

Daniela Steiner Spa

Hotel Rosa Alpina, Italy, www.rosaalpina.it

YOU don't have to spend the day yomping across flowery mountainsides or skiing down snow-covered ones to deserve quality time here. No, the whole atmosphere gently encourages you to submit to being pampered. Don't fight it.

Instead of following gimmicks and trends in beauty therapy, Daniela Steiner embraces natural products and her unique treatments, using herbs and flowers picked from local meadows and forests, sit alongside classic facials and massages.

Purify your body with volcanic clay using herbal steam while resting on a marble lounger. Bask in a vitamin shower massage or slink away with silky skin after a brown-sugar exfoliation and lemon herbal body mask. You'll be good enough to eat.



With cheeks rosy from the mountain air and the sound of cow bells tinkling in my ears, it made perfect sense to indulge in the Mountain Hay Bath. Being smothered in warm, damp fresh hay, wrapped up and snuggled into a warm water bed made me feel like a child playing hide-and-seek. But once the

sense of mischief wore off (after all, I was hiding but no one was seeking) it became oh-so relaxing.

You're never far from nature here. Flowers, fruit, seeds, shoots, shells and leaves are processed to supply oils, waxes and extracts for Steiner's products, which she developed with Swiss scientists. How wonderful to imagine the Gnomes of Zürich debating the merits of edelweiss versus grapefruit.

The staff here deliver as much warmth as expertise. From the candlelit suites to the butter-soft, feather-filled leather lounge sofas, this elegant, purpose-built spa will cosset and soothe you. You'll emerge soft and glowing, incredibly relaxed (though not stupefied) and ready for as much or as little activity as you want.

The Thalasso Spa

Marbella Club, Spain, www.marbellaclub.com

THE incredible therapists in this thalasso haven tell me they know immediately which guests are from London because they are the most stressed. It's a source of genuine concern and they take pride in unwinding the tightly coiled cases our capital delivers. Bring your anxiety and knotted shoulder muscles and you will leave feeling ten years younger.

This is thanks to the glorious thalasso facilities which deliver strengthening, revitalising and beautifying effects through the magic of sea water. Light years away from the freezing lidos around Britain's coast, the pool here has gallons of sea water pumped from source, a few feet away. Immerse yourself in goodness and then head for the water jet system which pummels you in a variety of places



while energising blood circulation and fortifying your immune system. Featured heavily on the spa menu, the boundless properties of algae are not to be missed, particularly in the wrap treatments.

It's no small thing for me to say that the 80-minute sea creation luxury rejuvenating facial is the best

I have ever had. An algae mask is applied to pump moisture back in. The therapist then massages your hands and feet and scalp.

Next up, a super-antioxidant serum, the active ingredient of which is a magical maritime substance called Thermophilis which is harvested from the bottom of the Pacific. An exquisite facial massage follows where tiger cowry shells are used to smooth away tension. I fell asleep at this point and woke up feeling like a little mermaid.

In 2005, the Marbella Club became the first, and so far only, resort in Spain to be accredited as a Leading Spa of the World. It's easy to see why. Go for one treatment or enjoy packages covering anything from one to the unimaginable heaven of six days.

Wellbeing Escapes

Spa Travel Company, www.wellbeingescapes.co.uk, 0845 602 6202

THE Spa Show is on at Olympia, London on 25-26 November, helping visitors to choose their next spa break, from boutique hideaways to the hottest spas both at home and worldwide. Wellbeing Escapes, the UK's leading spa and wellbeing travel company, is one of the key exhibitors at the show and does this all year round for their customers. Here's what makes them stand apart...

With so many holistic breaks to choose from and no way of knowing whether you're getting a luxury spa or a hotel with one draughty treatment room - booking your trip can be a stressful experience. But not with Wellbeing Escapes: the experts at this experience company have done all the hard work for you and handpicked the very best holidays. They



research, visit and test firsthand the spas, retreat centres and holiday destinations they recommend. And they'll work with you to tailor-make your perfect experience. So if you want to kick start your weight loss plans, improve your yoga skills, or simply relax and get away from it all, they'll find you the perfect

escape. Their website is constantly updated with the latest finds, whether it's a new retreat, a fabulous new therapy or a great holistic holiday.

Founder Stella Photi has 20 years experience in the travel industry. "As a working mother and running a business my free time is a precious commodity, so when I wanted to book a much needed yoga holiday and an initial web search came up with over 200 choices, I was overwhelmed. How could you decide which was the best without a degree in yoga?"

"With everyone jumping on the 'health' bandwagon, there is a need to find and qualify the experts in this industry and take away the fuss and worry. Stop trawling the Internet and let someone else find you the perfect place for you to relax and unwind."