



location: a fabulously remote atoll with golden beaches. The rooms may be a little confused stylistically (opt for a beach villa), but it's a family kind of hit. So who would've expected the whole tantric vibe? However you look at it, this spa is a serious operation. There are hulking overwater treatment rooms, but more delicious are the ones in the coconut groves. And the tantric menu is pulling in the curious. To whip male and female energies into shape, two therapists sing sacred songs as they massage individuals or couples together. Don't be spooked – true tantra is about a spiritual union, not just a rumble in the jungle. **Website** fourseasons.com/maldives. **UK reservations** Elegant Resorts (tel: 01244 897522). **Rates** Beach bungalow, from £420.

The Big Stretch

Picos de Europa, Spain

This place is about stretching your mind, not your body. Many spas focus on escaping reality – here it's all about facing it head on, albeit in the dreamlike location of the Picos de Europa mountains in Spain. Seven-day retreats allow you to think about the big questions in your life. But don't worry, there's nothing kookie about the 'coaching' sessions here. You'll absorb lots of practical advice. Afternoons are spent hiking through gorges and wilderness peaks – a great way to blow away the cobwebs. It's not all hard graft. Feast on wonderful picnics in the mountains and spend the evenings sampling local wine, fresh fish or the country's famous meats and manchego. La Montana Magica is an incredibly charming hotel with vast rooms, rustic stone floors and chestnut wood furniture. Sleep deep after the local masseuse has got her hands on you. **Tel** 0845 430 8621. **Website** thebigstretch.com. **Rates** Single, from £2,350 for seven nights, full board, including transfers.

