

Thomas Cook

November/December/January 2011/12

travel

ALONG CAME A SPIDER

Exploring Italy's Amalfi Coast
in a vintage Alfa Romeo

ALICANTE

"The best paella
in the world" -
Spain's top chef

TUNISIA

The Star Wars
fans saving Luke
Skywalker's home

Your
essential
guide to
MADEIRA



Spa secrets

From celeb-favourite macrobiotics and fish pedicures to firming caviar facials and sleep therapy, seven online spa-ficionados reveal the heavenly sanctuaries that will make all your pampering dreams come true

1

SHA WELLNESS CLINIC,

ALICANTE, SPAIN

The expert: Susan D'Arcy, founder, spa-confidential.com



HAVING EXPERIENCED A Nightingale excrement facial in Tokyo and an underwater massage in the Maldives –

all in the name of research – Susan started her own blog dedicated to spa-ing last summer.

“Modern macrobiotics came to my attention when Madonna became its glowing poster girl, but my interest waned when I found out how brown the diet was (brown rice, brown miso soup, brown lentils). That was until I found SHA Wellness Clinic, Europe’s first macrobiotic destination spa.

“A minimalist palace with sleek white lines – how hospitals might look if Lady Gaga was in charge – I felt better the moment I stepped onto its ultra-glam rooftop playground, dotted with infinity

pools, muslin-draped cabanas and sun-dappled views of the Med. The chef has worked in Michelin-starred kitchens, so mealtimes are a delight. And the only brown dish I had was a yummy chocolate dessert – actually healthy because it was made *without* sugar or dairy. This is as close to dying and going to heaven as a spa holiday gets. I even lost a few pounds. Stick to the stricter menu and you can lose more.

“The spa has everything from flotation tanks to oxygen bars where you can recharge with a shot of the pure stuff. In the words of Madonna, a weekend here will definitely leave you feeling shiny and new.”

1 Visit shawellnessclinic.com to book a treatment at the spa





Enjoy the ultimate
chill-out in the
SHA's rooftop
infinity pool,
soaking up a grand
view of the
Sierra de Bernia
mountain range



Now this is what we call a book at bedtime. Below: The spa's showstopping mosaic-tiled swimming pool



2

KALLIMA SPA, LONDON SYON PARK, UK

The expert: Neily Alimohamadi, editor,
cheriecity.co.uk



Neily dreamed up her beauty blog to share hidden gems that aren't in guidebooks.

Like Cheryl Cole, she loves Anne Sémonin treatments.

"Named after a rare butterfly, Kallima Spa's philosophy is based on achieving desired results with bespoke treatments. After a brief consultation with a therapist, I chose a radiance-boosting Anne Sémonin facial and head and shoulder rub to melt away my upper body stress.

"Anne Sémonin treatments are a tailor-made blend of minerals and essential oils, expertly mixed in front of you. My therapist applied gauze to work the products into my skin and used Express Radiance Ice Cubes to instantly revive my eyes. I left feeling deeply relaxed, supple and rejuvenated, especially after a lovely walk through the spectacular grounds of the stately Syon Park."

Book a stay at London Syon Park through thomascook.com or go to londonsyonpark.com to book a day visit

3

SHISEIDO SPA AT THE FOUR SEASONS,

LIMASSOL, CYPRUS

The expert: Catherine Beattie, editor, spawellbeing.com



With more than 20 years' experience reviewing spas for the likes of *The Sunday Times*, Catherine started her blog to share her pearls of wisdom.

"Cyprus is a spa haven, but my favourite is the Shiseido Spa at the Four Seasons Limassol, a five-star resort with two excellent spas.

"If you want to play it safe, the hotel's Thalasso spa offers the usual hot stone massages and body wraps. But the Shiseido Spa is the real star. It focuses on holistic Japanese

methods aimed at balancing the flow of *qi*, the body's energy force, and the Shiseido Qi method body massages combine shiatsu with Western techniques.

"Spa pros will love the new Royal Thai massage, which works on the body's energy lines (*sen*), before being stretched into contortionist positions. It's like a yoga workout, but without the effort!"

Book a stay at the Four Seasons through thomascook.com



Shiseido Spa's impressive entrance

4

THE SPA BY OCCO AT RADISSON BLU RESORT & SPA,

DUBROVNIK SUN GARDENS, CROATIA

The expert: Ally Pyle, editor-in-chief, glam.co.uk



As a former features editor for *vogue.com*, Ally is a pro on luxury travel. She joined the UK arm of the Glam

websites to write about travel, fashion, beauty and, of course, the ultimate indulgence – spas.

