



CLINIQUE LA PRAIRIE

MONTREUX, SWITZERLAND

WEIGHT
LOSS

STATE-OF-THE-ART, FOREVER-YOUNG TREATMENTS AT A LEGENDARY MEDI-SPA

A sense of moneyed wellbeing sings out of this pristine promise of a place. There's a reason why so many of the world's richest people fly to Switzerland when they need to consult any kind of therapist or doctor: the excellence of the country's medical facilities. In 1931 Professor Paul Niehans first started his research into using animal cells to treat various conditions, and Clinique La Prairie became internationally famous when he revived Pope Pius XII by injecting him with a secret substance based on live lamb-foetus cells. The controversial Revitalisation formula is still administered, although these days orally rather than by syringe, and the fortune it has made CLP over the decades – and still makes, thanks to new fans in China – has allowed the clinic to evolve into a lavishly equipped medi-spa where guests can consult almost any kind of mainstream medical specialist and have every conceivable cosmetically improving procedure under the sun. With 50 specialists on hand, along with operating theatres, 20 post-operative rooms and six recovery suites in the medical centre, you can book in for a hip replacement, triple bypass, dental implants, sports rehab, or a comprehensive general check-up (popular among Russians). Alternatively, in the white-on-white spa area, sign up for a sleep-improvement, weight-loss, stop-smoking or detox programme, or splash the cash on a Master Detox. That includes having your DNA examined to show what maladies you might be prone to and your levels of heavy metals measured in between being massaged, wrapped, steamed, soaked and facialised. Surrounded by mountains and with views of the sparkling chilly waters of Lake Geneva, the entire place is immaculate, all gleaming creams, gold and white, impeccably maintained and permanently hushed.

In fact, you rarely see other inmates outside of meal times. Plushly old-school, the 23 rooms mostly overlook the lake, with flattering lighting (the Hollywood actors who once packed the place presumably encouraged that), marble bathrooms and beds that at the press of a button prop up the mattress, allowing effortless enjoyment of the view. Stays start with a white-coated nurse and assistant wheeling their trolley to your bedside to take your blood and test blood pressure. For the first day or two some guests barely leave their rooms: with the doors to the balcony open, letting in the clean mountain air, this is a place to sleep and sleep. (Lunching and oligarching can be exhausting.) Then you slip into an easy routine of one beautifully administered treatment after another. In the restaurant the white-jacketed waiters glide about as smoothly as at London's Le Gavroche; the nutritionist injects a down-to-earth element with an instructive display of 100-calorie snacks. But it's hard to resist the temptation of Dr Violette Parzin's enticing Aesthetic Medicine Centre, perhaps for a spot of fat-cell freezing CoolSculpting, skin peeling, laser resurfacing or, inserted under local anaesthetic via cannula, tensor threads to pull up the skin, to recontour the face and lift the dreaded sagging jowls. In Switzerland health is wealth; arrive looking baggy, depart appearing young and gorgeous again. In the right light, at least.

INSIDER TIP The detox – and of course the lamb-foetus treatment – are eyewateringly expensive. But know that even a few nights' stay here is worth it. **BOOK IT** Healing Holidays (+44 20 7843 3592; healingholidays.co.uk/condenast) offers a six-night Master Detox programme from £12,269 per person, full board, including flights and transfers.