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& travel

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Steamy Switzerland springs

Located just four miles from the Tamina Gorge, where the physician and alchemist Paracelsus documented the healing powers of the Bad Ragaz spring water in the 16th century, Grand Resort Bad Ragaz has continued the tradition of health and wellbeing. Comprised of two hotels, Grand Hotel Quellenhof & Spa Suites, and Grand Hotel Hof Ragaz, the Grand Resort's 12,800-square-metre spa is one of the largest in Europe and features ten spring-water filled indoor and outdoor pools, three sauna and steam bath zones, Asian treatment suites, and a private spa. Known for its healing properties, the 36.5° Celsius Wellbeing & Thermal Spa offers an opulent 5,500 square-metre spa for guests to enjoy and swim in, while the spacious sauna landscape contains a Finnish sauna, steam bath and sanatorium, as well as an ice grotto, sensory area and wintergarden lounge. resortragaz.ch



Restore and hydrate in Spain

Located next to the beautiful Sierra Helada Natural Park, overlooking the Mediterranean Sea, the award-winning SHA Wellness Clinic in Alicante, Spain offers a truly restorative experience. Boasting fine architectural and landscape design, the resort consists of 93 spacious suites, with tropical gardens, large pools, numerous treatment rooms and relaxation rooms. With a holistic approach to balancing the mind, body and soul, SHA offers a range of health and wellness workshops, programs, and treatments as an alternative to traditional therapies to help with detoxing, weight-loss, stopping smoking, sleep problems, stress and anxiety, and more. The clinic's signature water therapies, which help improve tension, chronic pain, mobility and muscle tone, are a popular choice among guests, while non-surgical aesthetic programs treat the effects of ageing. shawellnessclinic.com

Press the pause button in Dubai

Exclusive to St.Regis and reflective of the brand's refined style, Dubai's first Iridium Spa features six beautifully-designed treatment rooms, with separate sections for male and female guests. Each section features wet areas with two Hammam rooms, a steam room, sauna, hot tub and multi-sensory experience showers. The spa provides a space where bespoke treatments are tailored specifically to the mood the individual guest wishes to evoke, whether it be energising or relaxing, while The Iridium Room provides a generous relaxation area. The signature treatment is the Iridium Bespoke Massage with a choice of Swedish, deep tissue, hot stone, Balinese or pre-natal methodology, and concludes with a tailored tea ritual. Other indulgent treatments include signature facials, body specialties, and traditional Hammam rituals, and Iridium Spa is the only spa in Dubai to use Swiss Perfection Cellular Skin Care. iridiumspadubai.com





Magic in Morocco

Inspired by an intoxicating blend of Moroccan and Eastern culture, the impressive 27,000-square-foot Spa La Mamounia features a large indoor heated pool, Jacuzzi, nine treatment rooms, six outdoor massage cabins, a gym, two Hammams, and a spa suite. Beautifully fusing traditional and modern rituals, the spa offers over 80 treatments, with a full line of face and body therapies including facials, hot stone treatments, massages, scrubs and wraps, using products from Shiseido, Wella and marocMaroc, and manicures and pedicures by La Ric. The spa's signature treatments also include a luxe version of the traditional Hammam ritual and there is a gym onsite complete with a range of equipment, personal training, and fitness classes. Get the Day Pass for the ultimate pamper experience at what is considered to be the best spa in Marrakech. mamounia.com

Turning Japanese in New York

Dedicated to the philosophy of balance between the traditional and the modern, Shibui Spa harnesses the healing properties of Japanese design. Featuring wood, water and stone throughout, at the centre of the spa sits a lantern-lit swimming pool and lounge under the roof of a 250-year-old wooden and bamboo farmhouse imported from Japan. The rest of the serene space includes a shiatsu room with a large tub for traditional bathing rituals, a wet room with a shower for wraps and scrubs, and a treatment room for massages and facials. Even the fitness room feels calming, with its old hemlock wood floors and muted lighting providing a soft counterpoint to the state-of-the-art equipment. Trainers are available by appointment for sessions or classes. Using plant-based and, whenever possible, organic products, treatments and services available include body treatments, facials, massage, reflexology, Reiki, scrubs and wraps, shiatsu, Thai massage, meditation, personal training, pilates, relaxation lounge, spa pool and a gym. thegreenwichhotel.com





Elemis Spa, Pacific Aria

By Lisa Perkovic

It makes sense that P&O's newest ship, Pacific Aria, would set sail with extras that haven't rolled out to its other vessels. Lucky cruisers aboard the 55,000 tonne Aria are in for a treat as the ship is home to the first Elemis Spa at Sea.

