

SPA BREAKS

THE BEST SPAS IN LONDON

Spa at Four Seasons Hotel London at Ten Trinity Square

Unwrapped: where to find the ultimate spa treatments in London





THE SPA AT THE BULGARI HOTEL LONDON

BEST SPA IN LONDON FOR: GLAMOUROUS DOWNTIME PAIRED WITH CLEVER, CUTTING-EDGE TREATMENTS

There's no disguising this spa's grand jewellery house heritage; not only is it one of the biggest and best in the city, it's also one of the blingiest. Five floors below the silvery lobby of the Bulgari Hotel – just steps from Knightsbridge – it's a maze of dark-wood treatment rooms, saunas, swirly onyx-marble steam rooms, ice fountains and a vitality pool that glints with gold-leaf mosaic. And at its heart lies the greeny-gold colonnaded pool, flanked by muslin-draped cabanas with buttons to press when you fancy a gut-friendly antioxidant shake. You could while away an entire day loafing and grazing and swimming gentle laps, but if all that sounds a bit soporific then there's an ultra-contemporary, ultra-discreet Workshop gym on site, where founder Lee Mullins sculpts the silhouettes of Oscar winners and supermodels.

Do book in for a treatment too; the list includes straight-up pampering, Ayurvedic healing and up-to-the-minute innovation with LED lights and radio-frequency machines. If you just want to be sent comatose, try the JAX Coco Body Experience, which starts with a head-to-toe scrub and polish before a hot-stone and deeply hydrating coconut-oil massage. You'll practically have to be carried to the relaxation room, where you're greeted with flickering fires and steamy pots of ginger tea. For something more results-focused, try a facial. The iS Clinical Fire and Ice uses a mild peel and skin-plumping glycolic acid to revive and renew skin (A-listers swear by it before heading onto the red carpet). And then there's the holistic; sleep rituals with breathing exercises and delicious herbal compresses, osteopathy with therapist Susannah Makram, and even fillers – without chemicals – delicately administered

after all.

TREATMENT TO BOOK

The iS Clinical Fire and Ice Facial; £250 for 40 minutes.

INSIDER TIP

Make sure you book a treatment that lasts at least two hours in order to get access to all the facilities, including the pool – not cheap, but a worthwhile investment.

By Teddy Wolstenholme

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CREDIT: TOMMY PICONE



SPA AT FOUR SEASONS HOTEL LONDON AT TEN TRINITY SQUARE

BEST SPA IN LONDON FOR: A VERY SPECIAL HAMMAM

Included on our list of the [hottest new hotels in the world in 2017](#), the Four Seasons at Ten Trinity Square is housed in a building dating from 1922 and has the oldest, wisest, Beaux-Arts head on its shiny, refurbished shoulders. Walking into the circular lobby, over the marble floors and velvety red carpets, all centred around the grandest grand piano, you get the sense you may have stumbled onto a Bond film mid-take, or at least the latest season of [McMafia](#). But take the lift down a floor to the even more recently redone spa and you'll realise you've actually fallen straight into Aladdin's lamp, so glittering and swirly are the walls, so curvy and sleek the lines of the pillars. Even the pool walls have reeds made up of teeny, tiny golden tiles, shooting and swaying up from the water jets.

And yet you haven't even reached the beating heart: the [Turkish](#) hammam. Little pink beams, like upside-down tea-lights, gently shine down on you from a ceiling of mother-of-pearl as you lie back on a warm slab of marble in nothing but your disposable pants and, more unusually but more comfortably, bandeau top. Rather than sitting, as might be more traditional, between the legs of your Turkish masseuse, at the Four Seasons you are treated (in the best sense possible) like a [pizza](#) base being kneaded on a table-top, with your therapist – male or female, according to your preference – manoeuvring themselves around you, making for a wholly less invasive and more relaxed experience. As well as special salts, sniffed and approved by you at each step, water is whooshed over you throughout, culminating in a surprisingly lovely blast of cold – though only if you agree to it.

TREATMENT TO BOOK

The Steam and Style package: £155 for 90 mins.

