





SPA MONT BLANC at the Four Seasons Hotel des Bergues Geneva

When it opened in 1834, the Four Seasons was Geneva's first hotel and is now one of the city's landmark establishments, epitomizing Old World glamour. In October, after a three-year renovation, the property welcomed the first Spa Mont Blanc, spread over 30,000 square feet on the top three floors of the hotel. The star here is the indoor rooftop lap pool, with underwater music, that's set under a bank of skylights. A row of chaises longues is set off to one side of it, in front of panoramic windows offering views of the Alps, the old town and Lake Geneva. Metex Design Group, with offices in Istanbul and Italy, was responsible for the design of the space, which is clad in loads of marble, as well as aged oak, to a modern yet not sterile effect. The spa has seven treatment rooms, one with a private hammam, an all-marble, very Zen, vitality pool, a library (created by Ultimate Library) with a fireplace, a fitness center with Technogym equipment and personal trainers at the ready, and a rooftop restaurant called Izumi, in partnership with Nobu, which serves Japanese fusion cuisine. Like many urban spas, the menu here is well-edited and focuses on facials (several from ESPA and Swiss Perfection) and massages. There's a full service Philippe Ankri salon onsite as well.

PALACIO DEL INKA, a Luxury Collection Hotel, Cusco

The addition of Palacio del Inka to existing high-end hotel offerings in this high-altitude Peruvian town is making Cusco a go-to luxury destination in Peru. But few have given the amount of thought or square footage to a spa as this 203-room Spanish Colonial property. Located opposite the Qoricancha (an Incan temple dedicated to the sun god), the hotel was designed to feel like a Colonial Cusco mansion, and some of those materials and details were also incorporated in the design of the spa. Deep-grained tornillo wood stained in dark green is used for furniture, lockers and niches (a detail one sees in the traditional houses of the area); walls and floors are covered in travertine marble. There are two relaxation rooms here, one with a starry-night-sky-style ceiling that guests can gaze upon, post-treatment, from the comfort of their heated chaise. Another has heated stone chaises (which many consider to be incredibly therapeutic) and is strategically positioned next to the pool, a thermal water circuit with five different hydro massages. That alone would be a reason to visit the spa, even if one doesn't book a proper treatment—but it would be a shame: treatment rooms here have fireplaces and showers, which can be enjoyed before or after, say, a pearl facial, an antioxidant grape-filled bath, an Incan mud wrap or the mac daddy of them all: the Qoricancha signature treatment, where one's body is wrapped in 24-karat gold.

AMAN SPA at Amanoi, Vinh Hy Bay

Aman junkies have yet another destination to add to their list: Vietnam. The company's 26th property, Amanoi, opened earlier this year, a discreet addition to a natural conservation area, northeast of Ho Chi Minh City, on Vinh Hy Bay. The name Amanoi is a combination of the Sanskrit words for "peace" and "place," an apt moniker for this 31-room property, designed by Jean-Michel Gathy of Kuala Lumpur-based Denniston architects. The 20,000square-foot-spa is situated on the shore of a lotus-filled lake in the middle of the property, with elegant, descending stairs that lead down to a yoga pavilion. There are five treatment suites, nestled within lush foliage, to allow for privacy; three of those rooms are on the lake itself and have private, outdoor relaxation areas. All have double bathtubs, private dressing areas and showers. There are two dedicated hydrotherapy suites, which can be enjoyed with or without a booked treatment. Here, guests can relax on heated stone treatment tables, have a steam, relax in a hot tub followed by an invigorating cold plunge pool or simply lounge on the outdoor terraces. The spa's treatment menu is consistent with other Aman resortsfour 90-120 minute "journeys" that are various combinations of scrubs, wraps, massages and mini-facials. A Vietnamese massage is offered, which incorporates cupping along the body's meridian points to stimulate blood circulation. Most treatments use the spa's own brand of products; others use local ingredients including rice and coffee.

