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# Reboot at Arizona’s Civana Wellness Resort & Spa



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The award-winning **Civana Wellness Resort & Spa**, conveniently located about 45 minutes from the Phoenix Airport, is a welcome retreat for anyone looking for a Sonoran Desert getaway. The accolades from *Travel & Leisure* (# 3 Destination Spa in 2020), *Travelers’ Choice* (Top 10% hotels worldwide), *USA Today* (30 Top Wellness Destinations Worldwide), AAA (4 Diamond Hotel), and *Conde Nest Traveler* (#6 destination spa resort in the US and #21 in the World) places Civana right on target. From sunrise to sunset, this resort offers an abundance of opportunities to become rejuvenated by exploring the outdoors, attending classes, indulging in spa treatments and tasting nutrient-dense food and beverages.

*Story and photos by Sandy Bornstein*



Ira and I took advantage of a late summer media trip that coincided with his birthday celebration. Since this was our first visit to a wellness spa, we were uncertain what to expect. Unlike many other wellness retreats with set programming, The ala carte format at Civana Wellness Resort offers the flexibility to engage in a variety of activities suitable for individuals as well as energetic couples. A **calendar** filled with classes appealing to all genders can be reviewed on the website. Except for a handful of activities (examples include paddle boarding and kayaking at a nearby lake, mountain biking, aerial yoga, mindful mixology and a mala making workshop) requiring an additional charge, the remainder of the classes were included in the daily room rate.

**Editor’s note:** We also love Canyon Ranch Tucson and **here’s the story of that visit.**

Immediately after confirming our accommodation reservation, I was contacted by a Civana Wellness Resort & Spa Guest Experience Team member and the Spa Concierge to book our classes and spa treatments. Prior to arrival, we each booked two daily classes and I reserved a spa treatment. Upon check-in, we rounded out our daily schedule by filling up our days with more classes. Luckily, all but one of our desired choices was available. This property also offers a more rigid option, a **5-night Chopra Health Retreat** with an emphasis on detoxification, yoga, meditation, and Ayurvedic spa treatments.

Our spacious, contemporary and quiet Spa King guest room with a walkout patio was conveniently located on the 20+ acre property. We didn’t have to walk very far to reach the spa, the two dining rooms, the outdoor pool area, the fitness room, the lobby or the classrooms. Breakfast and lunch were offered with dine-in or carryout service at The **Seed Café & Market**. Unlike many visitors who ventured offsite to nearby restaurants, we remained at Civana for dinner so we could enjoy Chef Scott Winegard’s seasonal recipes at the **Terras restaurant**.

To address the needs of a diverse audience, the menu included a handful of Chopra Health Retreat foods, an assortment of gluten free, nut free, and vegan dishes, as well as standard American favorites like pizza and a chocolate brownie sundae. Our preference was to follow our normal routine by selecting nutrient-dense foods.

Within hours of arrival, we took our first two classes. To expand our horizons, we participated in a handful of meditation and yoga classes. We were especially intrigued by two relaxing classes—the Sunset Sound Healing and the Sound Healing for a Joyful Journey. In both classes, we felt the vibrations from the instruments resonate throughout our bodies while we focused on our breathing.

I stepped outside my comfort zone when I flipped upside down during an aerial yoga class. With my legs intertwined around a wide piece of silk fabric suspended from a ceiling beam, I overcame my fear of hanging upside down. Ira happily tried this unique opportunity. I’m not sure how many other glioblastoma (incurable brain cancer) patients would attempt this feat with an Optune device on their head.

To round out our days, we attended traditional exercise classes—Aqua Fit, Functional Fitness, and Cardio HIIT. On a few occasions, Ira lifted weights in the Fitness Center. To cool off from the scorching summer heat, we reclined under poolside umbrellas and went swimming in the irregularly shaped outdoor pool.

We enjoyed a couple of early morning hikes. In cooler seasons, more than two guided hikes are offered offsite. The Jewel of the Creek Preserve Trailhead is a short distance from the **Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area**, a 2,154 acres tract of land showcasing the rugged Sonoran Desert landscape with an abundance of mature saguaro cacti. This easy hike had shady spots shielding us from the intense sunshine and offered the chance to see multiple ecosystems as well as an abandoned mine.



The Metate Trailhead is adjacent to the Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area parking lot. Luckily, the muddy conditions caused by the recent monsoon rains had dissipated. Due to the year-round flow of water in Cave Creek, this desert terrain is surprisingly filled with an abundance of plant life. While we encountered an assortment of birds flying overhead, we did not see any javelina, mule deer or coyotes. Both hikes were an excellent way to start the day.

