

BEAUTY / BOOKING

Warming Herbal Ritual at Ushvani, London

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When I arrived at [Ushvani](#), in London's Chelsea, I was greeted and brought through to an immediately calming space. The busy world of Sloane Square suddenly felt like a world away from the privacy and tranquility of the spa.

The Malaysian spa is housed in a beautiful three-storey building, decorated in dark wood furnishings and made up of multiple rooms. There is a recently reopened expansive yoga studio with high ceilings on the top floor, and on the lower levels we came to the Samara room (Samara being the Malay word for love) specifically for couples treatments, single treatment rooms, a communal spa area with steam room and a luxuriously kitted-out changing room.

After I was shown through the facilities I was led back to reception to fill out a client health card, asking questions about my concerns and history. My jacket was taken and I was given spa shoes, then led downstairs to change into my robe.

My massage therapist Shelly met me outside the change room and took me through to the Senyam room (smile in Malay). I chose to receive the [Warming Herbal Ritual](#), a 90-minute full-body massage claiming to be best for winter months.

Shelly described the treatment in detail, talking me through the style of massage and the products she would be using. She explained that the massage is a fusion of Asian techniques, and that she would be using a hibiscus and king coconut oil blend, as well as herbal compresses, to warm up the muscles and aid in the healing process.

After reading on my client card that a concern was tension, Shelly had chosen a turmeric, ginger and cassia anti-inflammatory compress, which would be warmed and placed on my body throughout the massage. She worked into specific pressure points to release built up tension, massaging them out with targeted kneading and long sweeping strokes. The massage was quite similar to a Thai massage in that it was quite active, with assisted stretching and back bends.

Although I regularly have massages, I hadn't had a treatment like this before and after a long winter my body was grateful – it felt warm, engaged and relaxed all at once. All tension had melted out of my muscles and I felt completely restored. Shelly told me that to benefit from the properties of the oils and compresses it would be best to not to shower for a few hours but encouraged me to use the steam room which would help with absorbing them fully.

Afterwards, I was taken through to the tea room and served a fresh-brewed Hibiscus tea, known for its anti-bacterial and anti-inflammatory properties. It was the perfect end to an ultimately relaxing and restorative spa afternoon.