

BEST AIRLINE SEATS — WHO HAS THEM, WHERE THEY FLY

# Condé Nast Traveler

TRUTH IN TRAVEL

MAY 2011

**124**  
**Best New**  
**Hotels in the**  
**World** (Including  
40 under \$300)

*The Hot*  
*List* 2011

**21 Top Restaurants**  
**40 Sensational Spas**

PLUS

**BEIJING**  
Insider's Guide  
to the World's  
Wildest City

**CARIBBEAN'S**  
Sleeping Beauty

**THE SEXIEST**  
**PLANE**  
**IN THE SKY**



TIBET TODAY: At the St. Regis Lhasa Resort



# Hot Spas

THE 40 BEST NEW  
URBAN AND RURAL RETREATS  
AROUND THE WORLD

LONG INTEGRAL TO HOTELS, spas are now an essential part of a mental health holiday—a rare opportunity to power down. (Hey, you can't IM during a massage!) This year, our correspondents checked out new spas from Lake Como to Koh Samui, assessing their style, facilities, treatments, and service—and their potential for, well, checking out. Herewith, our 40 favorites...



## ANGUILLA

### The Spa at Viceroy Anguilla, Meads Bay

**What:** A two-story villa of a spa tacked onto the buzzed-about Viceroy resort, with a small saltwater infinity pool and treatment suites with private terraces. **The look:** Organic, slightly Seussian: Curved, silvery loungers sit next to black-and-white-striped tables atop a silver travertine floor—but they're easily outdoors by the Caribbean vista beyond. **Who goes:** Manhattan financiers, Victoria's Secret models, and celebs. **The**

**treatment:** The 90-minute Raindrop Harmony, a revved-up Swedish massage with reflexology and stretches that'll make you feel slim enough to join Sandra Bullock et al on the beach. **P.S.:** Book the Plumeria suite for its steam shower, tub, and seascapes (264-497-7000; massages, \$60-\$195).

## AUSTRALIA

### CHI, The Spa, Sydney

**What:** Six-treatment haven at the Shangri-La Hotel. Therapies focus on balancing the five elements and use Ila and Bo-

tanical Extracts products. **The look:** Dark floorboards, carved sliding screens, and wall hangings conjure the ambience of a Tibetan temple. Treatment rooms have bathrooms and changing areas; tea is served afterward in curtained mini-boudoirs. **Who goes:** Travelers from Asia and Europe and affluent, world-weary locals. **The treatment:** The one-hour Lemon Myrtle & Eucalyptus Polish body scrub leaves you tingling and smelling sweetly of the Australian bush. **P.S.:** The Blu Bar on the hotel's thirty-sixth floor has wonderful views of Sydney Harbour (61-2-9250-6000; massages, \$120-\$245).

## Spa Saffire, Tasmania

**What:** Contemplative spot within the luxe waterside Saffire Freycinet lodge (see "Hot Hotels"), with a menu by facialist-to-the-stars Marianne De Candia (clients include Elle Macpherson). **The look:** Muted marble and blond Tasmanian timbers, with water features echoing the natural surroundings. **Who goes:** A cosmopolitan crowd of stressed-out Sydneysiders and Melbournites, plus Americans including Oprah's entourage. **The treatment:** The Jewel Collection of luxe facials uses gold, diamond, and sapphire dust; the Hazards Restoration massage features heated rocks from the pink-granite mountains, in whose shadow the lodge sits. **P.S.:** There's one complimentary "welcome treatment" per suite per stay (61-3-6256-7888; all treatments, \$3 to \$4 per minute).

## CAMBODIA

### Bodia Spa, Phnom Penh

**What:** Nine-room urban spa using Caudalie and home brand Bodia products that's a tranquil retreat from Phnom Penh's tropical heat. **The look:** Khmer eco-chic. Local natural materials—curvy woven rattan couches, twig light fixtures, driftwood objects—offset by burgundy walls and linens. **Who goes:** Ex-pats in the know, pop stars, and members of the royal family. **The treatment:** Delivered by a petite but powerful therapist, the rhythmic Bodia Classic alternates deep, long strokes and focused pressure with knuckles, thumbs, and palms. You'll bound out of the spa with renewed energy. **P.S.:** Bodia's handmade products—sugar and rice scrubs, herbal balms—make pretty souvenirs (855-232-26-199; massages, \$20-\$55).

## CANADA

### Bota Bota, Montreal

**What:** A boldly transformed pleasure boat moored in Montreal's Old Port, with a four-seasons indoor-outdoor "water course" of hot and cold tubs, a steam room, pristine saunas, and treatments using superluxe Bernard Cassière products from Paris. **The look:** Industrial maritime moderne, with portholes and tightly spiraling staircases. The over-

▲ SCHOOL OF ROCK  
A view of  
copse-covered  
grasslands  
at Spa Fasano,  
Uruguay.

