

# Marina Efraimoglou of Euphoria Retreat

by Alex Postman

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*Marina Efraimoglou, founder of Euphoria Retreat*

A couple of years back, I was lucky enough to stay at Euphoria Retreat in Mystras, in Greece's central Peloponnese. While the spa has all of the requisite treatments, hammams and plunge pools, I loved how tied to the outdoors and history it felt—we took long hikes through the pine-scented mountains overlooking nearby Sparta, occasionally passing tiny abandoned but elaborately painted Byzantine chapels and spigots of icy mountain water. I also appreciated that the approach there felt distinctly Greek—from the olive oil in the skincare to the Greek drama class I took that taught us to locate our voices/center of strength by “breathing” from our kidneys! I'd heard about founder Marina Efraimoglou, who built Euphoria after a health scare led her to completely change her life and research health renewal modalities around the world. But I didn't get to meet her until recently, over drinks in New York, where she was so excited about the medical program they've since launched at Euphoria (a “human regenerator power jet!”) and talking about her methods for staying healthy and balanced when she travels—including DIY acupressure and a calming trick involving a stainless-steel spoon—I wanted to share it all here! —Alex Postman

**Tell us briefly about Euphoria and how you found your way to wellness.**

Euphoria Retreat is the realization of a deeply personal journey—a vision that has been a lifetime in the making.

In my late twenties, I was diagnosed with cancer. While chemotherapy helped heal me physically, I was left searching for a deeper sense of healing, and a need to rebuild my immunity system. That search took me around the world to different detox and fasting retreats, opening my eyes to a whole new approach to well-being.

At the time, I was still fully immersed in the world of investment banking—I even co-owned a very successful investment bank in Greece. But despite all the success, something felt off. I realized I wasn't living in alignment with my true purpose. Eventually, I left banking behind and dove into studying various modalities of energy healing, self-awareness, Taoism, Traditional Chinese Medicine and Ancient Greek philosophy. What struck me was how these traditions, in their own ways, spoke about balance, nature, and the five elements as the key to a harmonious life.

A pivotal point came in 1999, when I visited the Golden Door in California. Being surrounded by nature, living according to these ancient principles—it sparked a dream to create something similar back home in Greece. That vision came to life in 2018 with the opening of Euphoria Retreat, set in the UNESCO World Heritage site of Mystras, in the heart of the Peloponnese. Surrounded by lush forests and steeped in history, it's an ideal setting for introspection, healing, and transformation.



*Euphoria Retreat*

#### **How would you describe your wellness philosophy?**

At Euphoria, everything we do is rooted in what we call the Euphoria Methodos—a holistic philosophy that blends the five elements of water, wood, fire, earth, and metal to bring balance to the body, mind, and spirit.

We believe real wellness isn't just about physical fitness or a good diet; it's about aligning yourself with nature's rhythms and taking time to truly know yourself. Our goal is to create an environment where guests feel safe and supported enough to go inward, make real changes, and leave feeling transformed.

While we offer a flexible range of programs, we're especially proud of our signature retreats like Emotional Harmony, a beautiful five- to seven-day journey of self-discovery, and Spartan Spirit of Adventure, which blends physical exploration with the legendary history of Sparta.

Most recently, we launched our groundbreaking 360-degree Euphoria Methodos Advanced Medical Programs—the world's first scientifically proven natural therapy focused on cellular metabolic health. This new approach combines at-home testing, advanced diagnostics on-site, cutting-edge therapies—like the German-engineered Human Regenerator Power Jet using Cold Atmospheric Plasma (CAP) technology—and a detailed two-month aftercare plan. It's about giving people the tools to deeply restore their health in a natural and empowering way.



### **Do you take anything to boost your wellness/immunity before traveling by plane?**

Before and during a flight, I spray PROPOLIS (the resin-like substance that honeybees take from tree buds and sap to and mix with their enzymes to sterilize their hives) in my throat. Its rich antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory and antioxidant compounds help support your immune system and reduce risk of catching a cold or sore throat while flying. I also up my intake of Vitamin C, D and Zinc.

Before and during my travels, I take my constitutional homeopathic remedy that supports me physically and emotionally—it's personally compounded for me at my pharmacy. I also travel with SOOO calm: Reishi extract 15:18:1. The calming blend of reishi mushrooms supports emotional well-being and contributes to the regulation of hormonal activity, making it easier to relax and unwind. It also helps boost immunity.

