

SUMMER 2009: GREATEST DEALS EVER

# Condé Nast Traveler

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TRUTH IN TRAVEL

MAY 2009

EUROPE  
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CRUISING  
CLASSIC CITIES

## HOT LIST WORLD'S TOP NEW 140 hotels\*

50 Restaurants

50 Spas

35 Nightclubs

\*including 43 under \$250

INSIDER'S GUIDE

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# Hot Spas

50

NEW SPAS TO LOSE  
YOURSELF IN

A little R and R is just what the doctor ordered. And as luck would have it, this past year delivered a bumper crop of superlative spas from Macau to Mexico. Our reviewers left no hot stone unturned in their effort to identify transcendent spots for head-to-toe pampering—rejecting scores of also-rans in the process.



**Spa Boat at Taj Lake Palace**

»Udaipur, India  
Taj's barge, floating at anchor on Lake Pichola, provides a novel stage for a spa treatment.

# HOT SPAS

## ARGENTINA

### CasaCalma »Buenos Aires

An oasis in Buenos Aires's traffic-choked downtown, the capital's first wellness hotel is bedecked with jasmine that casts a jungly glow over a fresh interior of Carolina pine, whitewashed walls, and woven natural fiber furniture. Guests stay over or book a four-hour day session in one of 18 rooms kitted out with a hydro-massage tub, sauna, and Scottish shower, which stimulates circulation. Day visits include a 50-minute massage and a meal—a fruit-filled breakfast or a healthy lunch. Don't be put off by silly treatment names like Aroma Spirit and Zen Shiatsu: Masseuses know their aromatherapy from their Ayurveda, offering an anti-jet lag pick-me-up, specialized shiatsu and Ayurvedic treatments, and a freestyle massage designed by each masseuse (54-11-5199-2800; massages, \$140). ☉ ☉ ☉ ☉ ☉

### Valle Perdido Wine Spa

»Neuquén

Crickets buzz and owls hoot around the clock at northern Patagonia's Valle Perdido, a working winery with a hotel and spa (see "Hot List"). Muted interiors of dark wood and sand-colored concrete decorated with sprays of pampas grass echo the stony steppe outside. Staff explain just why antioxidant-rich polyphenols in grapes slow the skin's aging process, and employ them in exfoliation, facial, and bath treatments and the signature 90-minute body wraps, combined with honey, mud, or seaweed. Rose hips are used in a cell-nourishing facial wrap, while a chocolate-based tightening mask softens expression lines. Afterward, snack on smoked wild boar, rinse off under a Vichy shower, or simply gaze from the indoor-outdoor pool at fork-tailed flycatchers cavorting on 570 acres of poplar-ringed vineyards (54-11-4343-3350; massages, \$45). ☉ ☉ ☉ ☉ ☉

## AUSTRALIA

### Southern Spa at Southern Ocean Lodge

»Kangaroo Island

This circular glass-walled spa, a brief boardwalk stroll from the stunning Southern Ocean Lodge (see "Hot List"), takes reconnecting with nature to a sensuous extreme. The three treatment rooms look out on the pounding turquoise sea, and a massage-based treatment menu echoes the unspoiled environs. Virtually everything used here, from the deep-pink mud to the lavender flowers and Ligerian bee honey, hails from this remarkable island—even the spa showers employ rainwater. A signature sea salt and eucalyptus

body wrap begins with a breath of indigenous culture—a smoking ceremony in which gum leaves are reduced to ash—before a faultless exfoliation, body mask, wrap, and full-body massage (61-8-8559-7347; massages, \$90–\$122). ☉ ☉ ☉ ☉ ☉

## CANADA

### Chi, the Spa at Shangri-La

»Vancouver

With ornate wooden doors, a well, flickering votives, rich paneling, and stone walls, the decor of this Chi spa, the first in the Americas, incorporates all five elements of Chinese philosophy, while treatments focus on your predominant one. The two-hour Element Vitality treatment incorporates sonic therapy, masterful Swedish massage, and acupressure—it's so enervating you feel as if you might levitate afterward. If time permits, take advantage of the salon's extended "Chi Journeys" (mixing various treatments) or linger in the locker rooms' saunas, then grab a fresh smoothie from the Ginger Bar, adjoining the Shangri-La's (see "Hot List") outdoor pool (604-695-2447; massages, \$125–\$140). ☉ ☉ ☉ ☉

## CARIBBEAN

### Sense, a Rosewood Spa at Little Dix Bay

»British Virgin Islands

A new addition to Little Dix Bay's eponymous resort, Sense features an open-air lobby with views of a two-tiered infinity pool and the Sir Francis Drake Channel beyond, while treatments take place in nine stone cottages with outdoor showers and bay views, linked by narrow

rock paths through dense foliage. Many treatments feature indigenous ingredients, including the Little Dix Bay Signature Ritual, which begins with a body scrub of Salt Island salt or spice and coconut, followed by an indulgent 90-minute massage with tropical oils. Not only will you feel as if you've had the richness of the island rubbed into you, you'll smell deliciously like it too (284-495-5555; massages, \$135–\$235). ☉ ☉ ☉ ☉ ☉

