



New moon

Claire Sawers kick-starts the year by decluttering her aura (not as painful as it sounds) at East Lothian's newest spiritual retreat IndigoSilk

January is traditionally the month for decluttering. Your cupboards, your insides, your bad habits; the start of the year is a perfect time to fling out the old and welcome in the new. But what about getting rid of bad juju? Detoxing your emotional baggage and cleansing your head with a good dose of spirituality? If the 'S' word fills you with fear, or worse, a mental montage of new-agey cults or bare-footed pagan festivals, then you may care to look away now.

If, on the other hand, you're happy having the occasional flirt with say, astrology or tarot cards, then you may be interested in what Jilly Greig offers at her luxurious East Lothian haven.

IndigoSilk opened in November, as a place for people to run away to. 'People can come and hide here if they're stressed and feel like they're walking around with their shoulders up to their ears,' says Greig. 'They might just want to relax, drink herbal tea and walk along Gullane beach. That's absolutely fine.'

Greig had been practising alternative therapies in health centres in Edinburgh's New Town and Stockbridge before deciding to base herself in the more rural, tranquil base of Spittalrig Farm, Haddington. Her modern revamp of two farm cottages took almost a year to complete, but the results are impressive. Patchouli, tie-dye or gypsy scarves over lamps are nowhere to be seen. Instead a minimalist décor of fresh orchids, scented candles and white furnishings make the three-bedroom farmhouse feel more like a serene spa than a hippy den. There are £800 worth of healing crystals buried in the foundations too; much to the builders' bemusement, as Greig points out.

'If you want straightforward B&B, that's fine – but I do warn people that strange spiritual stuff may be going on,' grins Greig, who finds it funny that her neighbours refer to her as Mystic Meg.

During my two-night stay, where I'm joined by two other women seeking a relaxing time-out from their daily routine, we are given aura readings, hot stone massages, Chinese Tui-na

MORE LIKE A SERENE SPA THAN A HIPPIY DEN



physiotherapy, colour personality readings, tarot readings and 'sextrology' advice (to be taken with a handful of salt, and in this case, served with a glass of prosecco).

Home-made cake is produced every few hours, and Greig encourages us to wander around the garden or neighbouring woods if we want some 'alone time'.

Squirting us with feelgood aromatherapy scents (depending on 'what colours we're lacking that day'), or herding us into the garden to play with divining rods, Greig floats around like a glamorous earth-mother. After raising five children, and losing her husband to cancer, Greig obviously isn't someone who can be bothered sweating the small stuff anymore. Instead, she believes in the power of peace and quiet, belly laughs, wine, fresh air and headspace. If you're intrigued by angel therapy (Greig is an 'angel teacher', and summons in angelic forces when the going gets tough) then she will happily guide you through it. If you can't keep a straight face, however, when she brings out her magic wand, 'charged' with the power of the full moon (her 16-year-old son does a full-body cringe every time she reads his schoolfriend's auras) then Greig won't take offence. Whether you leave spiritually richer is probably up to the person, but more relaxed, better fed and rosier cheeked – that's as good as guaranteed.

B&B prices start at £35 for a twin room. For more info on workshops and classes in baby massage, meditation, colour therapy etc, visit www.spiritualretreatscotland.co.uk