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By Sheila Sobell and
Richard N. Every

Spahhhcations

INDULGE IN RELAXATION DURING YOUR NEXT VACATION
AT ONE OF THESE TOP-RATED SPAS

EVERY YEAR SPA MAGAZINES RATE THE BEST SPAS in a variety of categories. We reviewed some of their suggestions for best regional spas guaranteed to restore mind/body bliss, not only for you and even for your husband.

Reconnect with your inner self at CAESAR'S PALACE QUA BATHS & SPA IN LAS VEGAS

A spiritual reading can be an unexpected part of the spa experience, but in the Aura Soma Color Quest at the Caesar's Palace Qua Baths & Spa in Las Vegas the four hues you pick from 109 colored blends of oils, herbs and essences, and the order of your selection gives the practitioner insight into your personality and potential. Your first choice becomes the session's focus, triggering a transformation of the room with colored lighting and aromatherapy for an energy boosting massage. The more complex Aura Soma Synergy treatment involves an hour-long consultation, and an aura cleansing and energy-balancing massage.

A chill-out in the Arctic Room takes the experience to another level as you de-stress stretched out on a heated bench watching snow fall. Snowball fight anyone?

Poetry on a platter in THE GRAND DEL MAR IN SAN DIEGO

Don't go here to eat yourself skinny. Gastronomic ecstasy is an essential part of the menu in this triple Five Star resort (the only one in California with top marks in accommodations, dining and spa). At Addison, its signature restaurant, we had the four-course spring menu

HEADER HEADER

Opposite page, left to right: Entrance to the Grand Del Mar; Palazzo Suite at Grand Del Mar; Women's lounge at Grand Del Mar; La Costa Spa courtyard entrance; Atlantis Spa laconium lounge; Arctic room at Ceasar Palace's Qua Baths and Spa; La Costa Spa; La Costa's reflexology path; Grand Del Mar Spa lounge.

with wine pairings with a puff pastry starter stuffed with cherries, sherry and cheese. Lightly grilled foie gras with green apples and wild king salmon basted in a Japanese sauce followed. Executive chef William Bradley combines unusual ingredients that explode into bursts of flavor.

Attention to detail is everywhere. The 249-bedroom, 31-suite hotel in the magnificent private Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve has first-class amenities – private beach, a par-72 grand golf club, activity program, tennis, night club and new equestrian center. Ceilings in the public rooms are made of 18 different types of wood. To keep the grain consistent, designer Addison Mizner bought the trees in their entirety! Bedroom tray ceilings are hand-painted with 24 karat gold accents; air vents are covered with artistic grills. Of the three categories of suites, we recommend the spacious one-bedroom, two-bath Palazzo with canyon or Fairview views.

You'd be right to expect superbly trained staff at a spa awarded five-stars from Forbes. Decorated with framed Hermès scarves and gilded mirrors, the entrance to the women's spa sets the tone of the experience.

During the signature Renaissance massage/body treatment the entire body (except the face) is slathered in mud; then cocooned in sheets and heavy plastic wraps. Unexpectedly the massage table sinks into a tub of warm water, and the masseuse rocks the participant's body back and forth using the person's leg as a paddle while pushing on his or her chakras. Found only at the most exclusive properties, this high-tech European Dry Float Soft-Pack system prevents the participant from ever getting wet! A rosemary-infused Swiss shower washes the mud and all tension away before the final massage.

Spanish Shangri-La at LA COSTA RESORT AND SPA IN CARLSBAD

Southern California's only gold medal golf resort, La Costa is designed as an inclusive luxury Spanish village that knows how to satisfy the needs of adults on a romantic escape as well as families with children. Some facilities are



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reserved for families, while others are for grown-ups only. Built in 1965 on 400 acres in Carlsbad, there's tennis, shops, spa, restaurants and activities for all ages.

if you go

**Caesar's Palace
Qua Baths & Spa**
3570 Las Vegas Blvd.
S.; 702-731-7110; www.CaesarsPalace.com

The Grand Del Mar
5300 Grand Del Mar
Court, San Diego.
858-314-2000. www.TheGrandDelMar.com.

