

# travel

INSIDE



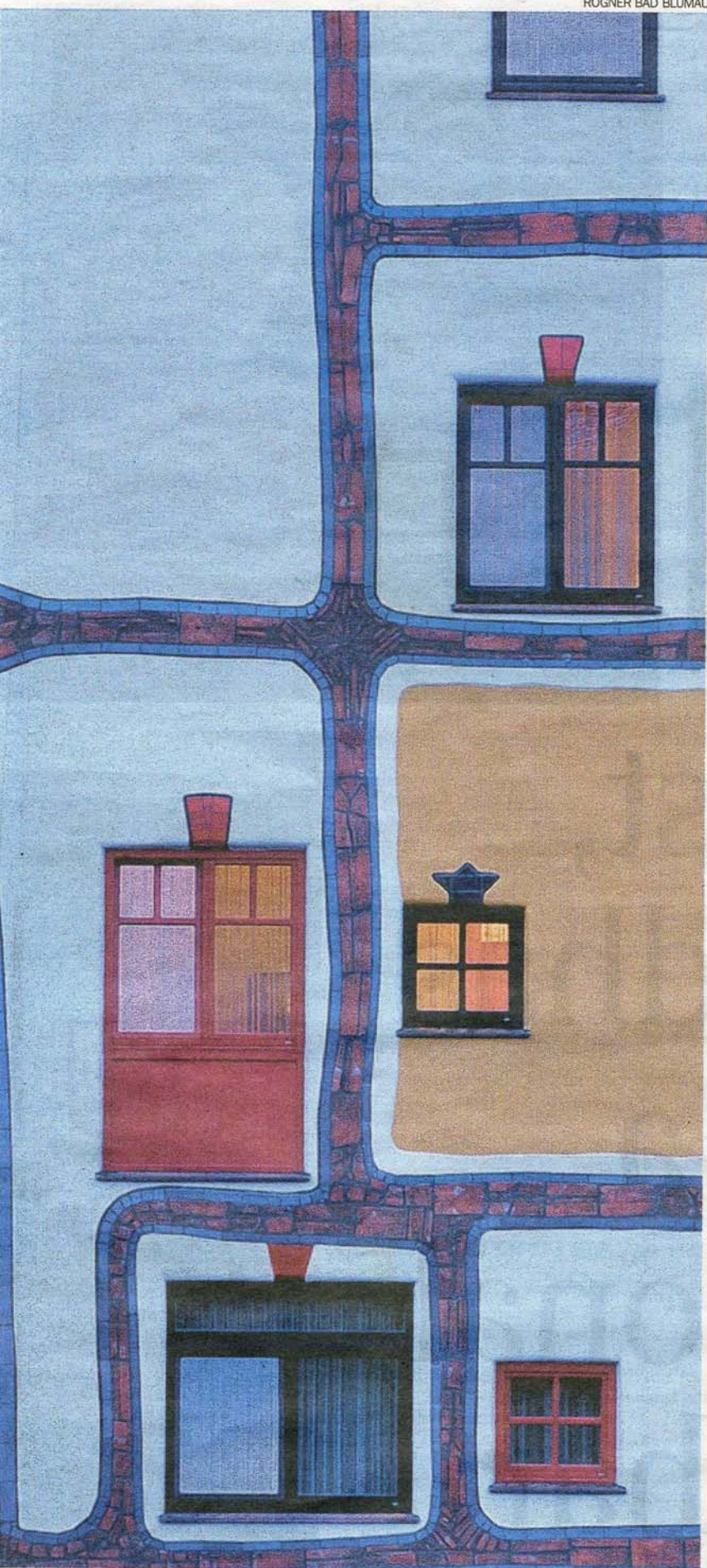
Saturday January 3 2009 • "Beauty is in the eye of the beer holder" Kinky Friedman (1944-)



## PURE PLEASURE

**GLOBAL DETOX SPECIAL** Putting the treat into treatment, Austrian style **10-11** Time travel: go away and come back looking younger **2** Where to quit smoking **4-5** PLUS ski deals **17**

ROGNER BAD BLUMAU



different and the building has been designed to have no straight lines

## I HAVE SPENT MOST OF MY ADULT LIFE AVOIDING SPAS

fires lit in braziers around the edge of the pool, I felt utterly at peace.