INSIDER TIP

The above package includes a blow-dry and style in [Gielly Green](#), the hotel salon, along with hot and cold drinks and, if your hair is in need of a little attention, sample products to go.

By Becky Lucas



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CHUAN BODY + SOUL AT THE LANGHAM, LONDON

BEST SPA IN LONDON FOR: A COMPLETE MIND AND BODY REBALANCE

Round corners, along corridors and down lifts, the Chuan Body + Soul spa is squirreled away in a quiet corner of the gorgeously grand Langham. The hotel might be better known for its clever craft cocktails – its Artesian Bar is regularly crowned the world’s best – but it is its unique mix of Traditional Chinese Medicine and Western results-driven facials that draws serenity-seekers here. Visits begin with a multi-choice questionnaire to determine your elemental balance: what time of day and what season do you prefer? What foods do you crave? What body aches and grumbles do you have? Totted and tallied, you’re first prescribed a mind-stilling breathing exercise: for Earth, visualising the colour yellow and resting your right hand over your spleen while practising a deep exhaling chant. Then work begins on your chi. A full-body Chuan Harmony massage releases tension through firmly working acupressure points, awaking and lightening limbs, all designed to balance energy flow through the body. Or there’s stone therapy with hot (yin) and cold (yang) rocks, bamboo massages and jade facials, all channelling ancient Eastern traditions. This is married with some decidedly 21-century skincare: deep-cleansing, plumping and radiance-returning prescriptions using products from Swedish-American brand Kerstin Florian and Spanish brand Germaine de Capuccini.

TREATMENT TO BOOK

The Chuan Ritual, consisting of two and a half hours of deeply resetting, mix-and-match, top-to-toe treatments tailored to your elemental balance: £240 for 2hours 30mins.

INSIDER TIP

Make time for a dip in the usually-deserted 16m pool before your treatment – it’s housed in this former bank’s vault, so sealed in silence. It’s more relaxing than the spa’s lounge, which is sound-tracked by the whoosh of the treadmill from the (well-stocked) gym through the big picture window next door.



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THE SPA AT THE FOUR SEASONS HOTEL LONDON AT PARK LANE

BEST SPA IN LONDON FOR: SUPERCHARGING TIRED SKIN

If you ever idly dream of going on holiday on your own somewhere quiet in the mountains, The Spa at the [Four Seasons Hotel Park Lane](#) is the place for you. A couple of hours here is like a brief escape for people who don't have time to take holidays. You tuck yourself away up on the hotel's top floor, an eyrie above the pell-mell of Park Lane, and switch off. It is private, calm; a place to get perspective. Start with a pace-slowng session in the Heat Experience, a series of warm dark rooms with a massaging jet pool, a steam room and a sauna with fantastic views over Hyde Park and the rooftops of Knightsbridge. Then book a facial – these are deeply effective next-generation treatments using the very best products and technology, promising to plump and de-wrinkle (Organic Pharmacy Collagen Boost Hydro Diamond Facial), to lift and tone (the award-winning Gold Hydrating Facial, which

temporary facelift without the needle: brightening and tightening, anti-ageing and revitalising. Note: not relaxing. Real results require effort, though thankfully only on the part of the adept therapist, who sculpts the face as though working clay, strong fingers kneading and redefining long-lost cheekbones and a jawline. Every bit of skin is pinched, pulled, rubbed until rubbery, then probed with the metal prongs of a Caci machine, which sends out tiny electrical impulses to tighten facial muscles (and leaves a coppery taste in the mouth). Then the delicious bit – thick and gloopy Omorovicza creams and masks, delicately fragrant, and wake-me-up chilled Derm-A-Globes, cold glass balls used to tighten pores. Come round, slowly, in the dark of a relaxation pod. The outcome is extraordinary and lasts a couple of weeks.

TREATMENT TO BOOK

The Omorovicza Blue Diamond Facial, which is properly performance-driven. Afterwards your face aches pleasantly, as though from a work-out: £275 for 80 minutes, plus Caci add-ons.