"If you can tear yourself away from the poolside piña coladas, a visit to The Spa by OCCO at Dubrovnik Sun Gardens – a five-star resort on Croatia's Adriatic Coast – is a must. Just launched in August, this is the flagship spa for OCCO, a Croatian-born brand inspired by the Dalmatian Coast and Adriatic Sea. All OCCO products – which are hot property at Harrods and Harvey Nichols – incorporate natural, local ingredients such as plants, flowers, herbs and minerals from the salt-tinged coastal cliffs to the sun-ripened citrus groves that surround the area.

"The treatments are also divine.

The terrace of the Spa by OCCO at Radisson Blu. Below: The spa's products are inspired by its Adriatic Sea setting

The Awakening Lemon Ginger Body Wrap packs a punch with an olive polish and a zesty citrus and warm spice body wrap, while the Smoothing Cypress Leaf Leg and Tummy Treatment, which firms cellulite and smooths skin tone, will help you to your bikini body.

"Finish off your day by sinking into one of the canopied sun beds or linen couches on the spa's vast wrap-around terrace while the sun sets over the Adriatic. True bliss."

1 Book a stay at Radisson Blu Resort and Spa through thomascook.com

5

ANESIS AT EGO SPA, SAN ANTONIO, IBIZA

The expert: Hayley, founder, londonbeautyqueen.com



What started as a hobby is now a fully-fledged passion for this beauty expert.

She covers spa reviews as well as fashion, celebs and trends. "Fish pedicures may no longer be revolutionary. If fact, they are as readily available as a Starbucks Frappuccino nowadays. But a visit to Anesis at Ego spa in Ibiza is truly fab compared to the dingy or über-public spas that offer this treatment.

"Anesis – which is an offshoot of the celeb-favourite London branch that's visited by the likes of Sarah

Harding and Tulisa from *The X Factor* – is situated in the buzzing San Antonio and it has the feel of a trendy bar – think soft dance tunes, bright lights and subtle luxury.

"Not only can you get a top-notch Piscean pedicure here – Turkish Garra Rufa fish nibble your feet, releasing an enzyme that softens your skin for baby-soft tootsies – but you can get a range of treatments to get you ready for a big night out. Try a file and polish for feet that are, made for killer party heels, make an appointment with the ultra-glam HD Brows (used by The Saturdays) or just relax with a full body massage."

1 Visit anesis.uk.com/ego to book a treatment at the spa



Unwind like a celeb on Ego's deck



Blue sky, golden sand and pampering perfection at The Westin Resort and Spa, Los Cabos

6

THE SPA AT THE RITZ-CARLTON,

NAPLES, FLORIDA, USA

The expert: Kara Williams,
chief spa reviewer, thespagals.com



With possibly the best job title in the world, Kara travels far and wide across the USA and Mexico to track down the best body lotions and Brazilian Peels for her blog.

"Situated among mangroves and cypress trees on Florida's serene Gulf Coast, The Ritz-Carlton's spa screams exclusivity. The treatments, hot whirlpools, cold plunges,

saunas and steam rooms and outdoor mineral pool are available to hotel guests only.

"The sheer size of the spa means that you won't have trouble finding somewhere to cocoon yourself, from the outdoor spa deck to the comfy conservatory with a full tea menu.

"The treatments are holistic, with an aim to heal the mind, body and spirit – so it's not just all about pampering, but rather a focus on overall wellbeing. I love the sublime Signature Massage (on a heated table with a choice of aromatherapy oils), but on my next visit I'd like to try the Craniosacral therapy (said to improve misaligned bones and restore their proper position). They also have a Drift to Sleep therapy designed to help guests completely let go of physical and mental stress and encourage a deep slumber. It consists of a lavender body scrub, an aromatic milk bath and a body massage. Therapists then suggest a 30-minute power nap. My eyelids are getting heavy as I think about it."

1 Book a stay at The Ritz-Carlton through elegantresorts.co.uk

7

THE WESTIN RESORT & SPA,

LOS CABOS, MEXICO

The expert: Jann Bailey,
spagirl007.blogspot.com



Jann believes that you don't need to spend a fortune to feel good. Her blog covers everything from affordable aromatherapy to DIY spa treatments.

"I'm a bit biased towards this spa because I got married here, but it more than earns its serenity stripes. Located on the Baja Peninsula, where the craggy desert meets the stunning Sea of Cortez, The Westin Resort & Spa is the perfect haven for helping you reach your pampering nirvana.

"My spa motto is 'relax, rejuvenate and restore', and this spa ticks those boxes (and more). The luxury Caviar Facial is my favourite, and at \$161 (£100) for an indulgent 80 minutes, it won't punish your purse. Caviar helps the skin's elasticity and makes it firmer. I'm convincing my husband to take a second honeymoon."

1 Book a stay at The Westin Resort and Spa through thomascook.com



Enjoy a post-treatment sundowner at The Ritz-Carlton's restaurant