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Dream Trips: Wellness And Yoga Meet Champagne In France



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As The Gear Diva, I bring function and style to active women's lives. [FULL BIO](#)

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As famous as its namesake product is, France's Champagne region has long been one of the world's more overlooked top wine producing areas. Most wine loving travelers visiting France think first of Bordeaux or Burgundy, and while they are great spots, Champagne should not be missed. The region lies just about an hour from Paris, one of the world's favorite tourism cities, close enough for day or overnight trips, with lots of companies offering transfers and tour packages, and there's even a non-stop high speed train straight to or from Charles de Gaulle airport making it easy to start or end your Parisian vacation here. The two main cities, Epernay and Reims, are both charming, the often overlooked third, Troyes, is lovely, and the countryside is dotted with quaint villages containing hundreds of welcoming family producers of bubbly in addition to the famed big houses. The area is also home to lots of great food, and all that Champagne has been missing is a wellness focus - until now.

Summer is the high season for American travelers to Europe, so July 1 is perfect timing for the grand opening of [Royal Champagne Hotel & Spa](#), the Champagne Region's first full service wellness resort. It sits just outside Epernay, home to the grand Avenue de Champagne, where several of the most famous champagne houses sit one after another, with many offering a slate of compete tours and tastings, especially the world's largest producer, Moët Chandon.

The hotel is a member of the prestigious Relais & Châteaux group, a luxury affiliation of independent smaller hotels that includes such famed spots as Napa's Auberge du Soleil, Aspen's Little Nell and England's Le Manoir Quat Saison. It is a complete reimagining of a previously existing hotel, incorporates an original 19th-century home and was designed as a contemporary amphitheater in order to offer views of the vineyard covered hillsides surrounding it from each of its 49 rooms and suites. In keeping with the gourmet traditions of France and Relais & Châteaux, it is home to two restaurants, a gourmet dining room, Le Royal, and a more casual, all-day restaurant, Bellevue, both run by 2-star Michelin chef Jean-Denis Rieubland, formerly of the acclaimed Le Chantecler in Nice.

But there are lots of luxury hotels in Europe with great food, so to me the big highlight is the 16,000 square-foot wellness center with a state-of-the-art fitness facility, large yoga studio with varied classes and elaborate spa offerings with nine treatment rooms in partnership with Biologique Recherche, a doctor-launched company now famed for his skincare treatments and products. Facilities also include a eucalyptus-infused sauna, mosaic-tiled hammam (steam room), and indoor and outdoor heated swimming pools. The hotel cuisine will emphasize local organic ingredients, utilize lots of fresh produce from an on-site chef's garden, and offer an array of fresh pressed juices. Rooms here definitely skew luxurious, with large floorplans, great views and Hermes amenities.

The full slate of wellness, yoga and workout activities is not available yet, and the website is largely a placeholder at this time, but the hotel promises to craft curated itineraries for all interests, and your exercise routine here can be combined with things like wine tastings, champagne house tours, even hot-air balloon rides, and of course, luxurious spa treatments.

Opening rates at Royal Champagne Hotel & Spa start at €495.

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