

VOGUE

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destination diets

The latest batch of weight-loss books steals secrets from luxe locales around the world.

Healing (Berkley Books, April). Its non-nonsense tone is a throwback to a rigorous European health clinic from the fifties, recommending complete elimination of pork, shellfish, swordfish, and all dairy products from cows (this from the Swiss!) to balance the body's alkaline levels by reducing protein.

The Saint Tropez Diet (Hatherleigh Press) is more easygoing, with an emphasis on joie de vivre and regular servings of "good" oils, nuts, fish, meat, and wine. Its many luscious recipes seem indulgent, not restrictive: whole-wheat pasta with anchovies, salmon with basil aioli, strawberry crepes. Similarly laid-back is *The Brazilian Bikini Body Program* (St. Martin's Press, April), which promises a bikini-ready physique in

30 days with a festive menu that doesn't stint on alcohol (caipirinhas), barbecue (churrasco), or beans and rice, balanced by an easy-to-follow sculpting regimen that blends Pilates and capoeira, the Brazilian martial art.

If you're seeking hard-core weight loss, *21 Pounds in 21 Days: The Martha's Vineyard Diet Detox* (ReganBooks, April) offers a power cleanse developed at the Martha's Vineyard Holistic Retreat. Dieters sip supplement-enhanced drinks, vegetable purees, and herbal teas every two hours so as not to feel hungry. Beyond the dropped pounds, claimed benefits include a surge of energy, clearer skin, and fewer allergies. But it's not for the timid—they should stick with *Saint Tropez*. —JANICE DUNN *beauty* >182

We've lived (and lost) through diets based on food groups, blood types, and carb quotients. This year, it's all about location, location, location: A sensible quartet of books takes cues from St-Tropez, Switzerland, Brazil, and Martha's Vineyard.

For those who like the comfort of a diet heavily weighted with science, get ready for *The Swiss Secret to Optimal Health: Dr. Rau's Diet for Whole Body*

organic chemistry

Introducing the beauty lab, where spa guests custom-blend creams and scrubs.

Nestled among picturesque mountains, the Ojai Valley Inn & Spa draws the harried and the hurried from all over, especially L.A., 90 minutes south. And while some guests come just for the world-famous 31,000-square-foot spa, others prefer to play scientist in the newly built Apothecary. Housed in a sun-filled cottage, the 90-minute "Aromatherapy" class is taught by a French biochemist who demonstrates how essential oils can soothe the skin and stimulate the mind. Students don lab coats, sniff out their favorite scents from fresh herbal cuttings, and sprinkle the ingredients in a hammered-copper still, or alembic. It steams chemical compounds out of the leaves and flowers, yielding essential oil and floral water that "flavor" an unscented base (of soap, hand lotion, body scrub, bath salt, or lip balm). Untouched by artificial preservatives, these ultrapersonalized products may not have the shelf life of the drugstore kind. Then again, no one's been able to find out how long they last: They're that addictive. *Ojai Valley Inn & Spa*; (800) 422-6524; ojaisort.com. —LAURIE DRAKE



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