# Hot Spas

dark changing rooms in the ship's bowels bring to mind the phrase *watery coffin*, but the upper water course decks are a sparkling miracle: giant windows and terraces have breathtaking nautical views. **Who goes:** Local dot-commers, chic French-Canadian wedding parties, and Europeans staying in Old Montreal. **The treatment:** The water course is the main event; if you're intent on a facial, try the hydrating Honey Comb, which uses Cassière products. **P.S.:** Make sure the sailor theme doesn't touch your skin—request a non-smoking aesthetician (514-284-0333; massages, \$90-\$131).

## CHINA

### CHI, The Spa at China World Summit Wing, Beijing

**What:** On the seventy-seventh floor of the opulent China World Tower, this intimate six-suite spa—the highest in Beijing—offers treatments based on rebalancing physical and spiritual energy, with Futuresse products made in Baden-Baden, Germany. **The look:** Earth-toned modern treatment suites with flowery wall coverings, couch, private tub, and shower. **Who goes:** Executives prepping for negotiating sessions with Chinese tycoons. **The treatment:** The CHI Balance massage uses acupressure and bone-cracking massage to stimulate yang energies, and gentle pressure to encourage yin impulses. **P.S.:** Swing by Atmosphere, the hotel's hip eightieth-floor bar, after your session (86-10-6505-2299; massages, \$88-\$210).

### Spa at Four Seasons Hotel Hangzhou at West Lake, Hangzhou

**What:** A destination spa at this Four Seasons property (see "Hot Hotels") based on the concept of an emperor's bathhouse. **The look:** A modern take on a Chinese palace, with multiroom treatment areas (which guests reach by crossing an indoor brook), private dressing rooms, huge bathtubs, and atmospheric light-



#### ▲ THE INGREDIENT

Juniper berries give your gin martinis a woody note, and provide anti-septic and anti-inflammatory effects in the treatment rooms.

#### THE TREATMENTS

- Warm river stones are infused with balsam fir, pine, and juniper oils for an apres-ski massage at the Spa at Four Seasons Resort Vail.

- Note juniper's piney presence in The Spa at the Waikiki Edition's Soothing Detoxifying Mineral Treatment, which restores sun-distraught skin.

#### TAKE IT HOME

Caudalie's **Crushed Cabernet Scrub** features juniper and cypress essential oils (caudalie-usa.com, \$29).

#### ▼ GIVE ME

**MOOR**  
Montreal's Bota Bota spa occupies a former pleasure boat.

ing. **Who goes:** Well-heeled Shanghaiese and expats craving a break from Asia's capitals. **The treatment:** The head-to-toe Imperial Consorts' and Concubines' Perfumed Water Rituals involves a bath and a massage, leaving you fragrant and super-relaxed. **P.S.:** Don't miss the indoor pool, with its pearl and gold leaf ceiling (86-571-8829-8888; massages, \$76-\$205).

### The Spa at Mandarin Oriental, Macau

**What:** Nirvana for Macau-going mortals, with eight treatment areas including four couples suites, the most lavish of which is the Oriental Spa Suite, with its own steam room, sunken tub, and experience shower. **The look:** Imperial decadence in lush silk and marble. **Who goes:** High rollers and Hong Kong *tai tais* (ladies who lunch). **The treatment:** After a footbath overlooking Macau's increasingly impressive neon skyline, spring for the signature full-body Spices of Portugal—a nod to Macau's colonial days—includes ginger-, rosemary-, and black pepper-infused oils by Aromatherapy Associates. **P.S.:** Arrive early to take advantage of the amethyst crystal steam room, sauna, and muscle-relaxing vitality pool (853-8805-8588; massages, \$118-\$179).

### The Ritz-Carlton Spa by ESPA, Shanghai

**What:** A glittering spa on two high floors of the chic Ritz-Carlton Shanghai in Pudong, with a steam room, a rock sauna, and an ice fountain. Treatments range from traditional Chinese dry massage to European salt and oil scrubs. **The look:** Art Deco-inspired relaxation, treatment, and communal changing rooms, all in white with sparkles of copper gold, as a riff on the traditional Chinese cracked ice motif. **Who goes:** Well-heeled expat mothers and fat-cat Chinese tycoons from the booming, factory-sprinkled regions near Shang-

hai. **The treatment:** The outrageously relaxing full-body Yin and Yang Rebalancer includes a facial cleanse and a limb-by-limb deep-pressure rubdown. **P.S.:** Make time for ginger tea and biscotti in the relaxation room, with spectacular Bund views (86-21-2020-1888; massages, \$59-\$160).

## CURAÇAO

### Atabei, Nieuwpoort

**What:** A skinny mini-oasis near the pool area at the one-year-old Hyatt Regency Curacao Golf Resort, Spa and Marina. **The look:** Classic Zen, with high ceilings, muted colors, distressed wood floors, a wall covered by shimmery, gauzy curtains, and the scent of aromatherapy oils. **Who goes:** Honeymooning couples, Dutch and American resort guests, and Curaçao society dames. **The treatment:** During the 60- or 90-minute Stemps, the relief comes from traditional sweeping massage strokes using organic infused oil alternating with herb-filled, heated poultices. **P.S.:** Post-treatment, don't unwind in the outdoor relaxation area—the music from nearby Medi restaurant and the chatter from other guests will shatter your newfound serenity (599-9-840-1234; massages, \$70-\$180).

