

SAN FRANCISCO | SILICON VALLEY | MARIN | NAPA | NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

# HAUTE LIVING

MARCH/APRIL 2020

LUXURY LIFESTYLE WITH PURPOSE

SAN FRANCISCO  
BALLET'S SPELLBOUND  
OPENING NIGHT

SAN FRANCISCO  
SYMPHONY'S CHINESE NEW  
YEAR CONCERT

MEET RUSSIAN COUTURE  
DESIGNER VASILY VEIN

EXPERIENCE ALL-INCLUSIVE  
LUXURY AT HAMMOCK COVE  
IN ANTIGUA

## THE FASHION ISSUE

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH WES GORDON OF CAROLINA HERRERA  
AND A SNEAK PEAK OF THE LATEST FASHION TRENDS FROM  
NEW YORK FASHION WEEK

By Teresa Rodriguez

# Haute WELLNESS

Canyon Ranch Wellness Retreat -  
Woodside tree house

## A TRIP DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE

*How 72 hours changed my outlook on life*

MY DRIVE SOUTH ON HIGHWAY 280 IN A TEMPERAMENTAL RENTAL CAR WAS A stressful one. The week before weighed heavily on my mind, notably the break-in and vandalism to my car a few nights earlier. The unforeseen cancelation of my daughter's health insurance did not help my disposition. My chest was tight with anxiety, and my head ached with unease. I contemplated canceling my solo birthday trip to Canyon Ranch Wellness Retreat – Woodside, but a commitment to self-care compelled me to reluctantly make the one-hour trip to a hilltop in Woodside. The drive was surprisingly short and ended on the winding Skyline Boulevard.

The property opened in November 2019, Canyon Ranch, the newest concept created by the leaders in resort innovations. While they're famous for their Tucson property where the rich and famous go to chill, this new property is sure to be a haven for Silicon Valley titans. The truth is, it takes a lot of time to get to the other Canyon Ranch locations, which include a property in Lenox, Massachusetts, The Venetian in Las Vegas, and onboard Cunard and Celebrity cruises.

Silicon Valley doesn't afford the time for luxurious cruise vacations, so, it makes perfect sense that instead of going to Canyon Ranch, it came to us. And that could not have happened at a more perfect time. I heard so much about Canyon Ranch, but there was no way in my hectic life that I could possibly get on a plane. Honestly, I didn't understand the power of Canyon Ranch, but within the 72 hours of being on their Woodside property, I was transformed.

When walking into the lobby, read the set of stones placed a few feet apart. They are easy

to miss them if you don't slow down. They say: HOW. FAR. DOWN. THE. RABBIT. HOLE. ARE. YOU. WILLING. TO. GO. I read those words and it was game on. I wanted to go down the rabbit hole. So, I trusted the process and surrendered to Canyon Ranch.

My stay started with a lovely orientation with other new guests. We were greeted with hot cider and their famous sweet and salty pumpkin crunch. Delightful Sales & Marketing Director Jeanine Conforti spoke to us about all the different programs, activities, and services that were available during our stay. I chose a mountain biking adventure, an 80-minute massage, BOD-POD, and a therapy session with a horse. My night ended with a class called Change: A Deeper Understanding. Oh, how apropos.

Even though I love my sleep—and, when I don't have to get my daughter ready for school, my favorite thing to do is sleep in—here, I was up at 6:00 a.m. and at sunrise yoga by 6:30. It was such a treat watching the sun gently rise as I practiced my downward-facing dog. I enjoyed a healthy breakfast of gluten-free avocado toast, breakfast salad, fresh fruit medley, and an oat-milk cappuccino overlooking the lush redwoods.

At 9:00 am, Marcel, professional mountain biker and owner of High Trails, collected me for a 7-mile ride above the redwoods and overlooking the ocean. It was magnificent. It helped that the bike I was on was a \$5,000 high-performance machine. While maneuvering up and down the rugged coastal hills, I was brought back to my body and my relationship with the

bike. I had an “ah-ha” moment when I realized that the only way I was going to stay on that bike was if I respected the ability of the bike and found balance. Wow. Such insight. I returned to Canyon Ranch and truly enjoyed my hearty and absolutely delicious lunch.