### **Do you do anything special for your skincare on a plane?**

I just make sure to hydrate and to use a good moisturizer, like Biologique Recherche's Grand Cream—the best!

### **How about practices to boost circulation, calm, or wellness while flying?**

Circulation is very important. As much as possible, I keep my legs up and try to walk around. Also, I have studied Traditional Chinese Medicine and adhere to several wellness practices to counteract the forces of dryness, stagnation, and stress on the body. Acupressure on certain points is excellent to support energy flow and calmness. Apply firm pressure for 1-2 minutes while breathing deeply to these points to ground energy, boost circulation, reduce anxiety, calm the nervous system, and support overall wellness in flight:

- Pericardium – Located three finger-widths below the wrist, between two tendons.
- Stomach 36\* – Four finger-widths below the kneecap, one finger-width to the outside of the shinbone.
- Kidney 1\* – Located on sole of the foot, in the depression just below the ball of the foot.

*\*The numbers refer to specific acupressure points on the related meridians*

### **Do you tend to pack any healthy food or snacks for travel?**

When I fly, I find it is best to eat as much protein as possible, avoid sweets and carbs. I carry non-roasted, unsalted almonds, dark chocolate and raisins. I also pack pistachios from Greece to pick me up when I arrive.

### **Do you have any rituals you use to reset or ground yourself in a new place and to deal with jet lag?**

I take a walk no matter what time I arrive, and no matter how tired I am. Just orienting myself to a new place helps anchor me in a new time-zone, new environment.

Once I am settled, I also give myself a face massage with a gua sha tool, preferably chilled, to de-puff, especially around my eyes, to stimulate circulation, relieve muscle tension in my jaw and forehead, and reduce fluid retention. Using light pressure, I glide the gua sha from the center of my forehead out towards temples, around eyes and under brow, and then cheeks and jawline, and neck.

Also, the back of a stainless steel spoon is great to slide from your toes all the way to your heel, as it grounds and connects you with the earth's energy after being in the air for so many hours.

If I have trouble sleeping, I take 3 mg of melatonin or an OTC compound like Sleep-eze. I travel with my mountain tea and Greek thyme honey for a warm cup of tea. The SOOO calm—see above—also helps.

### **How do you stay fit while traveling?**

By stretching every morning, especially my neck. And again, I put my feet up in bed to help with circulation. And a few sit down yoga postures (like lotus) to stretch my hips and legs.

I also walk everywhere. I travel with sneakers; sometimes I carry them with me between and after appointments, so I can walk farther and longer.

**(Aside from Euphoria) What are a few of your favorite wellness destinations and why?**



*Golden Door*

Golden Door near San Diego is where I first found inspiration to create Euphoria, so I will always have a soft spot for the property, and Deborah Szekely, their founder. And Tao Garden in Chiang Mai, Northern Thailand, where I did most of my Taoist training with grand master Mantak Chia, including the darkness and silent 10-day retreat, their most advanced training.

In August, I take my boat around the Aegean islands and always end up in the Southern Peloponnese, near Euphoria. I also love the Southwest part of the USA, where I used to go hiking and rappelling and canyoneering before opening Euphoria. Amangiri is a favorite.

The desert also feels very special to me.

**Do you have any favorite pharmacy bring-backs from other places?**

I always like to check out Whole Foods in the US and Boots in the UK. From the US, I bring back Tylenol PM and Advil PM. And at Boots, there is an alternative pill for malaria that you can't get here—a chloroquine plus proguanil combination like AVLOCLOR and PALUDRINE. I also bring back Tiger Balm from Thailand, as it is stronger and there are more varieties (red, white, orange, yellow, even black), all tailored for different uses: muscle pain, insect bites, congestion.

Kiehl's Vitamin C Serum for dark spots. And Lush hair products for curly hair.

**Where are you dreaming of going next and why?**

Africa... specifically Namibia. The vastness of the untouched landscapes, the silence of the Namib Desert and the serenity of the Skeleton Coast, and the deep connection to rhythms of the earth – this stillness and perspective can't help but support inner balance. Or so I am told. And that's my thing—inner balance.