As an added bonus, we reserved two visits to the aqua therapy circuit located inside the spa. While celebrating my birthday at the Fairmont Grand Del Mar Spa in San Diego, I was exposed to a similar hot and cold wellness treatment. At Civana’s aqua therapy circuit, guests can divide their time between a Sanarium sauna set at 140 degrees, a hot pool set at 104 degrees, a chilly pool with an uncomfortable setting of 50-55 degrees, and a warm pool hovering between 98-100 degrees.





I couldn’t depart from this mecca of wellness without indulging in at least one spa treatment. I selected a pure radiance facial which treated my face to a customized blend of warm and cool ingredients and traditional ayurvedic purifying herbs while being soothed by soft rhythmic sounds. This treatment included an abbreviated upper body and foot massage. By adding an additional 30 minutes, my hands, arms and scalp received special attention.



After four days of pampering, reflection, intense activity and consuming delicious food, we were reenergized. Our first experience at Civana Wellness Resort & Spa allowed us to see the benefits of rebooting at a comprehensive wellness resort. For more information check out the **Civana Wellness Resort & Spa web site**.

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When **Sandy Bornstein** isn’t trekking in Colorado or writing, she’s traveling with her husband Ira. After living as an international teacher in Bangalore, India, Sandy published an award-winning book, **May This Be the Best Year of Your Life**, as a resource for people contemplating an expat lifestyle and living outside their comfort zone. As an award-winning travel writer, Sandy writes about family, food, history and active midlife adventures highlighting land and water experiences. Civana Wellness Resort & Spa offered the Traveling Bornsteins a media rate for their accommodations, meals and spa charges.


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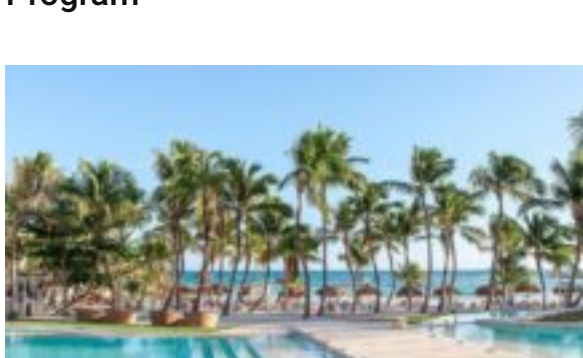
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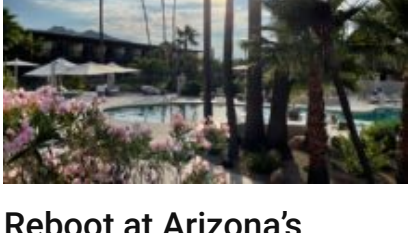


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Travel to Wellness Retreats Guide

When we are all able to travel again, our amazing travel advisor partners will be here to help you. Until then, think about where you might like to travel for your 2021 Wellness Vacation. [Here's a list of our wellness travel specialists](#)


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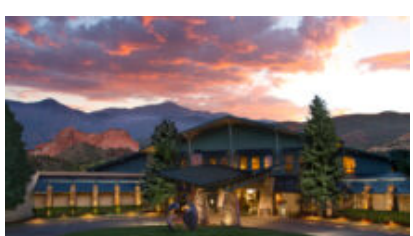
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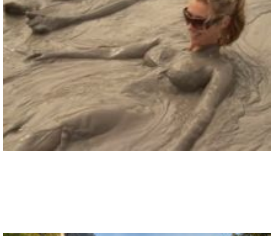
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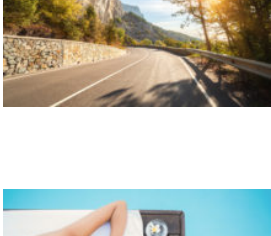
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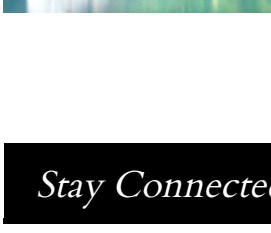
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Online since 2004, Travel to Wellness was the first online travel magazine from the wellness-minded. Thirteen years later we continue to bring you news and information from destinations around the world, wellness retreat and vacation options, travel advice from those in the know, stories and tips on wellness living and more. We also work with a variety of companies in the wellness travel space to bring you the best of what this growing travel sector offers. **Read More**

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