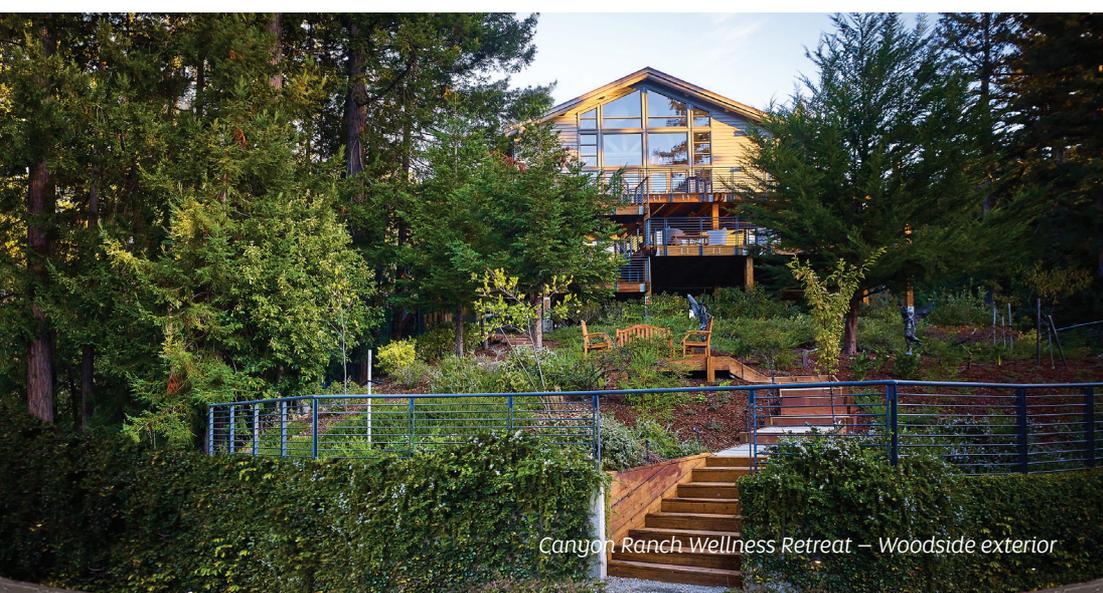
Following lunch, I joined an qi gong class under the grand canopy of the redwoods and next to the La Honda Creek. It was simply amazing. I felt my chest open up, and I finally could breathe. I took a gentle alignment class and then disappeared into the spa for one of the most incredible massages my body has experienced. I felt the pressure of stress lift from my bones, my muscles finally released. Amazing.

That night ended with a dramatic drumming circle. There I was beating a drum, tapping into my inner primal energy, and feeling alive.

I admit that I slept in the next morning. I couldn't resist the pressed sheets, cozy robe, and epic views from my window. After breakfast, Steven Ciarametaro, the owner of Ciara West Equestrian facility, met me. He drove me to his breathtaking property for a session with Nina Clark Ericson, Ph.D., clinical psychologist, life coach, and Equus Coach®. As a former equestrian, I had a tough time letting go of my preconceived notions of horsemanship and round pen work with a horse. Well, everything