## ENGLAND

### The Spa at Coworth Park, Surrey

**What:** A two-story hillside eco-spa in a country house hotel (see "Hot Hotels"), with a living roof of fragrant herbs, a Spatierrie for virtuous dining and champagne, a gym, a steam room, an experience shower, and a large, dramatically illuminated pool. **The look:** Dazzling white walls and skylights bring in natural light; pinky-beige lampshades lend the changing room a mellow glow. Elsewhere, furnishings are modern minimalist, with eccentric flourishes. **Who goes:** Burned-out city couples on romantic escapes; yummy mummies with nannies and (sometimes noisy) children in tow. **The treatment:** The English Rose Wrap comprises an exfoliation with crushed olive pits, a hydrating rose gel, an oil and cream wrap, and a nurturing neck and scalp massage. **P.S.:** Ask for Sarah: The only problem with her massage is that it ends (44-13-4487-6600; massages, \$89-\$195).

### Herb House Spa, Hampshire

**What:** Three-story jewel in the crown of Lime Wood, a glam David Collins-designed country-house hotel, with an indoor pool opening onto an outdoor hot tub, an outside sauna overlooking the forest, yoga and meditation in a rooftop herb garden, and treatments by British brands. **The look:** Sophisticated organic: clean-lined oak doors and gray stone floors set off with antique botanical prints, pots of herbs, wicker lanterns, and off-white weatherboard storage. **Who goes:** Hampshire and Berkshire ladies who lunch, and weekend Londoners. **The treatment:** The Seaweed Leaf Wrap, created by Irish brand Voya, is slimy but sensual, and leaves skin as smooth and soft as silk. **P.S.:** Stock up on Bamford Botanic Rose Bath Oil before you leave (44-23-8028-6998; massages, \$122-\$204).



## FRANCE

**Nuxe's Spa at the Hôtel Le StratoCourchevel 1850, Courchevel**

**What:** All-natural Nuxe-brand spa using products based on aromatherapy and phytotherapy with some ski-oriented treatments, on Cospillot's slopes in France's haute Courchevel 1850 resort (see "Hot Hotels"). **The look:** The hotel's modern-Baroque style filters into the spa via shimmering fabrics and chrome lamp stands in the relaxing room; treatment rooms are minimalist, with rough-hewn bowls and primitive wooden sculptures that play on Nuxe's tree logo. **Who goes:** Stylish, mostly European hotel guests seeking solace after hard falls on the slopes. **The treatment:** The Sportif Le Strato is an energetic après-ski rub-down using soothing warm wooden spheres. **P.S.:** An osteopath is available for more serious aches and pains (33-479-41-51-60; massages, \$82-\$170).

## GERMANY

**Cowshed at Soho House Berlin, Berlin**

**What:** Retro rustic spa at this new club-hotel (see "Hot Hotels"), with a hammam and steam, sauna, and treatment rooms; it's one of the few spots in Berlin where you can get a manicure while drinking a glass of wine with friends. **The look:** Berlin meets Britain—a cozy yet urban space with walls clad in shiny white subway tiles and wood planks from a German cowshed. Contemporary reclining manicure chairs have their own flat-screens. **Who goes:** Berlin's creative tastemakers, many of whom are Soho House members (you don't have to be one to make an appointment) and visiting celebrities like Madonna. **The treatment:** The Micro Polish Facial leaves skin squeaky clean after a night in the city's darkest clubs. **P.S.:** Reserve some time for the hammam, which is usually blissfully empty (49-3040-50-44-130; massages, \$20-\$131).

## GREECE

**The Anazoe Spa, Messinia**

**What:** The Anazoe Spa at Navarino Dunes, a super-resort in the Peloponnese, featuring 21 treatment rooms, thalassotherapy, ice-grotto rooms, mist showers, and herbal saunas. **The look:** Vast and vaguely sterile—soaring ceilings, pale marble, and clean, organic forms. **Who goes:** Russian oligarchs' molls and footballers' wives staying at the Romanos resort (for both, see "Hot Hotels"), and frazzled moms from the Westin Resort. **The treatment:** The olive nourishing facial employing lymphatic drainage techniques leaves skin luminous. **P.S.:** Signature Oleotherapy treatments use indigenous herbs and olive oil, which Hippocrates described as "the great therapeutic" (30-272-309-6000; massages, \$75-\$197).

