

## THE CHALKBOARD

# FINDING WHAT I LOST: A WEEKEND OF RESILIENCE + RENEWAL AT THE RANCH 4.0



TRANSFORMATION IS RARELY easy. Like romantic love, self-love can be wild and intense. It can whisk you away from your comfort zone and show you resilience you never knew you had. This kind of wellness can push you to your limits, make you let go of control, and crack your heart wide open, creating space for dormant joy to bubble over. Where does such a breed of wellness exist? We found it at a legendary, luxury boot camp in Malibu — The Ranch 4.0.



The Ranch 4.0 is a hardcore yet luxurious **fitness and wellness retreat** designed to help guests detox, shed weight, and reset on every level. A shortened version of The Ranch Malibu's acclaimed week-long program, this four-day boot camp is dramatically renewing and equally *intense*. Each day starts at 5:30 am, includes eight-hours of fitness (four of which are hiking) and a strict meal plan made with lots of plants and absolutely no meat, dairy, gluten or... caffeine.

The program is rigorous but rewarding, and the results — both mental and physical — are instantly noticeable, making it a favorite amongst high-octane executives and Hollywood A-listers; Alison Brie, Rebel Wilson, **Mandy Moore**, Minka Kelly, Lea Michele, **Julianne Hough**, and Selma Blair have all been spotted at The Ranch in the last few months.



What's the catch? A weekend at The Ranch 4.0 requires some deep pockets, but for those who have the means to spare, there's truly nothing like it. We recently had the chance to try the program for ourselves and couldn't believe the depth of our transformation after just one weekend. We found ourselves challenged on every level, and we left feeling a sense of mind-body elation that lingered for weeks after...

**WHAT TO KNOW:** The Ranch 4.0 runs Thursday through Monday and is based at the beautiful Four Seasons Westlake Village. A cornerstone of the program is a chance to connect with nature and its healing benefits, which is why most of the day is spent outdoors. Each day of the program follows the same schedule, and guests are expected to attend every activity. For high-strung A-types (aka the majority of guests at The ranch 4.0), not having to make any decisions about what to do or when to do it is the only real way to unwind in such a short period of time – it's the dreamiest kind of luxury.





**WHAT YOU'LL EAT:** Plants. So many plants. While at the ranch you'll follow a 1,400 calorie-per-day diet that is completely organic and plant-based with most ingredients sourced from their biodynamic garden. The meals change every day, and each one is delicious, creative and completely crave-able. Breakfast might be a bowl of steel-cut oats with fresh berries and homemade almond milk or a chickpea 'frittata' with tomatillo salsa; lunch could be a hearty quinoa and veggie salad or a lentil veggie burger with guacamole and a side of kale chips; and dinner is vegetable bolognese over spaghetti squash or a mini cauliflower crust personal pizza piled high with veggies and homemade almond ricotta.

Guests are given a few small snacks throughout the day. On the hike, you'll have a precious piece of fruit or a few almonds (literally, six). If you attend the afternoon fitness classes you'll be rewarded with a bag of nutritional yeast seasoned popcorn or date and cacao energy bites. The restriction of food is one of the most challenging aspects of the program (by day three, a group of us snuck into the spa to steal some extra apples) but it's also surprisingly refreshing. You'll quickly realize how little your body actually needs to absorb energy from food.

**WHAT YOU'LL DO:** You'll sweat, you'll whine, you'll think your legs are breaking and your body is giving up — and you will discover an awe-inspiring ability to push through.



The morning starts at 6am with a group stretch class. Following 45-minutes of slow, luxurious movement, breakfast is served in the grounds' linen and light-drenched greenhouse. After filling up camelbacks and wrapping ourselves in KT tape, we hopped into a van and drove to our morning hike somewhere in the Santa Monica mountains. We hiked for four-hours — the goal being time not distance — sweating our faces off, chatting to our fellow Ranchers and finding ways to stay present and not think about how many hours are left until lunch. We barely touched our phones while we walked and felt like a renegade and also a goddess.



After enjoying another beautifully balanced plant-based meal, we were given free time to nap, hit the sauna, melt away by the pool, or just sit in a bathrobe in your room doing nothing (*bliss*). Every afternoon, guests are treated to an in-room athletic massage to help unravel exhausted muscles. The evening program includes two 45-minute strength training classes and an hour of restorative yoga. After showering, we all gathered back in the greenhouse for another amazing meal and great conversation.





Other perks of the program include a plant-based cooking class, body fat and muscle mass analysis to assess the impact of the weekend, and VO2 testing to help map out a personalized plan to sustain results after the weekend.

**HOW YOU'LL FEEL:** In a word: euphoric. The Ranch 4.0 will break you down in the most luxurious way and build you back up through the bliss of embodied movement. You'll feel refreshed and reconnected to your humanness after being surrounded by nature and pushed beyond your perceived limits. You'll experience connection and solitude, a balanced opportunity to dive deep into yourself and remember who you are outside of your schedule and work-life. The Ranch gives you a rare chance to be released from responsibility, to transcend the mundane and embody your true potential.

Over the course of the program you will feel tired, and sore, and a little loopy from the low-calorie diet — but it all brings you back to a place of appreciation and gratitude. You will be bored by your 30th hour of hiking, but that boredom creates space to slow down, look around and let joy rise. When you stop counting minutes, qualifying accomplishments and identifying by your daily routine, you realize there's nowhere to rush to. Life is happening now. The Ranch will remind you to make time for the things that make you feel alive and how good it feels to linger there.



The Ranch 4.0 is an incredible experience with transformative potential that can actually lead to sustainable changes. At the end of the program, you'll be sent off with a packet of recipes (get one of our favorite breakfasts below!), a new sense of strength and all the inspiration you need to maintain your bliss. Learn more about the program and how to sign up [here](#).

## ZUCCHINI BANANA MUFFINS

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### INGREDIENTS:

1 1/2 cups almond flour  
1/2 cup oat flour  
1/2 cup rolled oats  
1 tsp baking powder  
1 tsp baking soda  
1/4 tsp salt  
1/2 tsp cinnamon  
2 tsp vanilla  
1/2 overripe banana, mashed  
1 Tbsp oil  
2 chia 'eggs' (see below)  
1/4 cup maple syrup  
1/2 cup zucchini, shredded  
1/2 Tbsp apple cider vinegar

### DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line a muffin pan with paper liners.

First, make the chia egg by combining 2 Tbsp chia seeds with 6 Tbsp water. Mix in a bowl and let sit for at least 10 minutes.

In a large bowl, whisk together the almond flour, oat flour, rolled oats, baking powder, baking soda, salt and cinnamon. Set aside.

Wring out any excess moisture from the zucchini using a dish towel.

In a separate bowl, mix together the mashed banana, zucchini, oil, chia eggs, apple cider vinegar and vanilla.

Pour the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients and mix just until incorporated.

Using a 1/2 cup measure, pour the batter into the prepared muffin tin.

Bake 20-25 minutes until golden brown on top. Allow to cool completely. Serve with a jam and your choice of nut or seed butter.

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