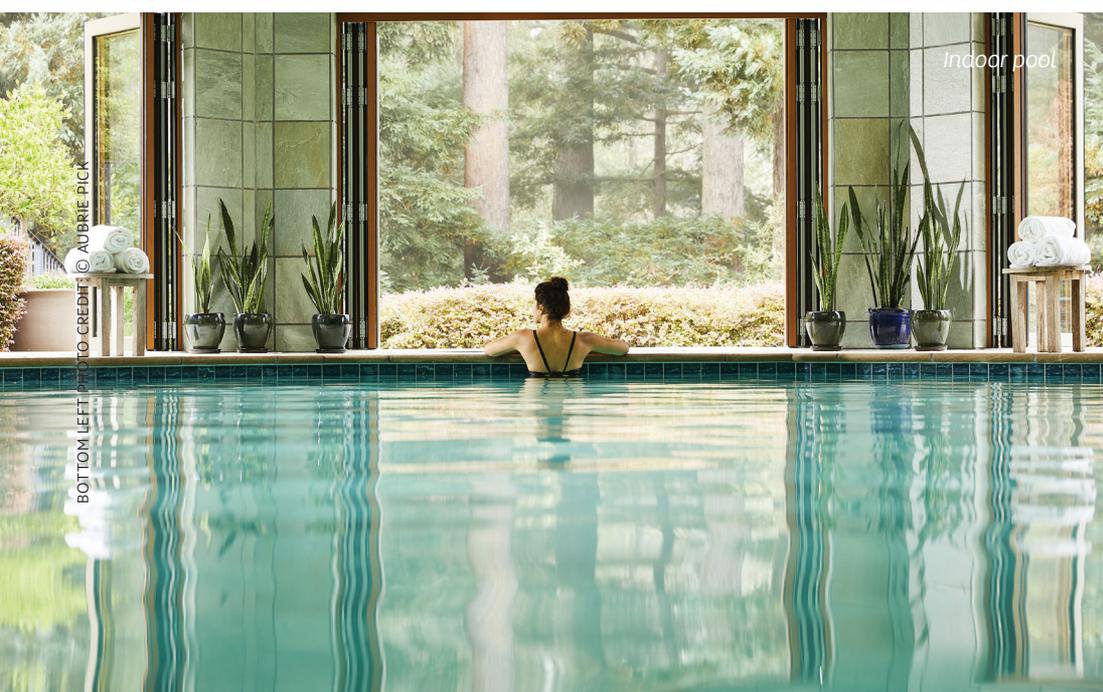
Firepit



Canyon Ranch Wellness Retreat – Woodside exterior



Retreat balcony



Indoor pool

BOTTOM LEFT PHOTO CREDIT © AUBRIE PICK



Heating class

# HauteWELLNESS

that I thought I knew about my relationship with horses was blown out of the water. Nina Clark Ericson took me deeper down the rabbit hole while I was in the round pen with Charisma, a headstrong Arabian mare. There, with the blue sky above me, the gray sand below, I had to come to terms with my relationship with myself. I cried. I let my guard down and shared. I felt heard. And Charisma was there, letting me know it was all going to be okay.

"Everything is as it should be," her eyes whispered to my soul.

I left Ciara West Equestrian lighter and more grounded than I had been in months.

Steven drove me back to Canyon Ranch, where I went, smelling of horse, to the Energizing Breath and Sound class. There, on the floor of the loft, I breathed out, cried, moaned, and sighed out the rest of what was sticking to my tired lungs. The class ended. I wiped my eyes, took the deepest breath of 2020, and exhaled the final pieces of stress lodged in my throat and heart.

After the class, I took a silent, slow walk down to La Honda Creek. I sat there, bathing in the joyous energy of the forest, alone and at peace.

Lunch was filled with great conversations with other guests. We spoke openly



Hideaway



The Loft



Loft Social

Loft social



The Fitness Center



Gong

about our “ah-ha” moments and the powerful shifts in thought we made in such a short time. I followed lunch with some downtime in the spa. They have a massaging, zero-gravity chair where I almost floated away. I enjoyed time in the steam room and dry sauna and finished my adventure with a swim in their beautiful indoor saline pool.

One of the best parts of Canyon Ranch is all the different activities that they offer throughout the day. I ended the day with a pretty intense foot massage class called Fitness for your Feet, followed by the Roll and Release class that is done with a vibrating roller.

Endless hugs with all the fantastic friends that I made concluded my stay. The staff was so

wonderful, that I felt like I was leaving home. I had always believed that significant transformation needed at least a week of immersion. Well, my 72 hours at Canyon Ranch was an amazing eye-opener on the power of just a few days and a commitment to go down the rabbit hole.

**CANYON RANCH WOODSIDE RETREAT – WOODSIDE**

16350 Skyline Blvd, Woodside, CA 94062

650-529-1046

[www.canyonranch.com/woodside](http://www.canyonranch.com/woodside)



Isabelle Nunes Jackson



Treehouse king



Treehouse bath



Yoga fairy ring



Spa lobby