## INDIA

**Jiva Spa, Hyderabad**

**What:** In a private wing of the Taj Falaknuma Palace (see "Hot Hotels"), two large single massage suites and a couples suite, a beauty salon, and a relaxation room. Men's and women's locker areas have their own private steam and chill showers. There's an outdoor swimming pool in a lush garden. **The look:** In the



## ▲ DEAR DAIRY

The cream-tiled relaxation area of Cowshed spa at Berlin's Soho House.

treatment rooms, cream-colored walls are embellished with a simple, slender gold frieze. The reception is comparatively gaudy, with walls in a perplexingly bright and busy Western chintz. **Who goes:** Indian fat cats and European sophisticates. **The treatment:** The Nawabe-Khaas, in a rose petal-strewn treatment room, uses techniques and ingredients that are said to have pampered Hyderabad nobility, and includes a scrub of crushed almonds, rose petals, vetiver, saffron, and herbs. **P.S.:** Ask for the lovely Ms. Padma (91-040-6629-8585; massages, \$122-\$230).

## ITALY

**Spa at Val di Luce Spa Resort, Abetone, Tuscany**

**What:** Scenic mountain resort spa (see "Hot Hotels") with an expansive hammam area, including a warm "crystal" pool with underwater jets to massage, and a hotter "emotional" pool with sea salts that leads to the outdoor whirlpool, white-marble steam bath, alpine sauna, experience shower, frigidarium, gym, and treatment rooms. **The look:** Contemporary cool, with pine-wood treatment rooms and raw marble in the hammam area. The "crystal" pool and a Kneipp bath are under a glass pyramid (think Louvre) with views of the mountains and stars. **Who goes:** Après-skiers in winter, après-trekkers in summer, and family members who do neither. **The treatment:** The Green Forest includes a massage with fragrant mountain pine essential oil and will leave you ready to tackle the slopes. **P.S.:** Want to skip the treatment? A \$28 spa entry fee gives hotel guests ac-



## ▲ THE INGREDIENT

The pretty petals and fruit of vitamin C-rich roses pack an anti-aging punch.

## ▲ THE TREATMENTS

• Derived from roses that grow in the Andes, Rosa Mosqueta oil is used in the Citrus Supreme ritual at CastaDiva Resort on Lake Como

• Damask rose essential oil gets the blood pumping during the English Rose Wrap at Co-worth Park's spa in Surrey

## ▲ TAKE IT HOME

Smell like a bed of blooms with Jurlique's moisturizing Rose Body Oil (jurlique.com; \$55)

cess to the hammam and gym (39-0573-60961; massages, \$48-\$123).

**CastaDiva Resort Spa, Lake Como**

**What:** Gorgeous subterranean spa, partially carved from lakeside rock, beneath the historic eighteenth-century villa (see "Hot Hotels"). **The look:** Vintage Como with twenty-first-century amenities. Retro shots of the lake are beamed onto the walls behind a spectacular indoor pool. There are huge mosaic pod showers, and a relaxation area sits atop an inspired glass floor—the water laps below. **Who goes:** Discreet celebs who didn't score an invite to Clooney's pad, and Milanese matrons. **The treatment:** We loved the signature facials using Natura Bissé products—the combo of a lifting massage and "DNA repairing" potion acts like a mini face-lift. **P.S.:** Give yourself time to explore the watery amenities, including the pool that floats like a dock on Lake Como (39-031-32-51-3030; massages, \$97-\$336).

## JAPAN

**Green Leaf Spa, The Green Leaf Niseko Village, Niseko**

**What:** Small spa with an amazing indoor-outdoor onsen in red-hot Niseko, Japan's answer to Aspen. (Niseko did not sustain any damage in the March earthquake.) **The look:** Tucked behind frosted glass, the Alexandra Champalimaud-designed space mixes beautiful murals by artist Emi Shiratori. Treatment rooms have large mattresses on the floor behind curtains. **Who goes:** Trendy après-ski Tokyo types and clued-in powder-loving expats (Niseko has the best snow in Asia). **The**

# Hot Spas

**treatment:** The 45-, 60-, or 90-minute Off Piste works out ski-weary muscles. Beware: The tiny technicians have the pressure of sumo wrestlers. **P.S.:** Make sure you follow *onsen* etiquette—there are different sections for men and women (81-136-44-3311; massages, \$39-\$186).

## KENYA

### Kaya Spa, Nairobi

**What:** A new luxury spa situated near the pool at Nairobi's trendy Tribe Hotel, it offers a variety of body scrubs and massages. Dermalogica skin care treatments, and whirlpool tub treatments for two. **The look:** Africa's interpretation of Philippe Starck, with dark walls, locally sourced natural wood floors, and colorful African art. **Who goes:** The hotel's mainly European guests, local expats, and wealthy Kenyans. **The treatment:** The Kenya Gold includes a full-body coffee scrub that smells good enough to drink, followed by a stimulating massage. Ask for Wendy. **P.S.:** Tips are not expected but are very much appreciated. This reviewer received a follow-up e-mail of gratitude (254-20-720-0656; massages, \$58-\$127).

