

# Stoned at the Spa!

Different spa treatments have different effects. Pick up your wellness massage from our list here.

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Spa therapies can melt away fatigue, stress and chronic pain. Finding it difficult to choose from a plethora of options? Here is a quick check on some must-have spa treatments and their effects on your mind, body and soul.



## ☀ Hydrotherapy

**Actualities:** Hydrotherapy provides rejuvenation through water treatments, aqua massages, jet blitzes, showers and mineral baths. In an aqua massage, you are immersed in a tub of water and massaged with either underwater jets or hand held jets. They are manipulated by the therapist to suit specific needs. Aerobic exercises are also performed in a pool. In a Hydrotherapy pool, the temperature, pressure and movement of water is controlled according to who's using it and why.

**Cures:** The resistance and support of water helps to burn fat, strengthen bones, and increase cardiovascular activity. The buoyancy of water greatly reduces the risk of injury to joints or muscles. Hydrotherapy is a good cure for back pain, rheumatic pain and arthritis, anxiety and stress, poor circulation, and headaches.

**Run to:** Ananda in the Himalayas and Radisson Plaza Resort and Spa, Kumarakom, Kerala.

## ☀ Ayurveda Massage

**Actualities:** Ayurveda, the science of life is one of the oldest healing sciences of India. Once the dominant dosha type (out of Vata, Pitta and Kapha) has been determined, oils and herbal treatments are then tailored for the individual client. This supports the fundamental



Ayurvedic principle that each individual has a unique mind-body constitution and will therefore have different balancing needs. The science also includes using meditation, nutrition and aromatherapy. During an Ayurvedic massage, the therapist might pray dosha mantras to unite your mind and body. The Abhyanga massage is recommended as a daily morning ritual where herbal oil is used to massage the body.

**Cures:** It emphasises the prevention of illness and promotes longevity through various methods. Ayurveda restores serenity and harmony to the body and soul. It regains the connection between the two.

**Run to:** Ananda in the Himalayas, Quan Spa in JW Marriot, Mumbai, Amatra Spa in The Ashok, New Delhi, Park Hyatt Goa Resort and Spa, and Radisson Plaza Resort and Spa, Kumarakom, Kerala.

## ☀ Aromatherapy

**Actualities:** As the name suggests, Aromatherapy involves using different 'aromas' or fragrant essential oils to achieve various therapeutic benefits. Treatments such as massages, facials, body wraps, or hydrobaths are used to infuse the body with warmth and the soul with tranquility. Frequently used



essential oils are chamomile, lavender, rosemary and tea-tree.

**Cures:** It helps to relieve stress and anxiety; sleep better, improves skin tone, aid concentration, and calm bad temper.

**Run to:** Ananda in the Himalayas, Quan Spa in JW Marriot, Mumbai, Amatra Spa in The Ashok, New Delhi, Heavenly Spa

at the Westin Sohna-Gurgaon Resort and Spa, and Rejuve Spa at Intercontinental, The Grand, New Delhi.

## ☀ Balinese Massage

**Actualities:** Balinese massage uses a combination of gentle stretches, acupressure and aromatherapy oils to aid in the flow of blood, oxygen and 'qi' (energy). An ancient technique, Balinese massage uses skin rolling, kneading, stroking, acupressure and reflexology to re-energise and aromatic oils are used to soothe and relax the body. It is usually done on a floor mat or a massage couch. It can also be done on a chair, if for medical purposes that is more comfortable. After using the various skin stretching and acupressure techniques, the massage ends with the pouring of coconut or some other essential oil on your body.

**Cures:** A Balinese massage works deeply to soothe damaged tissue and relieve strained muscles and joint pain. The boost in circulation helps to reduce stress and rebalance the body. It can help in curing ailments like migraine, sleep disorder and asthma.

**Run to:** Heavenly Spa at The Westin Sohna-Gurgaon Resort & Spa, Asian Roots, New Delhi, Amatra Spa at The Ashok, New Delhi, and Radisson Plaza Resort and Spa Kumarakom, Kerala.

## ☀ Hot Stone Therapy

**Actualities:** Before the therapy, you will be told to undress and lie down in a private cell. Then smooth water-heated basalt stones are placed on key energy points of your body. This direct heat relaxes the muscles. The size of the stones varies, depending on the part of the body that they are used on. The stones are coated in fragrant oil to increase your sense of relaxation. Most therapists will alternate the hot stones with cool marble ones to stimulate the nervous system. The therapist gives a massage which induces deep slumber as the muscles relax.

**Cures:** The hot stones sedate the nervous system, while the cool stones activate it again. This combination of hot and cold encourages the body to detox and heal, increase lymph flow and flush out waste.

