



*Relax and rejuvenate  
in a treetop cabin at  
the Lake House's Salus  
Day Spa in Victoria.*



# RUNWAY *to* RETREAT

FROM A VINE LEAF DETOX TO SOAKING IN A TREETOP TUB, **JUDY CHAPMAN** UNCOVERS SPECIAL BEAUTY TREATMENTS THAT ARE WORTH MAKING THE FLIGHT FOR ALONE.

**A** new breed of intelligent therapies and treatments are on the menu as spas and resorts, both in Australia and overseas, carve their own niche in the wellness market.

With wellness tipped to be a trillion-dollar industry worldwide by 2010, and as one of the fastest growth business areas today, trend analysts predict that our future travel decisions will depend not only on the virtues of a location, but also the uniqueness of the spa and facilities on offer.

Celebrities have long been on the regulars list at far-flung luxury retreats. Elle MacPherson, Nicole Kidman, Kate Moss, Elizabeth Hurley and the Beckhams are all fans of foreign facials and exotic exfoliations. But enjoying the latest treatments is no longer the preserve of

the rich and famous. Today, the convenience of flights means we can all enjoy a bit of jetset star treatment, without breaking the bank.

As our lives become increasingly busy and stressful, we're considering spa visits a necessity rather than an extravagance, and as a way to regularly and significantly improve our wellbeing.

Gone are the days when pampering demanded a special occasion. Today, that special occasion may just as easily be the pampering itself – and one that's worth notching up a few Velocity points.

From carbon-neutral facials and cutting-edge diagnostics to open-air bathing rituals and do-it-yourself treatments, we explore some of the more unusual and special experiences to be found in Australasia. ►

“ Deep and nurturing, it’s an emotional experience. For some, it feels as if they’ve attended a week-long retreat as feelings are released. ”

**The Sydney Ka Huna Centre**  
76 Oxford Street,  
Paddington, Sydney  
+61 2 9358 3777  
www.kahunacentre.com.au  
**Fly to: Sydney, NSW**

✳ **TO FLY FOR :: The Ka Huna Healer**

More like a spiritual encounter than your average rubdown, regulars swear by the Ka Huna massage at this modest healing refuge. Ka Huna therapy is a centuries-old Hawaiian massage with secret techniques passed down through generations of healers. These include the pressing of elbows and forearms and long sweeping strokes, all to soul-reaching rhythmic music. The bodywork is recommended for people suffering from stress and exhaustion as well as confusion, grief or loss. Deep and nurturing, it’s an extremely emotional experience. For some, it feels as if they’ve attended a week-long retreat as bottled up feelings are released.



**CHI Spa, Shangri-La**  
Yanuca Island,  
Cuvu, Sigatoka  
+679 652 0155  
www.shangri-la.com  
**Fly to: Nadi, Fiji**

✳ **TO FLY FOR :: The Dusk Till Dawn Experience**

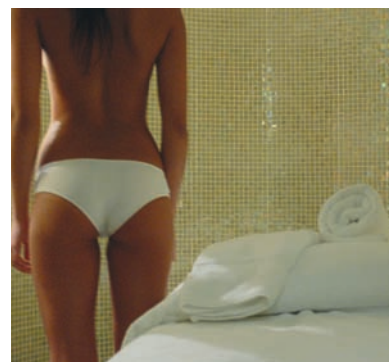
Fiji’s landscape of coconut palms and warm tropical waters make a sensual backdrop for CHI Spa at Shangri-La’s Fijian Resort & Spa on the private Yanuca Island. Unique to Shangri-La hotels is the Dusk Till Dawn treatment, where you stay overnight in a sea-facing spa *bure* (thatched roof cottage) or hut (with outdoor showers and plunge pool). The experience starts at dusk with an open-air bath followed by a scrub, massage and light cuisine served on the terrace inches from the Pacific Ocean. The next morning, a therapist brings in a tray of fruits then follows with a rejuvenating facial. For a relaxing alternative, try the Bobo massage with locally made virgin coconut oil.



**Rae’s Spa**  
Watego’s Beach,  
Marine Parade,  
Byron Bay  
+61 2 6685 5366  
www.raes.com.au  
**Fly to: Ballina/Byron, NSW**

✳ **TO FLY FOR :: The Bespoke Facial**

Rae’s Spa, located within the boutique hotel Rae’s on Watego’s – a celebrity favourite at Byron Bay – is where therapists deliver exceptional experiences. But it’s spa manager Marionne de Candia’s off-the-menu facials that have regulars begging for more (Elle MacPherson and actor Donald Sutherland are fans). Bringing decades of experience to Rae’s Spa, de Candia’s treatments include a facial massage, lymphatic drainage and reiki energy work. Her touch is powerful and it’s uplifting to see how many wrinkles seem to disappear when you are in her hands. While you’re cocooned in the exclusive spa, outside lie some of the world’s best surf beaches.