## LAOS

### Spa Alila, Luang Prabang

**What:** All-natural spa in a secluded hotel (see "Hot Hotels") in the sleepy former royal capital. It offers pan-Asian treatments using acupressure, hot stones, stretching massage techniques, and locally sourced curatives like lemongrass, ginger, and green tea. **The look:** Traditional Lao architecture, with four double treatment rooms raised on stilts in dark carved wood—a contrast to the hotel's pared-down French colonial style. **Who goes:** Trendy young couples skipping the high-priced Aman down the street. **The treatment:** The great-value two-hour Spa Escape, a Balinese-style full-body massage and a minifacial. **P.S.:** Avoid appointments around mealtimes—the spa is located next to the cooking school and restaurant (856-71-260-777; massages, \$46-\$65).

## MALDIVES

### Le Spa de Constance,

#### South Ari Atoll

**What:** Built on a jetty above the Indian Ocean, the classic Asian-inspired spa at the Constance Moofushi Resort (see "Hot Hotels") has eight overwater treatment rooms and a delightful team of mostly Filipina therapists. **The look:** Wood pavilions on stilts that are open on one side to sea breezes, with glass panels in the floor for gazing at the angelfish below, and simple interiors (pale wood, a sleek carved fan, an Oriental cabinet; white cotton drapes). **Who goes:** The hotel's mostly European guests unwind after scuba dives. **The treatment:** The Enchanting Wave Massage uses head-to-toe continuous strokes employing Reiki, tai chi, lomilomi, and Esalen techniques. **P.S.:** Treatments between 9 A.M. and 1 P.M. get a 20 percent discount (960-668-10-10; massages, \$90-\$155).

## MEXICO

### Spa Matilda, San Miguel de Allende

**What:** A neutral-hued oasis with a hammam and a steam room in the lavish

digs of the Hotel Matilda. **The look:** Nearly as dim and sultry as Aladdin's cave, with rooms redolent of vanilla, lavender, and rosemary, and four decadent treatment rooms with chocolate-velvet armchairs, cream leather stools, and silver bowls of lavender buds.

**Who goes:** Mexico City's moneyed Gen X, their elegant mothers, and American expats. **The treatment:** The spa honors Mexico's indigenous flavors: Energize with a *nopal*, ginger, and lime exfoliation; focus with a coffee, cocoa, and mint scrub. **P.S.:** Treatments end at the scheduled time regardless of when they start (52-415-152-1015; massages, \$50-\$150).

## MOROCCO

### Le Spa Royal Mansour, Marrakech

**What:** A whopping spa pavilion within the gated grounds of this medina hotel (see "Hot Hotels"), with two full hammams, a vast glass-enclosed indoor pool, a Pilates studio, and treatment rooms (some with private hammams). **The look:** Like entering an immense birdcage, which frames the spa's three-story atrium. The treatment room functions as your private locker room and is decorated in muted natural tones, and there are additional communal rooms. **Who goes:** Affluent Euros and



**▲ THE INGREDIENT**  
Morning, joe. Coffee and tea make it into baths and buffs because of caffeine's detoxifying properties.

**THE TREATMENTS**  
• In Nairobi, Kenyan coffee packs a punch in the body polish used in Kaya Spa's signature Kenya Gold treatment.

• The Island Coffee Treatment at Vietnam's Six Senses Spa in Con Dao culminates in a coffee mask.

**TAKE IT HOME**  
Freshen up with the Soap and Paper Factory's Shea Butter Soap, infused with green tea, lavender, verbena, or jasmine (soapandpaperfactory.com; \$8)

## PORTUGAL

### Vidago Palace Spa, Vidago

**What:** Sleek white-marble annex by architect Álvaro Siza Vieira at one of Portugal's most charming grand hotels (see "Hot Hotels"), with 20 treatment rooms and a superb spa menu featuring therapies with waters from the Vidago source. **The look:** Marble is softened by votive candles and gentle lighting—the effect is more sensual shrine than Euro clinic. **Who goes:** Gorgeous honeymooners, sexy second wives who don't golf (the Palace has one of Portugal's best courses), arty types from Oporto. **The treatment:** The reviving 160-minute Ultimate Vidago Experience includes a lavender-and-rosemary-scented bath in Vidago water, a stress-releasing massage, and a detox facial. **P.S.:** Ask for Juliana—her sweet personality belies her amazingly powerful digits (351-276-990-970; massages, \$116-\$259).

## PUERTO RICO

### Remède Spa, Rio Grande

**What:** A vast and elegant walled garden at the St. Regis Bahia Beach Resort (see "Hot Hotels") with plush changing and waiting areas, whirlpool and cold plunge pools, and full salon services, as well as a steam room and sauna. **The**



## ▲ CANARY ISLAND

An ornate birdcage frames the three-story atrium at Le Spa Royal Mansour, Marrakech.