La Costa Resort & Spa
2100 Costa Del Mar
Rd., Carlsbad; 800-854-
5000; villa rentals at
7600-804-7400;
www.lacosta.com

An archway draped in purple Bougainville opens to a Spanish courtyard with a pool and Jacuzzi. A stunning fountain bearing the resort's insignia and green plants flank the entrance to the spa's wet room.

An 80-minute aromatherapy rain massage uses essential oils applied individually with a distinctive stroke. A mixture of lavender vera, peppermint, and sweet marjoram relieves muscular tension. Sage, sweet orange, sweet marjoram, and lavender vera encourage restfulness. Roman chamomile, sweet marjoram, lemongrass and lavender vera relieve headaches and migraines. Layer four is a mix of cyprus, ylang ylang, rosemary and lemongrass to boost confidence.

South Seas Escape at PARADISE POINT RESORT & SPA ON MISSION BAY

Fifty years ago, movie producer Jack Skirball really put the "paradise" into this 44-acre island planted with aromatic tropical gardens, lagoons, waterfalls, five swimming pools, and cabana-style cottages.

The resort's day spa offers "global ritual" bodywork derived from Fiji, Bali, Hawaii and Thailand. Mahogany and bamboo ceilings, hand-blown glass lighting and Japanese soaking tubs create an authentic island ambiance.

Top accommodations include the Lanai Bayside Premium room. Original decorative stone masonry still hangs over the door which opens to a 650-foot space with sitting area, fireplace, HD TV, dining table, and king bed. Sliding doors open to a patio, fire pit and mesmerizing bay view.

Jazz plays softly in the romantic Baleen restaurant with sweeping beach and bay vistas. Across the room dinner is prepared in the open kitchen. Although the restaurant isn't promoted separately, word of its



A staycation spacation

In need of a quick, accessible vacation from every day life? Check out some of Reno's nationally-renown spas.

Spa Atlantis

Indulge your senses and rejuvenate body and mind in a 30,000-sq. ft. haven of tranquility at Spa Atlantis. The Laconium Relaxation Lounge features heated lounges and floor to stimulate circulation, purify and detoxify the body. The Brine Inhalation-Light Therapy Lounge includes a waterfall of Brine cascades to improve the respiratory system. The Aqua Spa Lounge includes Jacuzzi® pools to relieve aching muscles and an Experiential Shower. The spa received SpaFinder's Readers' Choice Awards for Best Casino Hotel Spa in 2012. For more information visit www.atlantiscasino.com/spa/.

Spa Toscana

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excellence attracts 30 percent of diners from off-property

Amenities like tennis, an 18-hole golf putting course and marina have earned Paradise a AAA Four-Diamond award. ■

Sheila Sobell and Richard N. Every are professional world-wide travel journalists who contribute frequently to RENO magazine.

Look

By Siobhan McAndrew
Photos by David Calvert

Black rock BEAUTY

The ultimate mud pie for grownups



MUD TREAT

Harvested from the Black Rock desert, Black Rock Mud is an mineral rich illite clay, containing more than 50 naturally occurring trace elements that promote healthy skin, including calcium, phosphorus, iron, magnesium, potassium, and zinc.

PLAYING IN THE MUD NEVER GETS OLD. I've spent my Sunday nights for a few weeks

slathering my face with MudPot, a thick green clay that goes on smooth, hardens and leaves my face renewed.



SIOBHAN McANDREW

The illite clay is a home grown, harvested and a healing beauty product packaged in an award winning cute white box.

It comes from the Black Rock Desert, a place made famous by Burning Man, an annual arts festival that brings thousands from around the world to the flat and vast landscape 120 miles north of Reno.

Now if Burning Man isn't for you, what's being harvested by its full-time neighbors in Gerlach, Nevada might be the only kind of alternative escape you need.

Another way to really enjoy the Black Rock Desert is from the comforts of indoor plumbing while you heal your skin with a geothermal mud mask.