INSIDER TIP

Even if you only book in for a one-hour treatment, give yourself extra time for the Heat Experience and to wind down afterwards. You won't be booted out of the relaxation pod.

By Laura Fowler

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USHVANI

BEST SPA IN LONDON FOR: A FULL DAY DECOMPRESSION

Just off Sloane Street, the handsome Grade II-listed Edwardian mansion-house that Ushvani sits inside calls to mind the sort of place Lucy Honeychurch, heroine of *A Room With A View*, might stay on a visit to [London](#), tripping out for iced coffee and meringues with cousin Charlotte. The spa's walls and staircases are clad in the original Arts and Crafts carved panels, and the rich colour and history of the wood immediately casts a spell on the visitor – there is the immense quiet and dignity here almost of a grand library. And yet the permeating scent is of hibiscus, the treatments are Asian-inspired, and there's a subtle sound of water from the subterranean plunge pool – which guests are encouraged to take proper time in before a treatment – as well as the dry and wet steam rooms. The signature Malay Massage centres on stretching, the therapist firmly guiding movements, stopping to concentrate on areas that are gnarled. There is a sense of someone properly listening to your body and making any changes in the treatment to suit – it feels intuitively bespoke and therapists are confident and strong: this is proper, sensitive bodywork. There are many thoughtful things about Ushvani: the careful way they stagger treatments so that the place is never crowded; their own super-light king coconut and hibiscus facial oil; the little morsels of glacé mango they serve with fresh herbal tea in the drawing room that looks onto the stuccoed elegance of the street, before you gather your thoughts and leave, somewhat dazed, zinging-clean and acutely relaxed.

TREATMENT TO BOOK

Ushvani Malay Massage: £180 for 90 mins.

