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Lose Weight, Tone, De-Stress (And Even Find Our Your Spirit Animal) at Mii amo's Body Transformation Retreat in Sedona

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The holiday season is upon us. It is a time to be with friends, loved ones, and dishes so decadent (marshmallow and brown sugar dusted sweet potatoes, anyone?) that we often wake up on January 1st with not only a hangover, but also an extra layer of fat surrounding our midriff. In preparation for the upcoming onslaught of sugar cookies, potato latkes, and cornbread stuffing heading my plate in the upcoming weeks, I decided to skip the crash diet and celebrity-riddled SoulCycle classes and travel to Sedona, Arizona for Mii amo's acclaimed [Body Transformation Retreat](#).

Led by Mii amo's fitness director [Danielle Fryer](#)—a registered dietitian and nutritionist, board certified sports specialist, certified international sports science fitness trainer, yoga teacher, and intentional touch therapist—I, along with seven others, embarked on a five-day journey that combined group fitness activities, diet and nutrition classes, and rejuvenating spa treatments.



Upon arriving at Mii amo on Sunday afternoon (the resort only accepts arrivals for journeys/retreats on Sundays or Thursdays), I checked into my private villa—outfitted with separate living, dining, and bedroom areas, a massage room, and a spacious outdoor hot tub—slipped on my buttery terrycloth bathrobe and headed to the main building for a group orientation and welcome dinner.



After a quick trip around the table to get to know the other group members—all women with the exception of one man, a spouse of one of the participants—and our reasons for signing up for the retreat, we dined on a selection of locally grown and organic cuisine prepared by the on-site chef. In an effort to cater to different dietary restrictions and preferences, guests hand-select each meal from a rotating menu, which includes Strawberry and Tomato Gazpacho, House-Made Black Garlic Linguine Primavera, Sambal Marinated Kabobs, and Vegan Peanut Butter Turtles (my favorite). Detailed nutrition information including calories, fat, carbohydrates, and protein are listed next to each item in the hope of encouraging guests to make mindful food selections. All meals, with the exception of alcohol, are included in the cost of the program.



At 7 AM the following morning, I met Fryer and the other group members at the fitness center for an hour-long workout comprised of high-intensity, interval training using free weights and machines. After working up a sweat from the rotating sequence of cardiovascular and strengthening moves, I headed to the Crystal Grotto for Morning Ritual—10 minutes of guided meditation and aura cleansing using sage. Upon entering the grotto, each guest is encouraged to fold a piece of paper containing their “worries, stress, or fears” into a nearby wicker basket. The writings are collected and burned each evening in outdoor Cairn Garden, outfitted with stacks of smooth rocks built by resort guests. The stacks are removed with each full moon, which according to several Native American tribes, symbolizes the height of power, the peak of clarity, and the fullness and attainment of desire. Everything at Mii amo has a deeper meaning—from the type of tea offered in the spa waiting area to the mineral-rich red clay used in the signature Sedona Clay Wrap.



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Following my treatment (I selected a 90-minute clarifying facial), I joined the group for a nutritional workshop that concentrated on weight loss and/or weight maintenance, as well as instruction on eating for one's body type. Fryer provided tips, tricks, and recipes from her new book, "The Mindful Clean Plate," and fielded questions from the group about the principles of clean eating. She taught us the importance of reading labels and passed around grocery store staples like whole-grain graham crackers and vitamin-rich nutrition bars to show how even seemingly healthy products can fail the clean eating requirements.



After another spa treatment—this time I chose one of the resort's popular Red Rock treatments, a Lymphatic Drainage massage intended to detoxify and stimulate circulation—I joined the group for a healthy cooking demonstration followed by Power Vinyasa Yoga with a backdrop of the awe-inspiring Red Rock mountains. I capped off the day with more guided meditation, followed by a 60-minute Reading of the Moment performed by a trained psychic. Using a combination of tarot cards and palm reading techniques, the psychic charted my love life, career, and even assigned my spirit animal (I'm a bird it seems). Interestingly, everything she shared was positive, but she assured me that it was only that outcome because of the cards I had hand-selected.



The next four days at Mii amo continued in a similar fashion. I kicked off each day with an invigorating group workout in the fitness center, followed by two others that ranged from water-based Aqua Fitness to outdoor hiking on the nearby desert trails. I'm not sure if I lost any weight, but I definitely walked away from Fryer's Body

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The next [Body Transformation Retreat](#) will take place January 4-8.