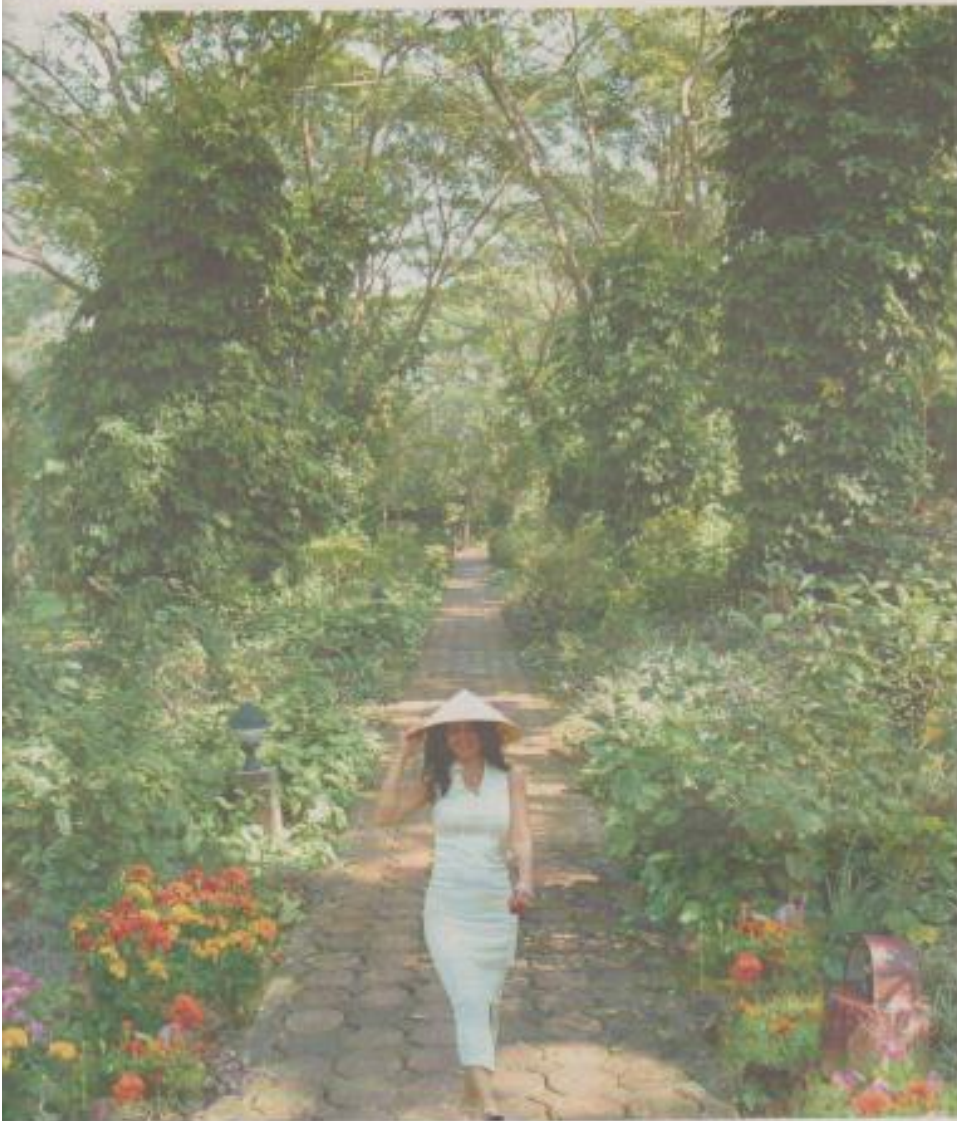


Thailand



Still searching for a healing haven

Like pretty much every other woman in Thailand, I was a little bit sick. I wanted to see the board about a place he was offering me all of and beauty, and the deallines whatsoever good idea to leap on. Well, when I say three, actually, because lands aren't always get to with a hop, so. And this one, built Chiang Mai in most involved a journey from Troy. But who to Abu Dhabi, as Bangkok, and into Mai. I arrived at the Health Spa. I felt in these emerging fit world into spring.

