

The Secret Celebrity Wellness History of Madeira

Madeira has a secret history as a haven for celebrity wellness seekers, Winston Churchill, Margaret Thatcher, Empress Sissi of Austria, Stephen Hawking, and William Reid, to name just a few. The concept of wellness travel, only now starting to be fully realised, was so ahead of its time in the 18th-20th century, that it was reserved for royalty and social elites.

Madeira today is best known as a beautiful holiday destination, unique with its volcanic landscapes, coastal beaches, waterfalls and botanic wonders. But before its reputation as a leisure haven, Madeira was known by the Western elite for its wellness offering. In the 19th Century, very wealthy travellers were often prescribed a trip to Madeira by their doctors for its warm, dry air and rich botany.

The notion stuck, and from the 19th Century to today, politicians and businessmen found Madeira for peace and respite from their demanding lives. A notion so ahead of its time, speaking to the modern trend of medispa travel and heightened-oxygen therapies, Madeira attracted some of the world's most famous faces and developed as a wellness haven and destination.

One to name is Empress Sissi who loved the Island of Madeira and visited for the first time after being recommended a visit by a lung specialist in 1860. Today, a bronze statue of the Empress stands near where she once resided in Quinta Vigia to perpetuate her memory while the Noble Habsburg family is said to have kept close ties to Madeira.

In 1887, Scotsman Dr. William Reid spent so much time on the island focusing on his health, he started building rental homes and hotels for his elite friends and family to visit, starting the tourism industry of Madeira as we know it.

The Reserve, opening January 2024 speaks levels to this cultural and historical celebrity offering, sitting just along the coast from Camara de Lobos Bay, immortalised by Winston Churchill who sat overlooking the bay to paint, now commemorated with a statue at the Espirito Santo Viewpoint.

Guests of The Reserve, exclusive boutique hotel concept in Madeira, are enveloped in a nature-inspired colour scheme, harmoniously blending an immersive destination experience with the serene comforts of home. Inspired by the Laurissilva forest, Madeira's unique forest full of vivid



THE
RESERVE

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greens and with a striking floral palette, guests can immerse themselves in the revitalising essence of this magical garden, a haven of healing diversity waiting to rejuvenate your senses.

Guest of The Reserve may access the Thatcher Bar, a gin's bar with a singular view over the ocean, a tribute to Lady Margaret Thatcher, who celebrated her honeymoon at old Savoy Hotel after marrying Sir Dennis Thatcher in 1951, again to return on their 50th wedding anniversary in 2001.

The Laurea Spa features a series of facilities to enhance guests' well-being and relaxation including 11 treatments rooms, a sauna, jacuzzi, steam room, a fitness centre and a gym, a relaxation room, champagne and nails bar, halotherapy rooms, ice fountain and sensorial showers.

The Reserve

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