### Driftwood Spa »Jamaica

This airy waterfront newcomer in the sleepy south-coast town of Treasure Beach mirrors the placid ambience of Jake's hotel, its home. The two-story, sunshine-colored adobe spa with driftwood furniture draws from all corners of the globe: African and Thai Buddhist masks appear on tabletops and walls; stained glass transoms impart a Moorish feel. The menu isn't extensive, so consider combining treatments. The Intuitive Bodywork Massage is a series of pushes, pulls, rocking, and therapeutic massage strokes. Of the skin treatments, the Bona Fide Coffee Scrub has the most sense of place: It uses crushed Blue Mountain coffee beans and local organic brown cane sugar, plus fragrant oils, to exfoliate, leaving skin smooth, supple, and smelling sensational (876-564-2406; massages, \$75–\$90). ☉ ☉ ☉ ☉ ☉

### Boutique Spa by Carita

»St. Barts

A bastion of French style on St. Barts, Carita is no mega-spa; the

2,000-square-foot ville d'eau is diminutively chic, from muted gray private dressing rooms to a theatrically lit double hammam. Plan an hour to cruise the maze of showers, steam rooms, and Jacuzzis before being collected by your masseuse cum model, who will douse you in orange-scented oils during the hour-long signature Carl Gustaf Relaxing Massage, a deep, tension-eliminating rubdown. The two treatment rooms are cozy compared with the spa's spare communal area, and heated beds are maneuvered electronically, so you won't be disturbed during a session's deep kneads. Stretch the limits of your high school French with the English-averse staff, who are refreshingly slow to push pricey Carita products onto even the most susceptible guests (866-297-2153; massages, \$155). ☉ ☉

## CHINA

### Aman Spa »Beijing

At the spa at the Aman at Summer Palace (see "Hot List"), low lights and lattice doors lead to neutral-hued healing spaces sprinkled with Chinese antiques such as wedding chests. Sign up for a private posture analysis and Pilates lesson in the pristine gym. Or, equally transformative, try the signature hair spa treatment designed by celebrity Hong Kong stylist Kim Robinson: It features a computer-assisted scalp analysis and bespoke hair mask to restore shine. The Nurtured Harmony treatment is an indulgent combination of ancient Chinese beauty secrets—a black and white

## 50 HOT SPAS

### ARGENTINA

CasaCalma, Buenos Aires  
Valle Perdido Wine Spa,  
Neuquén

### AUSTRALIA

Southern Spa at Southern  
Ocean Lodge, Kangaroo Island

### CANADA

Chi, the Spa at Shangri-La,  
Vancouver

### CARIBBEAN

Sense, a Rosewood Spa at  
Little Dix Bay, British  
Virgin Islands  
Driftwood Spa, Jamaica  
Boutique Spa by Carita,  
St. Barts

### CHINA

Aman Spa, Beijing  
Banyan Tree Sanya, Hainan  
Water's Edge, Shanghai

### DUBAI

The Spa, Atlantis, Dubai

### ENGLAND

Cowshed Spa, St. Moritz  
Hotel, Cornwall

### FRANCE

Le Couvent des Minimes Spa  
by L'Occitane, Mane  
Ambassade de la Beauté;  
Dior Institut at the Plaza  
Athénée, Paris

### INDIA

Priya Spa, Kerala  
Taj Spa Boat, Udaipur

### INDONESIA

Karma Spa, Bali  
Spa at Hotel Tugu, Lombok

### IRELAND

ESPA at the Europe,  
Killarney

### ITALY

Four Seasons Hotel, Florence

### MALAYSIA

Solace Spa, Kota Kinabalu

### MALDIVES

COMO Shambhala Spa,  
Kandooma

### MAURITIUS

The Spa, Four Seasons  
Resort Mauritius at Anahita,  
Beau Champ

### MEXICO

Remède, St. Regis Resort,  
Punta Mita  
Sense at Rosewood  
Mayakoba, Riviera Maya

### MOROCCO

Spa at Dar Jil, Marrakech

### PHILIPPINES

Abaca Spa, Cebu

### RUSSIA

Algothem Spa, Moscow

### SCOTLAND

Spa at Gleneagles by ESPA,  
Auchterarder

### SLOVENIA

Rose Spa, Hotel Kempinski  
Palace, Portoroz

### SOUTH AFRICA

Librisa Spa at the Mount  
Nelson Hotel, Cape Town  
Karkloof Spa, KwaZulu-Natal

### SWITZERLAND

Dolder Grand Spa, Zurich

### THAILAND

Veranda Spa, Chiang Mai  
Six Senses Destination Spa,

### Phuket

### TURKEY

Four Seasons Istanbul at the  
Bosphorus Spa, Istanbul

### UNITED STATES

CALIFORNIA: Spa Montage,  
Beverly Hills; Spa at Pelican  
Hill, Newport Beach

COLORADO: RockResorts Spa  
at the Arrabelle, Vail

FLORIDA: Icon Brickell at  
Viceroy Miami; Lapis at the  
Fontainebleau, Miami Beach

GEORGIA: 29 Spa at the  
Mansion on Peachtree,  
Atlanta

NEVADA: Spa at Trump,  
Las Vegas

NEW MEXICO: Spa at  
Encantado, Santa Fe

NEW YORK: Caudalie Spa  
at the Plaza Hotel; ESPA  
at the Peninsula; Sense, a  
Rosewood Spa, The Carlyle;  
Shibui Spa, Greenwich Hotel,  
New York City

TEXAS: Stoneleigh Spa, Dallas

Key to Symbols: ☉ Outdoor Treatments ☉ Spa Menu ☉ Views ☉ Facial Specialty ☉ Trends  
☉ Destination Spa ☉ Urban Day Spa ☉ Resort Spa ☉ Urban Hotel Spa ☉ Medical Treatments

Massage prices quoted are for one-hour sessions.