The Tao Garden, lots of awards, is in Set among banana trees and rice fields land's lushest, green it's 32 acres of white charmed forest. Dozens are little bits of wana, statues and a I discovered after round, not just a gym, tennis courts, and garden, and a very, very pool, but no meditation hall, a something called "Universal Taoism"

developed by the Tao Garden. Most heard of it, but I'd done a course in a little bit about "chi", a little bit about traditional Chinese medicine. "Chi", or energy, is what you get, and the Chinese medicine to anything found there. But I'd found nothing and now also found that we me well at a time we did. So I was looking forward when our my pain, look at my, scribe me a miracle.

The treatments, start the next day, of this one trying to play the "healing" fit. The food, which the welcome health around blood type outdoor dining hall, via a little bridge.

The fresh fruits as you might expect in the organic part that morning, delicate hot dishes were, as weren't. Signs of their healing qualities seemed quite new when the service was

surprisingly basic. The food, in one of the "luxe houses" which are, apparently, four star to the maximum, one and two star, was much nicer. It was big, very and tastefully furnished, but this, it turned out, was lucky. All accommodation is rented from different private owners who furnish according to their own taste. And the air conditioning units seem to have been supplied by a company which specialises in agricultural machinery.

But in spite of it, I forced myself out of bed the next morning, and to the Tai chi gym. Under a giant pagoda in the garden, a German called Walter showed us how to bend and stretch. He also showed us how to rub our coccyx, stick out our tongues and bend our hands like claws. We should, he said, greet every organ with the "inner smile". We should, he said, beat ourselves with bamboo. I did start beating myself with bamboo, but then I realised it was nearly eight o'clock, and I had to rush off for my blood analysis.

In the Pakus Clinic, next door to the dining hall, a middle young man measured my blood pressure, and another one pricked my finger and made me spit into a cup. My blood, he told me, since he'd stuck a slide under a microscope, and gazed at a computer, was full of toxins. I would need, he said, to get rid of them. The treatment, he said, would start straight away.

And it did, with a "Chi Nei Tsang abdominal detox therapy" massage. This "internal organ massage", which is the "Tao Garden" signature

Green days: The Tao Garden (left) is set in some of Thailand's lushest countryside; a guest receives treatment (right)



therapy", and given in one of the treatment rooms set around a courtyard is the very pretty spa, involved a young woman pampering my torso, and what I assume to be my gut. What wasn't quite so soothing was the "Infrared Sauna". For this, you have to sit in a tiny wooden cubicle next to an electrical hot, and get extremely hot. I was prescribed four, which seemed quite a lot.

After lunch, it was time to go back to the clinic for an "aural bio-electrographic evaluation" and an "Obeson body scan". I wasn't absolutely sure what either of those were for, but was pleased when the young man, who did them (who I thought was a

doctor, but who, it turned out, wasn't) told me that my aura was "good". It was, he said, 97 per cent. And so, it turned out, when I talked to other guests, was everyone else's.

The man who wasn't a doctor told me that I should massage my ears and feet every day, touch the big tree in the Tai chi field, and give myself love and joy. Later, in the meditation hall, a German woman called Julia talked about love and joy again. We were doing a gentle kind of yoga, and a meditation called "Six Healing Sounds". We had, for example, to tap our liver and go "Hibbi", and then tap our stomach and go "Woooo".

It was nice to be on a mat and not do very much, because the next few days were very busy. There was, for a start, the fast. You might think that going on a three-day juice and soup fast would mean you'd save the time you'd normally spend on meals, but it doesn't. What it means is having a "detox drink", and then, an hour and a half later, a "red cleansing drink", and then soup, and then another "red-cleansing drink" and so on throughout the day, ending with a 9pm "probiotic". And bet when those drinks you're meant to use the "vibrations" room, which means sitting on various modalities that make you vibrate, and you're meant to have your infrared saunas, and your amazing massages, and your colonic wrings, and your ozone steam treatments, which mean you have to sit naked in a kind of cupboard.

On my last day, I saw a real doctor. He told me 70 per cent of Western medicine was wrong. He said I should come off the drugs I take to prevent cancer. Which I've had twice.

I like a nice massage. I like walking in a shady garden and sitting when there's time to, by a pool. But what I learnt, in those packed days spent largely having treatments or waiting for the next one, was that a little bit of pampering goes quite a long way. I learnt that if you don't take a few days you'll lose a few pounds, but when you do, you'll get them back. And I learnt that while some of the New Age medicines you find in "integrative holistic health spas" won't do you any harm, some of it will.

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