Americans d'un certain age; see-and-not-be-seen hotel guests. **The treatment:** My Time Hammam uses Maroc-Maroc's rich-smelling native products: An invigorating Miel d'Ambre exfoliation, a soaping down with orange flower-scented suds, and an almond milk shampoo are topped off by a head-to-toe massage. **P.S.:** After treatment, relax with mint tea on a curtained daybed in the second-floor lounge (212-529-80-80-80; massages, \$169-\$349).

**look:** You walk past pale polished marble, unfinished stone, limestone tiles, and koi ponds to an indoor-outdoor lounge where wood chairs and chaises upholstered in cornflower blue and celery green encourage dawdling post-treatment. **Who goes:** Ladies of means, suits in need of corporate detox, lucky bridesmaids. **The treatment:** An internal miscommunication meant that instead of a scheduled reflexology we got a massage, which was well done if unexpect-

ed. The front desk refunded the fee without being asked. **P.S.:** Don't miss the chocolate truffles on the way out (787-809-8000; massages, \$90-\$240).

## SOUTH AFRICA

### The Delaire Graff Spa, Stellenbosch

**What:** A results-driven spa on a working wine-estate hotel (see "Hot Hotels"). Facilities run the gamut from an outdoor 72-foot heated pool with a spa bath to a Pilates and yoga studio, and treatments masquerade as indulgent rituals. **The look:** Treatment suites (three with hydro-massage tubs and shady massage terraces) have calming natural tones and textures. **Who goes:** Post-safari weary travelers, wine estate wives, and gourmands doing damage control (it's the Cape Winelands, after all). **The treatment:** The vanilla-enriched pure indulgence body exfoliation and wrap for dry, sun-kissed skin is like a full-body facial. **P.S.:** This isn't a dash-in, dash-out kind of place: Build in time to admire the hotel's art collection and stay for lunch (27-21-885-8160; massages, \$69-\$154).

### The Spa at Bushmans Kloof Wilderness Reserve & Wellness Spa Retreat, Cederberg Mountains, Western Cape

**What:** A spa attached to a private reserve in the Cederberg Mountains, which are dotted with red sandstone rocks known for their natural healing energy. Inside, there's a quartz crystal steam room, and treatment rooms have rain showers; outside are four pools and a riverside treatment gazebo. **The look:** Neutral if not austere. In reception, a massive hand-cut glass-and-porcelain mosaic depicting the tree of life is the focal point; monastic treatment rooms have pebble floors that are heated in winter. **Who goes:** Nature-loving honeymooners and 50-plus city escapees. **The treatment:** The Celebration of Life is head-to-toe bliss, with targeted massages for the back, feet, and hands followed by a deeply hydrating Elemis facial. **P.S.:** It's worth paying the surcharge to book the riverside gazebo (27-27-482-8200; massages, \$55-\$129).

## THAILAND

### AWAY Spa, Koh Samui

**What:** A hillside spa at the W Retreat Koh Samui (see "Hot Hotels"), overlooking the Gulf of Thailand. The menu has Dermalogica facials, as well as a "Thaimazcal," a mashup of a traditional Mexican sweat-lodge ritual and local herbs. **The look:** Sei-fi spa colony—white pods perched on stilts, surrounded by lush greenery. (Less sleek: the rooms' goofy names such as Thaim Out.) **Who goes:** Samui regulars seeking the latest spa thrills and Emiratis in need of tropical hydration (the resort is heavily promoted in Dubai). **The treatment:** The CocoNuts About You body scrub exfoliates with ground rice, then smoothes with a coconut-butter massage. Result: silky skin and loose limbs without a whiff of umbrella drink. **P.S.:** Massage therapists are more skilled in Thai techniques than in deep-tissue work (66-77-915-999; massages, \$72-\$147).



## ROAR TALENT ▲

The gazebo at South Africa's Bushmans Kloof, a private wildlife reserve.



**▲ THE INGREDIENT**  
Precious metals and stones put the bling in facials—smoothing, buffing, and plumping skin

## THE TREATMENTS

• Gold-particle nanotechnology used in **Spa Saffire's Gold Stem Facial** in Tasmania is designed to have an instant lifting effect on the visage.

• A ruby crystal serum smoothes and stimulates in the **Cerni Gods Rejuvenating Facial** at **St. Regis Bahia Beach Resort's Remède Spa** in Puerto Rico

**TAKE IT HOME**  
Slather on Guerlain's 24-karat-gold-infused **L'Or** moisturizer pre-makeup for the promised line-free look (sephora.com; \$70)

## UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

### Armani/Spa, Dubai

**What:** On the third floor of the world's tallest building, in the first Armani Hotel (see "Hot Hotels"), an oasis of understatement that's a refreshing change from Dubai's overstimulated gold leaf universe. **The look:** Taupe silks, backlit alabaster, and feng-shui-curved walls in reception lead to a monastic corridor and eight brown-tiled treatment rooms. The domed thermal salon features sequential sauna, laconium, steam, and falling water chambers. **Who goes:** Businessmen de-stressing and, on weekends, brand-obsessed Emirati socialites. **The treatment:** There's no menu—you book a block of time; an Armani-clad consultant asks whether you want to end your treatment relaxed ("Mu"), pain free ("Liberta"), or balanced ("Fluidita"); and therapists evoke these pleasurable if vaguely coded states employing shiatsu and other techniques. **P.S.:** Facials, more massage than medical, use Giorgio Armani's Crema Nera and Skin Minerals products (971-4-888-3888; massages, \$79-\$250).