MANDARIN ORIENTAL, Pudong, Shanghai

If there is one thing the Mandarin Oriental does consistently, exceedingly well, it is their spa-and this one is no exception. Perched dramatically on the banks of the Huangpu River, in the heart of the financial district and 10 minutes from the historic Bund, the 362-room Mandarin Oriental, Pudong, Shanghai, opened last March. The 26,000-square-foot spa does not offer river views from its subterranean location, but is built around a private sunken courtyard garden, creating a slightly more zen panorama. The interiors, by Hong Kong based BUZ Design, were inspired by a butterfly, which is a symbol of beauty and metamorphosis in Chinese culture. Its winged image is artistically rendered throughout the spa, with sculptures and installations by Chinese artists. Even the treatment rooms stick to the theme-they're each named "butterfly," in different languages, including Spanish and Greek. All spa products are certified organic and vegan (the signature product line was developed by Aromatherapy Associates), uniforms are made by local designers using organic materials and all-natural cleaning products are used on premise. These, however, are invisible details in a very visually interesting space that includes a tepidarium room with heated stone loungers, an ice fountain, a starry-skied hammam and spa suites with private vitality baths. Treatments here do acknowledge local specialties (a Chinese meridian massage, a one-hour Chinese foot reflexology session), but also nod to the over-the-top: a "Decadent Bubbles" mani/pedi treatment begins with a foot soak spiked with Champagne.

AWILI SPA AND SALON at Andaz Maui at Wailea

The name "Awili" is Hawaiian, meaning to "blend." Which doesn't seem like a natural name for a spa, until one is introduced to the place's overall concept of customization. They call it "spa omakase," meaning "faith in you" in Japanese, but translating here into very personalized treatments tailored to and based on a guest's physiology, needs and goals. Should you choose the Omakase route, you'll work with a spa apothecary consultant to mix your own scrubs, lotions, body butters and oils—using indigenous herbs, plants, salts and even coffee—for use in 60- or 90-minute treatments. These recipes will be kept on file for future visits or used in treatments taking place in-room or around the 15-acre beachfront property (which is the 10th for the Andaz brand). There are, of course, a variety of other treatment options ranging from massages to coffee body scrubs and Hawaiian clay masks, which take place in one of 10 rooms here, or a suite with its own private shower, views of the ocean and, in some cases, a spa pool. Common areas include a tranquility pool, sauna and steam room, as well as a tea lounge, full-service salon and 24-hour fitness center.

JIVA GRANDE SPA at Vivanta by Taj, Madikeri, Coorg

It takes about six hours to get here from Bangalore, India, the closest major airport, but those who brave the drive are rewarded tenfold. This mountain resort is nestled amongst a 180-acre living rainforest, at an altitude of 1,200 feet, with views of the Western Ghats. The spa—30,000 square feet across three levels—was designed to be an extension of that rainforest, using natural materials including recycled woods, mud paints, ceramic tiles and natural river stones. There are plenty of views of the rainforest, especially from the outdoor pool. A simulated stream is cleverly woven into the design. Meant to mimic the streams that run through the Coorg countryside, it is littered with real river rocks that act as stepping stones, leading guests to the reception area. With eight treatment rooms, the spa specializes in ayurvedic treatments, including several facials, as well as an ayurvedic detox program. The signature experience, however, is the Gudda bath, which takes place in an outdoor pavilion with a view of the valley. Here, one is bathed using water heated over a wooden fire, scrubbed and massaged. Yogis take note: there are 15 different classes offered here.

