



# Time out...



**AFTER A BUSY SCHEDULE AT LONDON, PARIS AND MILAN FASHION WEEKS, LA DI DA'S TOP MAKE UP ARTIST JO LEVERSUCH HEADED OFF TO THE DESERT FOR A RETREAT TO FIND HERSELF AGAIN. SHE TELLS US ALL ABOUT IT...**

**A**fter an exhausting but exciting time working in London, Paris and Milan for fashion week I was desperate for some downtime but where?

I needed to go back to basics and find myself again. A total recharge with some sunshine as an added bonus. 'Meditation and Tibetan Yoga by Retreats' in the Marrakech Desert appealed immediately. Morocco has been on my wish list for ages and I had heard good things about the stylish Retreats which have been set up by Brian Hilliard and Shannon van Staden. Their passion and expertise in the field of meditation is stellar. While I was there a fellow traveler was writing an article and shooting it for the Sunday Times, and the couple's Retreats have become popular with movers and shakers

needing to reboot themselves before returning to the fray of hectic working schedules.

The La Pause Hotel in Morocco, where the retreat was being held, is a magical place in the middle of the desert looking over the Atlas Mountains. The retreat was the perfect combination, discovery with mindfulness meditation plus some Tibetan Yoga as an added bonus to relax.

There was no Wi-Fi and no electricity around the hotel. I lived the whole week by candlelight, with no make-up and no hair dryer and no access to emails. I can honestly say I enjoyed every moment of not wearing make-up or having to think about my hair, it was so liberating.

In the past I have been on Tai Chi retreats for

a week but I have never experienced the full concept of switch off, slow down and recharge from mind body and spirit. Brian Hillard, our Meditation Teacher, with his calm presence and gentle manner was just what was needed.

The hardest aspect of the retreat was understanding the concept of meditation practice at all of the different levels you can experience it. I am not embarrassed to say I spent many days feeling tearful and emotional about my life and my past experiences but after the fourth day I started to feel happier and my mind so much calmer. I came back feeling totally re-energised and feeling a lot happier and calmer about life with some valuable new meditation tools to help me cope with the long days and high pressure deadlines.

Would I go on another retreat with Retreat organized by Brian and Shannon? Yes most certainly. In fact I am now trying to arrange my work load so I can go away again and visit one of their other Retreats in Greece or Lapland.

• [www.retreats.pro](http://www.retreats.pro)