detachment—an invaluable skill that, if properly internalized, can render one invulnerable to the petty perturbations of daily life.

It is here, in these moments of quiet contemplation, that Ananda's true gift reveals itself—not just as a retreat, but as a re-education, a rewiring of the self.

## A JOURNEY WITHOUT AN END

As the final morning dawns, the realization crystallizes: true luxury may be found in the unburdening of the self. But Ananda is not designed to be a fleeting escape. Unlike most retreats, which unceremoniously eject their guests back into the chaos of reality with little more than a routine farewell, Ananda ensures that the transformation continues beyond its gates.

"We offer post-stay consultations and ongoing support through digital channels, guiding guests as they incorporate these practices into their lifestyles," says Natarajan. "Many of our guests return not just for relaxation but to deepen their practice and sustain their long-term well-being. Ananda is more than just a retreat—it is a lifelong wellness partner."

And so, guests depart—not merely refreshed, but fundamentally altered. The world outside Ananda appears both the same and unrecognizably different, as if a veil has been lifted.

And that, perhaps, is its most lasting gift.



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