



BOLLANTS SPA IM PARK

WEIGHT
LOSS

BAD SOBERNHEIM, GERMANY

MUD AND COLD PLUNGES TO BOOST YOU BACK TO RUDE HEALTH

American author, poet and Pulitzer Prize winner Carl Sandburg once wrote: 'There is an eagle in me that wants to soar, and there is a hippopotamus in me that wants to wallow in the mud.' Here, you can do both. BollAnts, on the banks of the river Nahe in the wine-producing region of south-west Germany, has developed the Felke Med programme. Founded on wellness practices established more than 100 years ago, it has three essential elements: fasting allows the body to activate its self-healing powers; medicinal clay therapies strengthen the immune system, improve circulation and alleviate inflammation; and the power of the natural elements invigorates and stimulates both body and mind. BollAnts' parkland setting – with its bright light, clean fresh air and mineral-rich earth – is fundamental to the spa's holistic approach to wellbeing through naturopathy. Walking, cycling, swimming and yoga are encouraged, as the balance between activity and rest assists the detox process. What comes as a surprise is that the daily 30-minute outdoor mud bath, the ice-water cleanse and some exercises are taken in the nude in mixed-gender groups. Appropriate clothing is permitted, but there is an intoxicating, childlike joy in squeezing,

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squelching and slathering mud all over your naked body. So leave your inhibitions at reception when you check in because nudity is part and parcel of this retreat. Although challenging, the plan works and ultimately packs an energising punch. The Buchinger therapeutic fast should be followed for a minimum of five days. This requires commitment. Fruit and vegetable juices, herbal teas and sap from silver birch trees (to help expel toxins) are served with thin soups. Fasting guests sit at communal tables, so a smattering of German is a bonus. Guests are supported by Dr Alex Bolland, grandson of the original practitioner and owner, his wife Elke, and Nicole Anton, the excellent spa manager, and the 70 therapists ensure that all client needs are met. Well-dressed visitors from across Germany and the Benelux region come at weekends for the Michelin-starred Jungborn restaurant, and the fresh new rooms demonstrate the progressive intentions of the team behind this surprisingly wonderfully effective place.

INSIDER TIP Pack flip-flops. You may be naked but you still have to walk over sharp stones. And remember to wax.

BOOK IT Healing Holidays (+44 20 7843 3592; healingholidays.co.uk/condenast) offers a seven-night Felke Med Basic and Intensive holiday from £1,285 per person, full board, including flights, transfers and all treatments according to the programme. Healing Holidays is the only UK tour operator that works with Bollants Spa Im Park.