### One&Only Spa, Dubai

**What:** A secluded spa at One&Only The Palm (see "Hot Hotels"), with nine spa suites, an outdoor lap pool, a fitness center, a Bastien Gonzalez "medical" pedicure and manicure parlor, and a hair salon. **The look:** Roman emperor's villa, with a landscaped inner courtyard and a splashing marble fountain; airy inner sanctums have glass windows, cream walls, bronze textiles, and mother-of-pearl showers. **Who goes:** Vacationing couples of all ages; abaya-clad Emirati ladies whisk off their head scarves for beehives at the outpost of Parisian hairstylist Alexandre Zouari. **The treatment:** Therapists conduct detailed interviews. Yasmine, a talented Egyptian masseuse, uses eucalyptus or tangerine oil to relieve stress and reinvigorate.

**P.S.:** Spectacular night views of Dubai's skyscraper-studded coast make evening treatments popular (971-4-440-10-10; massages, \$133-\$172).

## UNITED STATES

### The Ritz-Carlton Spa, Los Angeles, California

**What:** A cloudlike second-floor spot in downtown Los Angeles's LA Live hotel, cinema, and arena complex. **The look:** Separate women-only and coed relaxation rooms have opalescent leather chaises, silver-on-white wallpaper, and pale patchwork pony-skin carpets. (The coed room butches things up with a flat-screen TV.) **Who goes:** Hollywood bigwigs primping for awards shows, and singers and athletes prepping for performances at the nearby Staples Center and Nokia Theatre. **The treatment:** The menu hews to the effective: The Renovator Body Polish starts with a sunflower seed scrub, followed by a body wrap designed to firm and detox, a shoulder and scalp massage, and a silky Carita body lotion rub. **P.S.:** Nosh is minimal here, so walk to the JW Marriott lobby for snack bar panini before your treatment (213-743-8800; massages, \$120-\$390).

### Spa at Four Seasons Resort Vail, Vail, Colorado

**What:** A modest entry at the resort (see "Hot Hotels") gives way to a 14,000-square-foot oasis close to Vail Village, with treatment rooms featuring alpine charms like stone fireplaces, two cozy lounges, and a deck. Men's and women's locker rooms have a hot tub and a soaking pool with water pouring over sandstone water features. **The look:** Rocky Mountain chic, with wood details and framing, sandstone-slabbed walls, and limestone fireplaces. **Who goes:** The real housewives of Sydney, and assorted jet-setters with adrenaline addictions. **The treatment:** Dissolve piste-pounding ten-

# Hot Spas

sion with the Vail River Stone massage, using rocks pulled out of the Eagle River, which runs through town. **P.S.** Wind-or sunburned? Try the Mountain Man treatment, an exfoliating scrub, moisturizing mask, and oil-infused scalp rub (970-477-8600; massages, \$135-\$215).

## Cowshed Miami Beach, Miami Beach, Florida

**What:** A destination spa at Soho Beach House, the Florida outpost of tony Brit-based members' club Soho House (see "Hot Hotels"), with a retro barbershop blow-dry bar, mani-pedi chairs, and a boutique that stocks perfect beach garb. **The look:** Reclaimed wood beams, paneled walls, and comfy granny-chic sofas conjure a calming vibe with a masculine edge. **Who goes:** A heavy London contingent, New York sunseekers, and keyed-in locals. **The treatment:** The Cowshed Wrap, which includes a full-body sea salt exfoliation and moisturization plus a hair mask, is just the thing for winter-weary skin. **P.S.:** The cozy atmosphere and full-service approach, from hair to nails, make it a great hen-party spot (786-507-7904; massages, \$65-\$190).

## The Spa at the Waikiki Edition, Honolulu, Hawaii

**What:** The city's best new day spa at the chic Ian Schrager meets Marriott Edition hotel (see "Hot Hotels"). In addition to four treatment rooms, there's a mani-pedi bar for relaxing foot rubs post-surfing on Waikiki. **The look:** Despite its relatively small dimensions, the light space stays airy and serene, with white walls, cool stone floors, and sheer curtains. **Who goes:** New Yorkers and Angelenos after a stylish spa alternative to the standard lei-filled kitsch. **The treatment:** The one- to two-hour Muscle Melt Down focuses on relaxing tight muscles and

promoting range of motion, the perfect shoulder primer for paddling. **P.S.:** If you need a full leg wax, ask for Heather, one of the best technicians in town (808-943-5800; massages, \$100-\$255).