**Gwinganna Lifestyle Retreat**  
192 Syndicate Road,  
Tallebudgera Valley  
+61 7 5589 5000  
www.gwinganna.com  
**Fly to: Gold Coast, QLD**

✳ **TO FLY FOR :: The Musical Detox**

Hide away in the sheltered Spa Sanctuary – an eco-facility set among eucalyptus trees and a spring-fed billabong – and be pampered with a treatment or two. A spectrum of holistic, beauty and emotional balancing experiences are on offer, such as the Native American flute meditation or a Music to my Muscles treatment, where therapists gently tap and stretch your body into shape. The new Gwinganna Signature Spa Ritual comprises a spirit-resting sequence of footbath, scrub and massage and the senior therapist may even add to the session by playing the didgeridoo. Little wonder Hugh Jackman and his wife, Deborra-Lee Furness, became part-owners in the retreat. ▷





*Soak away your woes  
on the Gold Coast's  
secluded Gwinganna  
Lifestyle Retreat.*



**Salus Day Spa**

King Street, Daylesford  
+61 3 5348 3329  
www.lakehouse.com.au  
Fly to: Melbourne, VIC

**\* TO FLY FOR :: The Treetop Tub**

Long lunches and hot mineral water dips are the core ingredients of Salus Day Spa at the luxury Lake House in Daylesford. In the heart of Australia's spa district, where the largest concentration of mineral springs can be found, the waters are cool, clean and renowned for their medicinal properties. As far back as 1895, people have travelled from all over Australia to soak in and drink the waters believed to be rich in minerals like calcium, magnesium, iron and bicarbonate. They work wonders for skin and hair, oxygenate the blood and alleviate stress. Book a private Tree-top Mineral Spa and you can soak in a tub filled with mineral waters in a secluded treetop cabin.

**ThoSona**

Part of the Next Generation  
Sporting Complex Adelaide,  
1 War Memorial Drive,  
North Adelaide  
+61 8 8231 1034  
Part of the Next Generation  
Sporting Complex Perth,  
21 Kings Park, West Perth  
+61 8 9321 1794  
www.thosona.com  
Fly to: Adelaide, SA  
or Perth, WA

**\* TO FLY FOR :: The Carbon-Neutral Body Scrub**

Eco-chic travellers and dwellers can now duck into a ThoSona sanctuary. On offer in the Rock and Water room are Do-It-Yourself treatments, which are a growing trend in spas around the globe. Not only are DIYs social and fun, but they are more affordable, too. Inside the exquisite, but earthy, day spa, guests can slather their own bodies (and others!) with organic clays and salts before a steam and drench in wellness water. The spa's organic treatments include the Cranberry Boost Facial, which utilises products from Aussie brand KuuSh – the world's first CO<sub>2</sub>-free range. KuuSh leaves no carbon footprint since its products and processes are offset by eco initiatives.

**Hells Gate and Wai Ora Spa**

State Highway 20  
Tikitere, Rotorua  
+64 7 345 3151  
www.hellsgate.co.nz

**Polynesian Spa**

Lakefront  
Hinemoa Street, Rotorua  
+64 7 348 1328  
www.polynesianspa.co.nz  
Fly to: Auckland, NZ


**\* TO FLY FOR :: The Moonlight Mud Bath**

Spending time in nature is the purest spa experience of all, and there are few places as authentic as historic Rotorua. The landscape of bubbling waters, hot waterfalls, medicinal lakes and mud pools creates a therapeutic playground. And the medicinal volcanic mud and sulphur waters of Rotorua are known cures for relieving muscle and joint pain. For a chance to relax under the stars, head to Hells Gate Spa for a mud bath at sunset. For a more private experience, visit the adjoining Wai Ora Spa where you can wallow in a mud pool just for two. The nearby Polynesian Spa is open late every night with private pools on the edge of Lake Rotorua – perfect for a moonlight soak.

**Moondance Lodge**

Spencer Road, Yallingup  
+61 8 9750 1777  
www.moondancelodge.com  
Fly to: Perth, WA

**\* TO FLY FOR :: The Grape Wrapture**

Moondance Lodge, a boutique retreat situated in the Margaret River wine district, offers mouth-watering treatments that fuse with the surrounding landscape. The spa's Grape Healing therapies comprise Grape Wrapture – where you are wrapped in vine leaves to improve detoxification and boost circulation – as well as a Grape Glow Facial that utilises antioxidant-rich grape pulp. Loaded with antioxidants and vitamin C, grapes are a powerful healing agent, promoting anti-ageing and nourishment. Every part of the treatment is hand-blended from home-grown ingredients. The spa also offers naturopathy consultations for a tailor-made wellness experience. 



**BOOK YOUR FLIGHT ::** Virgin Blue offers several convenient flights to various rejuvenating health spa locations. To book flights, visit [www.virginblue.com.au](http://www.virginblue.com.au) or call 13 6789 (in Australia)



or 0800 67 00 00 (in New Zealand). For your travel insurance needs, from as little as \$5 per day, visit [www.virginblue.com.au](http://www.virginblue.com.au) or call 1800 010 457 (in Australia).

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