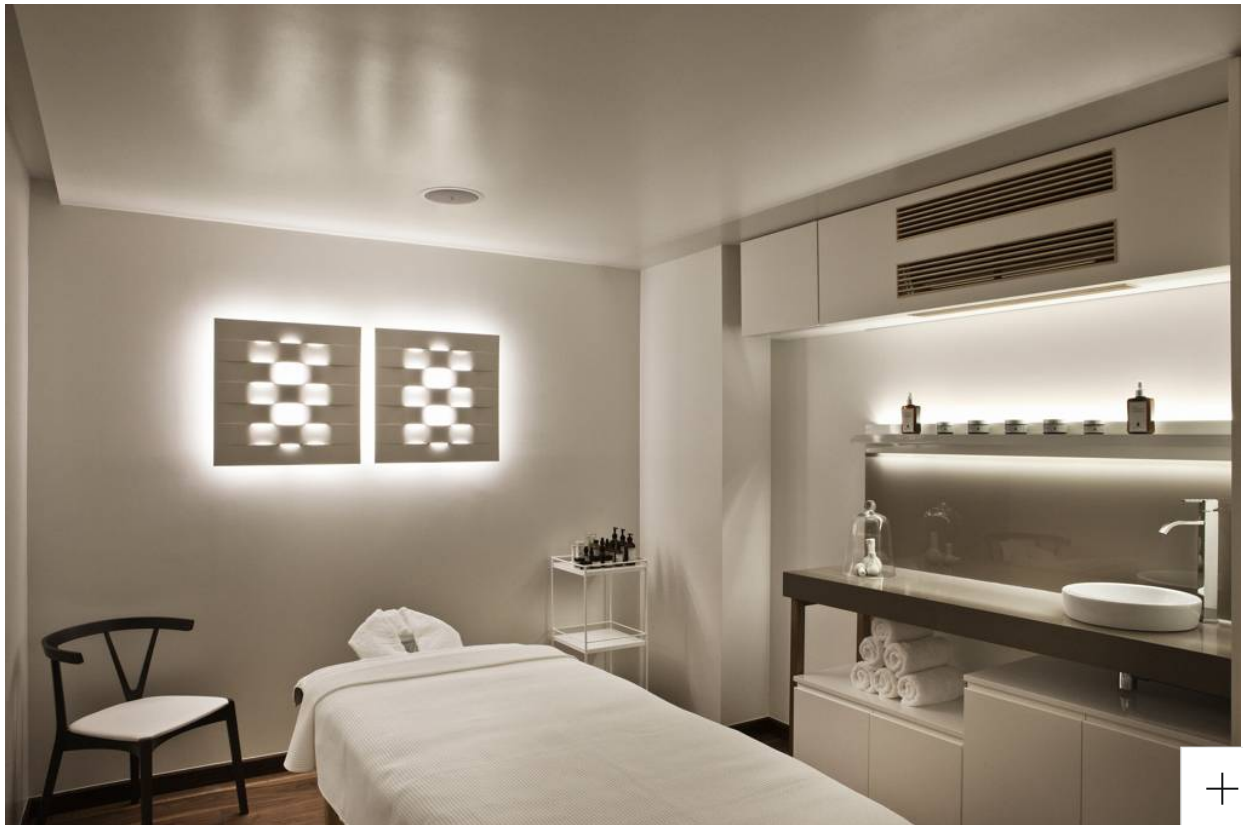
INSIDER TIP

By Antonia Quirke

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COMO SHAMBHALA URBAN ESCAPE AT COMO METROPOLITAN LONDON

BEST SPA IN LONDON FOR: PERTINENT, INTUITIVE TREATMENTS WITH A TOP-OF-THEIR-GAME ROSTER OF THERAPISTS

Small but perfectly formed, the spa here often gets overlooked for bigger players, but this is one of London's best-kept secrets. Not only is the space completely sleek and serene – no

results-driven. Come for the Performance Facial, which combines a deep thorough cleanse with firming, collagen-stimulating topical therapies, and leave with properly glowing bare skin. And those going straight out to a meeting or for dinner can ask the therapist to put on some of Dr Perricone's amazing foundation. There are great salt-and-sugar body scrubs to polish and slough off old skin, and a considered range of Asian-leaning massage treatments, from Japanese Shiatsu and Chinese reflexology to Indian head massage, as well as a powerful and authentic Thai massage. Most noteworthy of all though are the visiting masters. A roll call of some of the most impressive therapists globally, many of which are from other COMO hotels around the world – [COMO Shambhala Estate in Bali](#), COMO Parrot Cay in Turks & Caicos, [COMO Maalifushi in the Maldives](#) – stop in at the COMO Metropolitan London for a week or two's stint. Up next is the extraordinary energy master Per van Spall, who's running a 'Vacation for the Soul' weekend workshop from 6-7 October 2018. Sessions with part-shaman, part-guru Per are gentle, shifting and releasing, as he manipulates your chi, adjusting the energy flow, and opening and moving blockages in a kind of souped-up version of craniosacral therapy. It's tricky to explain, but a game-changing experience. Unmissable.

TREATMENT TO BOOK

One of the in-house experts or the visiting masters, of course. The Per van Spall two-day workshop on 6-7 October costs £475 per person. Per will also be available for private sessions from 1-14 October: each session is priced at £250.

INSIDER TIP

The exercise options are excellent, too – try a session with corrective exercise specialist Lyndon Littlefair to set your fitness back on the right path.

By Issy von Simson

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ESPA LIFE AT CORINTHIA

BEST SPA IN LONDON FOR: COMPLETE ISOLATION

This is one of the largest spas in London. Behind heavy swing doors, four floors of powerfully restorative treatments help to induce a deeper level of relaxation. From the golden crocodile-skin-print walls, to the curving corridors, and the calming fragrance of sweet orange, lavender and palmarosa in the Restorative candle range, everything here encourages tranquility. But beneath the serene design lies a state-of-the-art spa that can deliver as much or as little as you need. Yes, there are facials; cooling ones for irritated skin and anti-ageing ones which lift and firm, plus massages to pummel or to soothe (some are so sleep-inducing it's essential to crawl to the sleep pods afterwards), but ESPA Life also offers a long-term holistic approach to physical and mental health. Diverse disciplines such as Traditional Chinese Medicine and reflexology delve deeper into issues, and the mindful programme uses guided breathing and visualisation techniques to lower stress levels. Plus, of course, there's a gym and full fitness programme at BodySPace, with 24-hour personal trainers and a mini medical diagnostic option. Or simply come to enjoy the thermal floor, a dark cocoon of smooth Italian black marble. Here, stone loungers are warmed and set beside flickering fires, a place to wind down even further after enjoying the steam room or

down in the pin-drop peaceful pool.

