

Beauty Wellness

Singh, "the medical community is becoming gradually more aware that there may be advantages to meditation programs"—like stepping away from what Daniel J. Levitin, Ph.D., calls the "overcaffeinated, stressed-out Internet addiction" of modern-day life and slipping into "daydreaming mode," which, he explains, is controlled by a part of the brain called the insula. A McGill University professor of psychology and music who studies the cognitive effects of sound, Levitin says that the benefits of this mental shift are real: "It boosts the immune system; it enhances creativity."

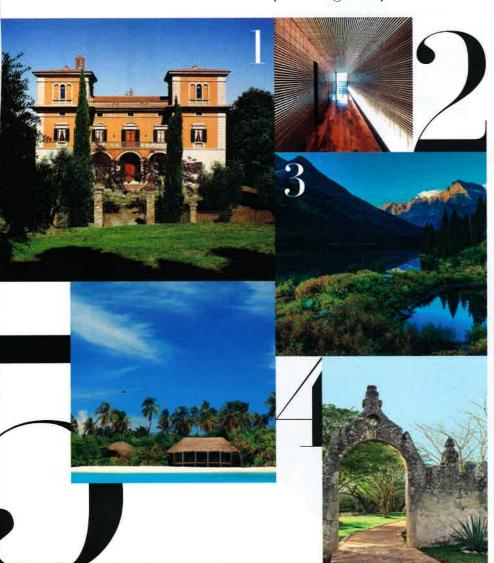
My hour-long private session at Martinez's Brooklyn apartment begins in a minimalistic way. There's no incense, no scented oils, no crystals hanging in front of the windows. Instead, I lie on his living-room floor as he coaches me in a calm voice to relax my legs, my hands, my shoulders. What comes next is startling: Although there's been no physical contact, I sense a quiet pressure against my skin as the vibration of the singing bowl, throbbing and metallic,

tingles across my body. I feel sturdy and light, like a cross between an eagle and a toy boat, as a blissed-out high exiles any disruptive thoughts into the void where all of my other worries are currently taking a much-needed break.

When I sit up and reenter the real world, I'm peacefully and profoundly alert. I step out onto the street and hear a dozen noises, each one distinct and compelling. Even the burrito I eat afterward feels significant. Lettuce is so beautiful, I think to myself, admiring how mindful I am being. I inhale deeply and remember how good it feels to breathe with intention. Then I pull the smartphone out of my duffel, and before I know it, I've checked Facebook three times and liked a heap of photos on Instagram, demolishing the clear head space I just spent an hour crafting. But as I descend the subway-station stairs and stand at the edge of the platform listening to the train rattle by, it sounds real and messy—and more wonderful than I had remembered. \square

HEAR and There

Make the most of your fall getaway with these destination sound-healing escapes.



1 This month, Villa Lena, the artists' colony in Tuscany, plays host to the globe-trotting **Secret** Yoga Club. Along with daily asanas, there will be sound therapy (vocal toning, Himalayan singing bowls) with the multidisciplinary practitioner Lani Rocillo, and farm-to-table cuisine from the property's groves and vineyards. secretyogaclub .co.uk. 2 South Beach's pulsing beat takes a restorative turn at The Standard Spa, Miami Beach, where vibrating crystal bowls accompany a massage for a deeper sense of mind-body balance. Upcoming events include a full-moon kundaliniyoga celebration with an immersive sound bath. standardhotels.com/miami. 3 London-based mindfulness group Fresh Perception heads to England's verdant Lake District this month for a sound-bath retreat held at a bucolic Georgian-era farmhouse. Hungarian Szilvia Gardian will lead sessions with gongs and singing bowls, after which you can chase the calm with a hike to nearby rocky beaches freshperception.com. 4 Chablé, a collection of luxury villas opening next month in Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula, weaves indigenous traditions into its spa treatments; for the Maya Rebirth, vibrations of the conch shell-long used in the local culture—set the tone for the herbal body brushing and muscle kneading that follow. chableresort.com. 5 Home to dreamlike overwater huts, Six Senses Laamu, in the Maldives, takes an island-inflected approach to wellness, with fresh coconut-oil treatments and Balinese bodywork. Next month, visiting practitioner Khun Sommai and his Tibetan singing bowls begin a six-week beachfront residency. sixsenses.com/laamu.-L.R.