



## Ocean House: The Pursuit of Wellness in Old-Time Rhode Island Comfort

By Amy Sung | April 18, 2012



If you've never been to Rhode Island, but have images of airy beachside homes with a nautically themed Victorian feel, you're pretty on point. On a recent visit to the historically rich **Ocean House in Watch Hill, Rhode Island**, just 2.5 hours from New York City, I got a taste of the laidback yet energetic and classy charm that Rhode Island is known for through the Ocean House's spa, wellness and food offerings.

A popular summer beach town full of visiting celebs and longtime residents alike, the 49-guest-room and 23-private-residence Ocean House boasts a 144-year-old history. The oceanfront beach resort, originally built in 1868, went through many ups and downs via hurricanes, city fire codes and more, and in 2003, the resort was to shut down due to its condition and the city's newly revamped fire regulations. Because the Ocean House held a significant and sentimental place in its Westerly community, residents and wealthy investors combined passions and finances to rebuild the historic resort, salvaging what they could to use in the replicated building, and rebuilding what was beyond repair. From the stylized moldings to the vintage elevator, there are many actual touches of the old Ocean House in the new and improved replica, which took five years and \$146 million to complete.



### **Relaxing Wellness: OH! Spa**

[OH! Spa](#), which recently joined the prestigious group of Forbes Travel Guide's Five-Star spa list, also just launched a new Wellness Weekend program, which includes a two-night stay, along with fitness classes, time at the spa, a spa cuisine lunch, a lesson with the resort's dedicated food forager Jan Faust Dane and more.

During my stay, I experienced much of what a Wellness Weekend experience would include, including some time at the spa partaking in two treatments. OH! Spa uses seasonal ingredients and natural, therapeutic elements centered around the "Ocean" and "Harvest" concepts; I opted for the Beach Stone Massage and the Harvest Replenishing Facial – a little bit of both worlds. I loved that the massage incorporated stones from the resort's own beach and the facial used a unique double-certified organic line of products. Hot stones during the massage melted away any tension in my muscles, while the grainy and very organic-smelling buckwheat facial mask felt like an incredibly wholesome way to draw out any impurities in my skin.



### **Invigorating Wellness: Fitness Classes**

When I wasn't at the spa getting treatments, I was working it out in the gym. An early morning yoga flow class located in the fitness studio was low key and calming. And while I'm more of a yogi than a runner or weight lifter, I absolutely loved the circuit training class at OH! Spa. Taught by the most enthusiastic and energetic instructor you could

ask for (which is much-needed in circuit training), we worked out as a group and broke a sweat to Adele and other energy-packed tunes.

Beyond yoga, circuit training and independent workouts with the cardio and weight equipment, OH! Spa features a very unique virtual fitness class. The “Virtual Fitness” machine, a small touch-screen machine about the size of an ATM, enables guests to choose from a variety of interesting classes, including spinning, the spa’s most popular. Once a class is selected, a large screen unrolls itself down the mirrored wall of the gym and a virtual instructor appears, ready to lead you in a fitness class. This enables guests to take fitness classes even when a real live one isn’t being offered.

### **Nourishing Wellness: Spa Cuisine & Smoothie Class**

The resort’s food and beverage program is centered around the farm-to-table lifestyle, with the mission of educating guests about sustainability and its culinary philosophy via regularly scheduled Farm + Vine dinners/classes; “In the Kitchen” workshops; and thrice-weekly cooking classes, led by food forager Jan Faust, that focuses on seasonal ingredients. Part of the Wellness Weekend experience includes a smoothie-making class taught by Jan, who travels to regional farms and farmer’s markets on a daily basis year-round to ensure that guests are experiencing the highest-quality, freshest foods possible.

A three-course spa lunch is also a featured part of the Wellness Weekend experience, served in the naturally lit Seasons restaurant, which showcases beautiful ocean views. I enjoyed refreshing roasted beet salad with toasted farro, baby spinach, blood orange, Narragansett Creamery Feta and a sherry shallot vinaigrette for my first course, followed by a lemon-poached salmon dish served with toasted quinoa, kale, red pearl onions and cucumber Tzatzki sauce for my main. Light yet satisfying, the meal was exactly what a spa lunch should be. Then came dessert: a rich and delicious strawberry panna cotta with berries and strawberry streusel.





In focusing on various facets of wellness, like food, spa, fitness and more, Wellness Weekends are truly all encompassing. With just a few weekends scheduled this year, be sure to book your visit and give yourself the gift of wellness in a beautiful beachside setting at the Ocean House.

**Wellness Weekend dates:**

April 20, 2012 to April 22, 2012  
October 26, 2012 to October 28, 2012  
November 9, 2012 to November 11, 2012

**Package Includes:**

- Two-night accommodations in Deluxe or Terrace Water View Rooms
- Motivating fitness classes such as yoga flow and circuit training
- Smoothie-making class
- Spa cuisine lunch
- Sunday brunch at Seasons restaurant
- 10% discount on spa treatments
- OH! spa tote

Wellness Weekend package rates start at \$758 for single occupancy and \$932 for double occupancy. Tax and gratuities not included. Based on availability. Travelers can book at [www.oceanhouseri.com](http://www.oceanhouseri.com) or by calling [\(888\) 552-2588](tel:8885522588).