TREATMENT TO BOOK

The deeply relaxing Mindful Massage: £195 for 90 mins.

INSIDER TIP

Book into the onsite Daniel Galvin hair salon or Margaret Dabbs London nail studio to get cocktail-bar-ready before you leave.

By Paula Maynard

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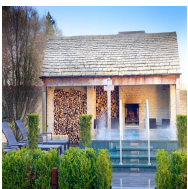
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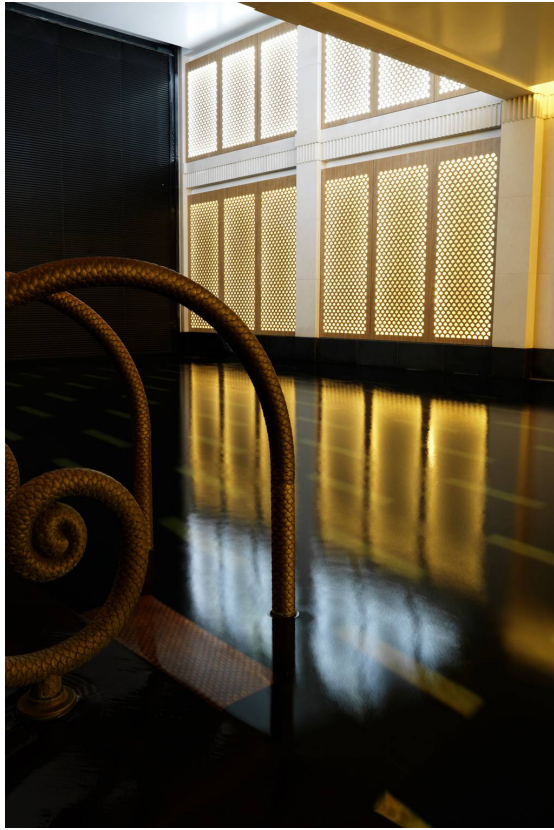
The 5 best spas in the world for 2018

[The best spas in the UK](#)



SPA BREAKS

The 15 most wonderful spas in England





AMAN SPA AT THE CONNAUGHT

BEST SPA IN LONDON FOR: LUNCHTIME LAPS

As you might expect at one of London's more discreet grand hotels, The Connaught's spa is similarly unobtrusive, hidden away in the basement's shiny new wing. As the only Aman spa outside of an Aman resort, it's a pretty good secret to know about. The space is dark and glamorous, but simple – styled with natural woods, marble and slate. A sleek (chlorine-free) pool is the centrepiece, with its black-tiled water-fountain-wall providing the only soundtrack. You might find a magazine stylist doing lengths, or a hotel guest reading on one of a row of smart poolside loungers but, chances are, you'll have the place to yourself. The treatments on offer reflect the global reach of the Aman brand, with a serious range: a Thai herbal compress is recommended for those with deep-seated muscular pain; an Indian signature treatment aims to leave you feeling calm and grounded; and a Chinese-inspired massage uses rejuvenating essential oils on acupuncture points to release stress. For those with just 20 minutes to spare, the spa also offers complimentary meditation classes to help manage stress and anxiety – just book in ahead of time.

TREATMENT TO BOOK

One of the spa's most popular bookings is Inspired By The Americas – a brilliant detox using ancient Navajo techniques. Starting with a red-clay body wrap and ending with a full body massage, the two-and-a-half-hour treatment promotes restorative sleep patterns: £300 for 2hrs 30mins.

INSIDER TIP

Don't forget to bring your swimming costume, as all 90 minute-plus packages include access to the pool and steam rooms.

By Tabitha Joyce

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