Frequent cruisers will be familiar with the Elemis brand, as it is stocked on plenty of ships, but the entire Elemis-branded spa is a first. Like most of the public areas the ship's sizeable spa was given an overall makeover when it was converted from Holland America's MS Ryndam. Step into the salon, where everything is light and bright, for a blow dry before formal night or bliss out by the big windows of your treatment room and peak up at the ocean while you drift off and daydream during a hot stone massage. Stop by the gym to try out Power-Barre, P&O's brand new low impact core muscle class that will still get your blood pumping and your muscles burning. And work up an appetite. pocruises.com.au

Le Strato, Courchevel

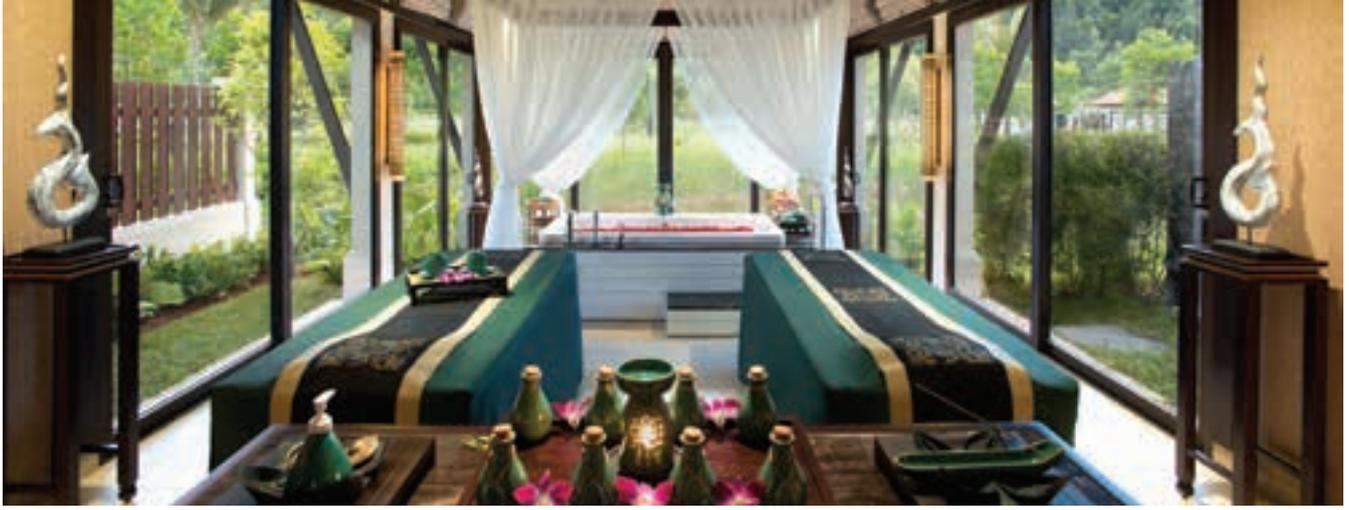
By Helen Hayes



A ski holiday and a massage go together like peas and carrots and when skiing in the celebrity playground that is Courchevel, there is no shortage of places to be pampered. One of the most beautiful is the Spa by Sothy's at Le Strato, 800 square metres of loveliness with a dazzling view of the snow white landscape outside.

After being led, clad in a luxurious robe, to a gorgeous treatment room complete with ski art, my therapist begins to weave her magic. She hones in with eagle-like precision on the muscles that are complaining after a few days of skiing, applying just the right amount of pressure.

The ambience of the room adds to the accomplished strokes, and all too soon I emerge from a trance-like state and find myself in a relaxation lounge that could be straight out of the pages of Home Beautiful. Sumptuous lounges, luscious furnishings and magnificent sculptures combine in a delicious combo of swank meets spa. If I could drum up the energy I could also swim in the spectacular indoor pool and backstroke under a two-metre long chandelier made of Murano glass, but instead, I collapse in the bar and lose myself in the twinkling lights of Courchevel below. hotelstrato.com



Banyan Tree Lang Co

By Sue Wallace

Don't be surprised if you hear sighs coming from the beautiful spa retreat at the Banyan Tree Lang Co Vietnam – it's a common occurrence. From the minute you step into the chic retreat, relax mode sets in. Guests are greeted to a cup of warm ginger tea before heading into a luxurious treatment suite with a therapist. A soothing foot bath in warm perfumed water with floating frangipani is a nice touch before starting the treatment.

The spa menu at this chic all-pool villa resort located in central Vietnam, offers indulgent massages and pampering treatments to be enjoyed as you gaze out over lush tropical gardens. My pick is the signature Royal Banyan Herbal Pouch Therapy that involves a sweet smelling herbal pouch dipped in warm sesame oil dabbed over my body, followed by long sweeping massage strokes. The warm oil soothes tired muscles and aims to improve blood circulation and muscles tensions according to my excellent therapist. The East-meets-West treatment leaves you feeling like a million dollars and yes I sigh a little too as I unwind. The Jade Face Therapy is another popular treatment that improves skin condition and firms up facial muscles. The resort is a stunner with traditional Vietnamese architecture combined with luxury facilities and signature dining at cliff side restaurant Saffron, beachside eatery Azura and several other restaurants.

The magnificent seaside views also add to a feeling of wellbeing as azure waters meet blue skies – ahh yes. banyantree.com

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