

wellness

FIT CHECK

Sleep, eat, train, repeat. A first look at the next-generation wellness resort where data-led optimisation is king.

Story by JANE CORNWELL



OPTIMISATION. TRANSFORMATION. TRAVELLING without compromise. Want to maintain peak performance while on holiday? Interested in some self-improving biohacks, even when you're away on business?

Welcome, then, to SIRO, an immersive lifestyle and hospitality brand whose luxury hotels – SIRO One Za'abeel, Dubai, and now SIRO Boka Place, Montenegro – encourage guests to unlock their potential, aiming to send them home healthier, smarter and more bright-eyed and gorgeous than when they checked in.

“So many of us have our daily fitness, nutrition and sleep regimes interrupted when we travel,” says Mattheos Georgiou, senior vice president of SIRO and Rare Finds, two of the four luxury hospitality brands (there's also Atlantis and One&Only) in the Kerzner International portfolio. “SIRO is ahead of the curve in offering a holistic approach to sleep, fitness, recovery and mindfulness. This is not a trend,” he adds with a smile. “We believe this will become a permanent expectation, especially for business travellers. People are less willing to compromise on their own wellbeing.” For the next few days, in situ at SIRO Boka Place – a 96-guest room hotel and 144 managed residences in Porto Montenegro, a new luxury waterfront community on the crystalline Boka Bay – I am one of those people.

Up here, in the limestone mountains flanking the roadside, are hiking trails, medieval villages, ruins of Austro-Hungarian forts. Wildflowers waft from dark green foliage, through which, my driver tells me, wolves, bears and foxes slink at night. In the other direction is a marina that sparkles with designer boutiques and upmarket eateries, bobbing sailing boats and sleek superyachts. Further along are islands with churches, little beaches with parasols and a sea cave lit by a vivid blue glow.

Later in my stay, SIRO Boka Place will arrange a cable car trip up to Savin Kuk, the highest peak in the Durmitor ranges, from where I overlook the fjord-like Bay of



SIRO Boka Place is a new community of hotel rooms and managed residences on Boka Bay, Montenegro. Above: Take a cable car up to Savin Kuk and enjoy the view over the Bay of Kotor.

Kotor and its UNESCO-listed old town before cycling down a long switchback road with the wind in my hair. Separately, I'll stroll a coastal promenade past shops, plazas and vine-bedecked mansions until I hit a small disused jetty where I'll sit, watching the occasional speedboat, swinging my legs over the water.

But first, in an open-plan reception area decked out with blonde wood benchtops and silver Apple computers, under an industrial-look exposed-pipe ceiling reminiscent of hipster hotels in Berlin or New York, good-looking staff in fawn and white uniforms want me to get my mojo back. My room is on the fourth of the hotel's seven floors – the rooftop tapas bar, SIRO Social, has a view over the 25-metre swimming pool and tennis courts designed by champion Novak Djokovic, a frequent visitor – and like everywhere else in this place has an aesthetic intended to soothe, never distract.

“I'm a bit OCD. I love coming into a room and seeing everything in its place. No obvious cables or sockets, just clean lines and tranquillity,” says Georgiou of SIRO's signature blend of Scandinavian and Japanese design, with its sleek furniture, neutral tones and zen-like chill. I hang the Do Not Disturb: Recharging sign on my door and look around. There's a pillow menu, blackout curtains and a bed with a temperature-regulating mattress. The TV has a pull-down wooden shutter; the desk has a medicine ball instead of a chair. On the wall in the corner, a Swedish ladder invites pull-ups, dips and stretches; a “recovery cabinet” reveals yoga accoutrements – mat, block, bands – and a meditation cushion to mindfully sit on (or try to: the rooms are not totally soundproof).

I figure I'll be bouncing back in no time. Regardless, I drop a SIRO hydration cube into my SIRO water bottle (both available from the boutique next to reception, opposite the smoothie-serving Refuel Bar) and head down to the first floor, which has a 1600-square-metre Fitness Lab with a





In the mountains are hiking trails, medieval villages and ruins. The rooms (below) include a bed with a temperature-regulating mattress, and bespoke meals are prepared on request.

FINE DETAILS

Room rates are from \$290 during the off-season and \$932 during peak season (June to August). sirohotels.com

Fly into Tivat Airport (TIV), a small airport with seasonal daily flights from major European hubs, or the international Dubrovnik Airport (DBV) in Croatia, a 90-minute drive away.



tech-forward gym, a space for yoga and reformer Pilates and a nightclub-like fitness studio where flashing LED lights and doof-doof music accompany classes developed in partnership with AC Milan football club and Olympic boxer Ramla Ali. (Reader, I sweated.)

Out of earshot is the Recovery Lab, a dreamy space of white walls, abstract wall hangings and a roster of treatments focused on performance and recovery such as physiotherapy, cryotherapy and myofascial cupping. I opt for compression boot therapy, sliding my legs into what look like a pair of electrified fisherman's waders, which tighten into tourniquets to squeeze and massage, and miraculously depuff my swollen ankles. A body composition analysis using Technogym's medical gold standard Seca Tru device gives metrics including mobility muscle mass and brain speed (99 per cent, yay!) and confirms that I have a problem with water retention. "Daily celery juice and less Vegemite, which is very rich in sodium," advises in-house nutritionist Radovan Ivanovic, to whom I confess my love of salty snacks (and intermittent homesickness).

"We want clients to understand that most health problems come from poor lifestyle choices, and it's best to treat the cause, not the symptom," he says. While I forgo his kind offer of a gut microbiome (stool) test, I am fascinated by the notion of a nutrient-rich IV infusion, a service administered by qualified staff in a designated hygienic room and sadly not yet available during my stay. Ivanovic recommends that I follow a gluten- and dairy-free meal plan for a month when I'm home, self-monitoring my wellbeing. I could, if I like, try out such a meal simply by ordering room service; the kitchen at SIRO Boka Place will customise recipes for guests on request, using organic produce sourced from sustainable farms across the Balkans.

Feeling sociable, I choose instead to dine at SIRO Table, the hotel's main restaurant, with its modular dining areas and outdoor terrace. Depending on where I'm sitting, I have



a view of the open kitchen and the workings of Malaysian-born chef Mohammed Rahim and his team, preparing dishes such as charcoal-grilled red tuna fillet and vegetables, eggplant steak with octopus ragout and feta cheese, and regional specialty *ustipci* (grilled beef patty with beef prosciutto). The menu lists nutritional value and has a wine and cocktail list with low- and no-alcohol options – although even after one or two glasses of organic chardonnay each evening, I still spring out for bed for 7am slow yoga.

SIRO's combination of nature and adventure, fitness and recovery ("I don't want to call it wellness because everything is wellness these days," says Georgiou) proves both memorable and hugely effective. I return home to a chorus of "You look great"! Not transformed, exactly, but certainly optimised – and determined to stay that way. *

THE WRITER WAS A GUEST OF SIRO.