The Rogner Bad is fun. Hundertwasser's architecture is colourful and uplifting — rather like living in a landscape designed by Joan Miró. It also manages to be worthy in a way that feels rather joyous. The rooms are deliberately simple because Hundertwasser wanted guests to spend time outside in the pools and exploring the surrounding landscape. Wandering through the grounds, we came upon a small orchard of young trees, each with a tag attached with two names on, commemorating weddings that had taken place at the hotel. It is the perfect hotel for couples.

Secluded corners with daybeds are

everywhere, and in the pools young and old twosomes drift about with their arms around each other.

The only place that isn't romantic, as is often the way with Austrian hotels, is the main restaurant; a brightly lit, huge canteen of a place that offered a vast buffet each evening. The restaurant offers a more intimate supper, and for those determined to be healthy there is a spa restaurant too, although judging by the number of gaudy-coloured cocktails being delivered to tables in the busy bar (complete with live jazz duo), I'm not sure how much abstaining was going on.

This shouldn't give the impression that they don't take wellness seriously at the Rogner Bad. On-site

doctors offer consultations and can draw up tailored programmes, there are nutritionists and nursing staff who can offer "muscle function" analysis (thermal spas are particularly good for the joints) and "biochecks" (blood tests and general health scans).

There is a huge sauna complex, dedicated spa area, and a programme of fitness classes. But even the exercise they offer can be enjoyable; lurching around in the third pool, with its tempestuous wave machine, was the most complete workout I'd had in months. I emerged from the water breathless, laughing and feeling totally invigorated.

Who said spas weren't about having fun?

## Spa for the course

Champneys' four resorts (Tring, Forest Mere, Springs and Henlow Grange) have a range of half-price packages for arrivals before January 15. A Weekend Mini-Break that includes a full-board overnight stay, a massage, facial and choice of 20 different classes a day costs from £134.97 a room. Details: 08703 300300, [www.champneys.com](http://www.champneys.com)

A spa day at the new £5 million Foxhills Healthspa in Surrey costs £119pp and includes two-course lunch and a foot-salve ritual followed by either an hour-long Elemis prescriptive solution facial, a traditional full-body Swedish massage or mini manicure and pedicure. Details: 01932 704555, [www.foxhillshealthspa.co.uk](http://www.foxhillshealthspa.co.uk)

Family-friendly CenterParcs has a two-for-one deal at its Aqua Sana spas at all four of its UK sites. A midweek spa day for two costs £70 and includes entry to the World of Spa's 16 experiences. To book call 08448 266200 and quote *The Times*

The Hythe Imperial on the Kent coast has a spa with a large indoor pool, a sauna, steam room and well-equipped gym. A two-day spa break costs £198pp and includes dinner, B&B, a skin consultation, full body massage and a facial. Details: 01303 267441, [www.mercur.com](http://www.mercur.com)

The Ayurveda & Wellness Centre at LykiaWorld & LinksGolf Antalya in Turkey has a package from £115pp. It includes a three-night stay in a standard double room, a hammam aromafoam treatment, a mineral earth face mask, a hydrotherapy bath in its multi-suite spa and one round of golf on the 18-hole championship course. Details: 08702 245524, [www.lykiagroup.com](http://www.lykiagroup.com) or e-mail [uk@lykiaworld.com](mailto:uk@lykiaworld.com)

Choose from more than 200 treatments at four spa centres on a seven-night break at the five-star Fortina Spa Resort in Sliema, Malta. The cost, from £599pp, includes half board, two thalasso pool treatments, a Spa Santé session and return flights from Gatwick, from £599pp. Details: 0800 9173001, [www.fortinasparesort.com](http://www.fortinasparesort.com)

A four-night Spa Essentials break at the Hotel Rosa Alpina in the Italian Dolomites includes après-ski treatments for him (pedicure, manicure, facial and deep-tissue massage) and her (a Daniela Steiner anti-ageing treatment, luxury body treatments) and access to the hotel's spa facilities. Accommodation is in a deluxe double room or junior suite on a B&B basis and costs from £1,173pp, excluding flights. Details: 0039 0471 849500, [www.rosalpina.it](http://www.rosalpina.it)

**Nick Wyke**

For a guide to the best-value detox retreats around the world and new spas to look out for in 2009 visit: [timesonline.co.uk/goodspaguide](http://timesonline.co.uk/goodspaguide)



Thermal springs are at the heart of this spa experience