

MARINA EFRAIMOGLOU

Founder of Euphoria Retreat



What spurred your decision to open Euphoria Retreat?

After overcoming cancer twice then suffering burn-out as an investment banker, I integrated holistic therapies into my life. I studied traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), the ‘five elements’ and more alternative health methods. Inspired by my recovery, I wanted [Euphoria Retreat](#) to be a place where people could be gently motivated to live a more spiritually satisfying life.

What advice would you give to someone looking to change their career or life?

Be patient with yourself. Make small changes: drink warm water on waking or take a daily walk—but don’t expect to run a marathon in a month. Share your journey with loved ones so they can support you and even join you. Be aware of what you read, watch and even how you talk, and seek out things that inspire you. The main message we want to spread to our guests is: ‘your life, your journey’ – they should have freedom of choice to follow their own path. Learn to honour yourself and you’ll make better choices in your life.

How do you ensure Euphoria provides a luxury experience as well as a holistic one?

My experience at many spas and retreats was based on sacrifice and denial: fasting, weight loss, extreme exercise... It’s too much to ask of your body in a short space of time. What I offer at Euphoria lies in my Greek heritage – the ancient philosophers viewed life as joyful and full of potential for growth; the word ‘euphoria’ is about living and feeling well.

Were you initially open to alternative medicines?

The first time I had cancer, I had traditional treatment, then explored ways to boost my immunity and discovered a more spiritual element. I started yoga, meditation and detox retreats, and did a lot of work on energy, self-awareness and traditional Chinese medicine. Time spent with my family was enriching too. These worked for me, but it’s important to find what works best for each individual.

What wisdom from the Greek philosophers do you share the most?

Everything in moderation, that life is to be celebrated, enjoyed and cherished; that freedom of choice comes with responsibility. Ancient Greeks had a love for inner peace and complete health; they understood that the physical, spiritual and emotional are intimately integrated.

Euphoria Retreat has such a unique design. What was the inspiration behind it?

The retreat was developed around a mansion that’s stood in this spot since 1830. The monastic tranquillity of the setting inspired the retreat’s authentic architecture, a blend of Byzantine art and Zen design by my sister Natalia Eframoglou and Greek firm Deca Architects. The philosophy and architecture have a symbiotic relationship: say, the sunken spa, which reflects the belief that proximity to the earth promotes healing.



What are you most proud of about Euphoria?

The community we’ve created – there’s a strong sense of family. The business isn’t driven commercially, but by what I feel to be my calling. I’m also proud that we’ve been recognised by some of the most popular media, awards and wellness organisations around the world.

What plans do you have for the future?

I’m excited for the launch of our new medical programme, and a new ‘Holistic leadership retreat’, which explores the power of intuition, compassion, and empathy and how essential it is to have a balance of energies for leadership, whether in your work or personal life.

*For more inspiration, discover the female hoteliers making strides in [sustainable hospitality](#).*