## Sahra Spa & Hammam, Las Vegas, Nevada

**What:** A sprawling bi-level oasis at the Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas (see "Hot Hotels"), with separate men's and women's wet areas featuring steam rooms, saunas, and whirlpools. The star is the 1,100-square-foot hammam, heated to 105 degrees. **The look:** Inspired by the Mojave Desert, the spa is constructed of 420 tons of salmon-hued sandstone. Guests enter through "the space between," a narrow tunnel that ends at a 22-foot waterfall. **Who goes:** Weekends, affluent hipsters prepping for (or recovering from) a night out. Locals dominate the weekday scene. **The treatment:** The Red Flower Hammam Experience is a modern spin on the classic, starting with ritual bathing and vigorous scrubbing on the mother stone, followed by a clay wrap and massage. **P.S.:** Sahra has an Aromapothecary iPad app that allows you to create customized massages, scrubs, and baths (702-698-7171; massages, \$80-\$225).

## The Spa at Trump SoHo, New York, New York

**What:** A two-level spa at Trump SoHo New York, with two private hammams among the treatment room offerings and a super-powered skin care program designed by Kate Somerville. **The look:** More Ivanka than Donald. Stained wood, hand-tooled leather, Fendi Casa furnishings, and Turkish textiles are sumptuous without an overdose of flash. **Who goes:** American hotel guests and groups of local ladies (and some men). **The treat-**



### ▲ THE INGREDIENT

Hammams are emerging far from their Middle Eastern roots, with olives (found in Turkish hammam soaps) a key treatment component.

### THE TREATMENTS

• At Sahra Spa & Hammam, guests are given a coffee blossom and olive stone scrub during the Red Flower Bathing Ritual.

• Black soap crammed with crushed olives and olive oil is used to slough skin as you lie on a heated marble slab at New York's Spa at Trump SoHo.

### TAKE IT HOME

Lather up and hydrate with Olivia Care's bergamot-infused olive oil soap (oliviare.com; \$8).

### ▼ BEAM ME UP

The foot massage area at the W Koh Samui, Thailand, where the decor is Southeast Asia meets space age.

**ment:** The 45-minute Turkish Hammam takes the traditional scrub to a luxe level, with an exfoliating full-body rub on a heated marble slab with a rich, bubbly lather of castile soap. **P.S.:** Plan to spend a few minutes in the spa relaxation room to rehydrate after your steamy shvitz (212-842-5505; massages, \$150-\$275).

## Spa Montage Deer Valley, Deer Valley, Utah

**What:** A capacious slopeside sanctuary at the Montage Deer Valley (see "Hot Hotels"), with a gym, four-lane lap pool, indoor hot tub, and men's and women's club-style locker rooms with massive saunas, steam rooms, and a cold deluge. **The look:** Floor-to-ceiling windows with views of serene, snow-dolloped pines enliven slightly sterile treatment rooms. The mosaic-tiled four-lane lap pool takes its inspiration from Hearst Castle's. **Who goes:** Movie starlets relaxing before walking the red carpet at Sundance. **The treatment:** The Après Ease starts with a mud wrap that detoxifies while soothing sore muscles and finishes with a customized hydromassage. **P.S.:** Start your day with a pre-ski yoga class in the spa's studio—it has spectacular mountain views (435-604-1300; massages, \$170-\$230).

### URUGUAY

## Spa Fasano by Renata de Abreu, La Barra

**What:** Brazilian therapist Renata de Abreu's seventh outlet overlooks acres of craggy grassland, copses, and ponds at Rogério Fasano's countryside resort (see "Hot Hotels"). De Abreu augments locally produced honey, wine, and olive oil with Germaine de Capuccini products. **The look:** Light gushes through large picture windows to a warren of treatment rooms, pools, steam rooms, and styling salons in a blunt concrete building that blends with the hillside's lichen-coated granite outcrops. **Who goes:** South American glitterati and Brazilian honeymooners. **The treatment:** The decadent 150-minute Olive Therapy treatment rejuvenates hair and body with extra-virgin olive oil from a neighboring farm. **P.S.:** Expect to be quizzed first on your irritability, worry, insomnia, and stress (598-42-67-00-00; massages, \$120-\$255).

### VIETNAM

## Six Senses Spa, Con Dao

**What:** Holistic pampering at the Six Senses Con Dao (see "Hot Hotels"), in the pristine wilderness of Vietnam's Con Dao Island. Massages, herbal baths, facials, yoga, and tai chi sessions are also offered. **The look:** Unadorned bamboo walls, furniture shaped from polished white terrazzo, and sustainable timber floors create a clean, one-with-nature feel. **Who goes:** Europeans and Australians in linen tunics, boat shoes, and flip-flops. **The treatment:** The Oriental Massage is a dream-state-inducing blend of strong forearm-powered strokes, pitter-patter acupressure along meridians, and gentle stretching. Ask for Mr. Hoc, and plan on chill-out recovery time. **P.S.:** Rooms 1 and 2 can get noisy with chatter drifting in from the relaxation area (84-64-3831-222; massages, \$49-\$120). □