**Run to:** Quan Spa in J W Marriot, Mumbai, Asian Roots, New Delhi, and Amatra Spa in The Ashok, New Delhi.

## ☀ Lomi Lomi

**Actualities:** Lomi Lomi, a Hawaiian massage, is also known as the 'loving hands' massage. The massage works gently, yet deeply into the muscles, with continuous, rhythmic strokes. Lomi lomi, literally means 'rub rub' in Hawaiian. Thus, it explains the long flowing strokes by the therapist's thumbs, fingers, palms, arms, and elbows. Traditionally, lomi lomi massage is conducted lying down on a hand woven mat on the



# spa essentials

floor or the usual massage table. You will be covered with just one towel to avoid any disruptions in the flowing strokes. After a moment of stillness, the therapist will work on your body with long continuous strokes. Sometimes the therapist may massage two different parts of the body at the same time to discourage your mind to drift away. It helps in relaxing the brain. Your therapist may also stretch your limbs or rotate your joints to aid in energy flow. A traditional lomi lomi practitioner might even start humming to give out positive vibrations in the atmosphere. Macadamia, palm and coconut oils are used to facilitate in long strokes and to nourish the skin.

**Cures:** Lomi Lomi aims to release tension, assist blood and lymph flow, eliminate waste and toxins, rejuvenate the body and instill a sense of peace, harmony and serenity. You will feel absolutely relaxed and nourished from head to toe after this massage.

**Run to:** Amatra Spa in The Ashok, New Delhi, and Heavenly Spa at The Westin Sohna-Gurgaon Resort and Spa.

## ☀️ Shiatsu

**Actualities:** Shiatsu is usually referred as 'acupuncture without needles'. It is a holistic, whole-body treatment that combines massage, acupressure and stretching. Shiatsu, an Asian healing method, ensures that energy flows freely along its 'meridians' or energy paths. The massage will be done in a spacious room and you would be loose fitted clothes. You will be asked to lie down on a futon or a quilted floor mat, with pillows and cushions all around which are used during the treatment. Since it involves a lot of acupressure and stretching, the therapist will keep guiding you on what to do next. After the first session, you may surprisingly feel some pain or ache in your body. But that is not a bad sign. These are the toxins coming to surface and being released.

**Cures:** It increases the flow of blood and lymph, takes oxygen to your skin and organs, helping them in releasing toxins and strengthening the immune system. It can also relieve pain in muscles and joints.

**Run to:** Asian Roots, New Delhi, and Amatra Spa in The Ashok, New Delhi.

## ☀️ Thai Massage

**Actualities:** Thai massage, nicknamed as 'yoga for the lazy', involves gentle techniques and passive stretches. Starting at the feet, and moving up to the head, the body is moved, loosened and stretched. Alongside lazy yoga, the therapist will apply gentle pressure with his palm and feet on the energy lines and acupressure points. You can lie down fully dressed on a light mattress on the floor. Since the massage is meditative in nature, the room is noise-free allowing you and the therapist to focus. Before commencing, the therapist will assess where your body needs healing and adapt his techniques accordingly. He will gently move and stretch your body starting from the feet to the head. One of the key features of Thai massage is blocking and then allowing blood flow again. It's called the Trigger Point Therapy. The masseuse may apply sustained pressure during the massage where your legs and arms meet the torso - for 30 seconds - and then you are straightened again. You will



feel a rush of heat as blood flows again. It acts as a circulation booster, giving you a heady feeling. The massage is concluded with a mini head massage. He will then finally block your ears with his fingers for a few seconds, and then unplug them again to bring you 'back to reality'.

**Cures:** Thai massage is done to increase your sense, increase energy, opening up of the meridians, relieve pain and muscle tension, increase blood circulation, and balances sleep pattern.

**Run to:** Ananda In the Himalayas, Quan Spa in J W Marriot, Mumbai, Heavenly Spa at The Westin Sohna-Gurgaon Resort & Spa, Asian Roots, New Delhi, Amatra Spa in The Ashok, New Delhi, and Radisson Plaza Resort and Spa Kumarakom, Kerala.

## ☀️ Swedish Massage

**Actualities:** The Swedish massage uses the five main techniques of stroking and gliding, kneading, rubbing, tapping or pounding, and vibration to ease muscular strain by flushing out toxins. In this massage, the person lies down on the massage table which is padded for extra comfort. The therapist starts by assessing your complexion to determine which essential oils to use on your skin. These will be massaged on your body using various techniques. Some therapists play music during the massage to help you unwind. The massage will gently relax you and makes you feel sleepy.

**Cures:** It helps in improving circulation by increasing flow of oxygen in the blood, keeping ligaments and tendons supple, stimulating the nervous system, and reducing emotional and physical stress.

**Run to:** Ananda in the Himalayas, Asian Roots, New Delhi, and Radisson Plaza Resort and Spa Kumarakom, Kerala.

Though these nine are not the only existing spa treatments, they take care of almost every need that you may have. So go ahead and indulge yourself to reclaim your vigour and vitality. 🌿