

NEW DIRECTIONS

From high-touch to high-tech, these are some of Judy Chapman's favourite new spa experiences.

If you thought that spas were becoming too generic then think again. With wellness now approaching a US\$4 trillion-dollar industry, a new genre of results-oriented treatments is popping up on our spa menus. There are massages that unkink our digital device-induced twinges, sleep treatments to fast-track rest, and movement massages getting the most sedentary among us – ahem – moving. At the same time, high-tech facials have gone mainstream and look out for FaceGym, the next wave of beauty.

A millennial generation of massages

Feeling creaky from too much digital time? The Deep Tissue Massage at the COMO Shambhala Urban Escape in Bangkok is designed to counter spinal and neck problems caused by our body caving inwards from staring down at our devices. Also try the Connoisseurs Massage at Jari Menari in Bali, infused with rotations, articulation and yoga-influenced movements.

Sleep treatments are a thing now...

The new Sacred Nap at Four Seasons Resort Bali at Sayan is my pick for the ultimate insomnia (and jetlag) cure. The sensation of floating in a hammock while the resident nun recites the story of Buddha is one of the most soothing experiences you'll ever try. Over at The Peninsula Shanghai the 120-minute Sleep Ceremony includes guided meditation, Balinese hot stone massage and a tension-releasing face and scalp massage, while Australia's Gwinganna Lifestyle Retreat is planning to launch Somadome, a high-tech 'peace in a pod' experience.

... as is digital detox

Disconnect digitally during the Spa Safari treatment at Nihi Sumba Island. Your day, without electricity or – gasp – Wi-Fi, begins with a morning trek to the remote NihiOka Spa overlooking a secluded bay. A bush-cooked breakfast awaits, followed by a day of unlimited treatments like the Hydrating Hair Smoothie and the native Mimpi Indah Facial. Also check out Spa Alila's retreats, which are launching Disconnect Programmes, essentially 72 hours of pure disconnection from the airwaves. And urban spas like that of Mandarin Oriental, Tokyo offer Silent Nights: no talking, no music, just silent therapists to help guests detach from devices and truly rest.

No pain, plenty of gain

We've heard the phrase 'sitting is the new smoking', which is why we will increasingly see movement choreographed into massage sequences. Try the Body Movement Pure Massage



01 ESPA Singapore's Rock Sauna
 02 Tribal Dreaming © Gwinganna Lifestyle Retreat 03 Clay is used at Peninsula Hot Springs Resort
 04 Sacred Nap at Four Seasons Resort Bali at Sayan



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on the menu at both Amilla Fushi and Finolhu in the Maldives. Rocking, intensive stretching and energetic muscle work actively engages guests into moving and stretching, increasing flexibility and circulation.

Saunas take centre stage

'Saunas reinvented' is a trend identified by the Global Wellness Institute. No longer hidden in basements, they are becoming wellness spas' centerpieces. Check out the view from the sauna at ESPA at Resorts World Sentosa in Singapore, while the mammoth sauna at Aro Hā Wellness Retreat in New Zealand offers meditative views over pristine mountains. And hydrotherapy specialist Peninsula Hot Springs in Australia blends hot spring bathing with optional didgeridoo healing meditations, smoking ceremonies and communal hammams.

High-tech facials

More people are turning 50 than 15, which explains why machine-based facials are now a given at upscale spas. At the Plateau Spa at Grand Hyatt Hong Kong, the Luminous Lift is delivered

with high-tech Radio Frequency to stimulate collagen, plus micro-current and LED technology for toning facial muscles. Cocoon Medical Spa in Bali offers the cream of the crop, like the Carboxy Facial where liquid nitrogen freezes away your wrinkles. And talking about freezing, the Cryotherapy facial at Porcelain, The Face Spa is quite an experience.

Face fitness

At the other end of the scale there is a shift towards facial workouts, where experts massage your skin so deeply it strengthens the connective tissues and shapes and sculpts the face. Celebrity facialists have long known the best

results come from toning and lifting the facial muscles rather than simply topical products. Sought-after experts include Thuyen Nguyen in New York, Fumi Yamamoto from Zen Facials in Australia, and Su-Man Skincare in London to name a few. FaceGym can be experienced abroad in London and at FaceLove in New York. ♦

Spa file

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