BAMFORD HAYBARN at the Berkeley, London

Bamford Haybarn's London outpost stands out immediately for two reasons: an outdoor pool and outdoor seating—in a town known for rain. To be fair, a retractable roof covers the pool area, allowing for year-round use. Regardless, it is one of many thoughtful touches here, the result of a recent renovation and unveiling of the new space this past July. The spa itself, designed by Spencer Fung, is decorated in a "light rustic" style: an oasis of wood, stone and whitewash. Visitors cross a heart-shaped threshold into the reception area, conveniently adjacent to the shop, offering Bamford Haybarn's own products, including candles and a well-edited selection of clothing and accessories. Treatments here are edited as well and seem geared to an urban traveler on-the-go versus someone looking to spend a day lounging (although that is clearly an option, and there are plenty of packages to prove it). The treatment menu focuses mainly on massages, using Bamford products, and facials using Oskia products (a London-based, awardwinning, natural brand). The spa menu is perhaps the hotel's best-kept secret, a wonderful selection of light bites including salads, smoothies and a nice surprise: British Chapel Down wines by the glass.

REMÈDE SPA at the St. Regis Abu Dhabi

■ Nothing is understated in the United Arab Emirates, and that apparently applies to spas as well as mosques. The Remède Spa in the newly opened St. Regis (on its own private beach on the Corniche) is a whopping 34,000 square feet, on the third floor of one of the two soaring towers of the property. In keeping with the traditions of the Middle East, the spa has separate men's and women's areas, both with views of the Arabian Gulf. Designed by Hirsch Bedner Associates, the women's section has eight suites, all in soothing neutral tones, with selective but stylish use of gold accents. There are three suites in the men's section, which also has the region's first Hommage gentleman's grooming atelier, offering traditional grooming services as well as acupressure and facials featuring the brand's signature products. Guests can nibble on delicacies from the spa cafe, whose offerings include the expected Middle Eastern mezze, salads and skewers, as well as seemingly exotic options like grilled Omani lobster and key lime pie.

WELL & BEING AT WILLOW STREAM



at the Fairmont Scottsdale Princess

It is rare in America to find hotel spas larger than those in Arizona—they really do have the spa equivalent of McMansions, in multiples-and at 44,000 indoor-outdoor square feet, this one absolutely qualifies. There are 30 treatment rooms, a full-service salon, several fitness classes, large men's and women's locker rooms with all the usual amenities, including eucalyptus inhalation rooms, relaxation pools and, of course, the requisite palmtree-lined rooftop pool with waiter service. The spa itself is not new, but the collaboration with Well & Being is, with a medically guided (there is a doctor on staff) and customized integrative approach to wellness. This translates to the option of having diagnostic health tests and acupuncture in addition to the expected massages, facials and other spa services, with many geared specifically towards men. There's a nod to the locale in treatments like a Sedona clay mud mask and a jojoba prickly pear sugar scrub, along with over 12 facials (from the all-natural to the more medical variety), as well as the option to do full-body diagnostics, from body composition to VO2, plus vitamin consultation sessions. But the star of the show is the physician-supervised integrative health assessment, with follow-ups either in person or on the phone, resulting in personalized health and nutrition recommendations to achieve desired goals, with optional add-ons of life coaching sessions.

BANYAN TREE Chongqing Beibei

The first Banyan Tree opened in 1994 in Phuket, Thailand and, in 2001, the company established a formal spa academy in the same city. It has trained some of the best in the business, always with a holistic focus on spiritual, mental and physical harmony. The Chongqing Beibei property, nestled in the foothills of the Jinyun Mountain Natural Reserve in China, is the first hot springs resort for the company, drawing from the natural healing waters of the North Hot Spring. Indeed, there are seven hot spring soaking pools here—one each in the women's and men's locker rooms, and five others that are outdoors with scenic views of the lush hills that surround the property. The overall look of the 13,000-square-foot spa is modern, with clean lines, dark woods, geometric patterns and touches of red, and treatment rooms include three standard doubles, five deluxe doubles and a Royal Double Room, which has a "rainmist" feature, but we'd call it a Vichy shower. Treatment offerings include the "Harmony Banyan" (a massage with two therapists working in tandem), the hydrothermal "Yin Yang Rainmist" experience (involving a rain shower, steam bath, body scrub and massage) and full-day indulgences featuring a healthy spa lunch.

Contact your travel agent today to book your spa getaway

