

Treatment Trends

Some forms of relaxation are as old as time, but new products, techniques and research help reinvent even the most tried and tested experiences.

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When it comes to trends in wellness treatments and products, we seek those that address our ever-evolving lifestyle needs. Sleep is the new prescription at spas while digital detox is also having a moment. Hamams are being reimagined, hot spring bathing is experiencing a renaissance and even the traditional sauna is going through a transformation. Face Gym is the next wave of beauty, and fitness-focused treatments are on the rise. Of the many new or revamped wellness experiences to explore, these are our top picks.

MUSIC TO YOUR EARS
From group sweat and saunas sessions to live DJs, communal bathing is experiencing a worldwide revival. Peninsula Hot Springs in Mornington, just 90 minutes from Melbourne, has unveiled a bath house amphitheatre where you watch live classical music and theatre as you soak in healing waters. This coincides with the site's expansion of the geothermal bathing space with two massive saunas, and ice cave and cryotherapy treatments.

At the urban AIRE Ancient Baths in New York, the entire ground floor is a dimly lit space of warm salt pools, steam rooms and saunas. Twice-weekly

you are invited to drift and float to live guitar music during their Flamenco Acoustic Concert Experience.

NEXT GEN MASSAGES
Feeling drained from too much digital time? We're seeing an increase in targeted massages devised to counter issues such as spinal and neck problems caused by our body caving inwards from staring down at our devices (saggy neck alert). An example is COMO's signature massage designed to realign the body. Meanwhile, spas at Mandarin Oriental hotels around the world are encouraging guests to ditch the phone into neoprene bags

while enjoying a Digital Wellness Escape that includes a grounding massage designed to counter repetitive movements.

Fitness-focused massages are another emerging trend. Equinox Fitness Clubs in the US offer an entire menu dedicated to improving performance levels. Choose from treatments such as the regeneration massage for recovery and helping sustain your fitness training. In the Maldives, Amilla Fushi and Finolhu resorts both offer the Body Movement Pure Massage, which consists of rocking, intensive stretching and energetic muscle work, to actively



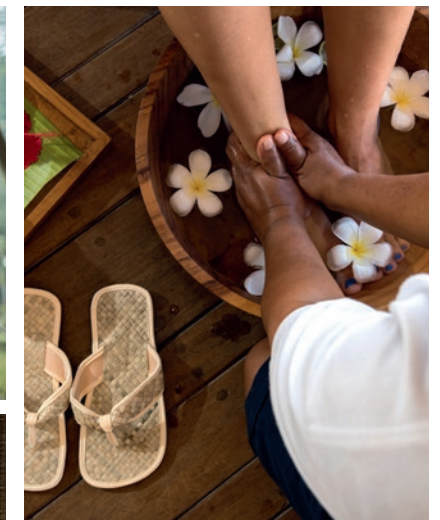
Clockwise from top: Swing yourself to sleep with the Sacred Nap treatment at the Four Seasons Sayan in Bali; the NihiOka spa safari at Nihi Sumba resort is a full-day experience tailored to indulge each of your senses; the Sleep Well Journey at Six Senses Spa in Crete includes meditation before bed.

engage people into stretching more. At Golden Door's Elysia Spa, the signature Watsu treatment combines the therapeutic benefits of shiatsu with warm water, relaxing your spine in ways not possible on land, and creating a deep sense of relaxation.

SLEEP WELL
Imagine the sensation of floating on a silk hammock suspended from the ceiling in an open-air bale overlooking ricefields. This is what you'll experience when you try the Sacred Nap treatment at the Four Seasons Sayan in Bali. As you sway gently, resident wellness mentor, Ibu Fera, recounts the life story of Buddha. The weightlessness feels so relaxing that many guests report it's the best sleep they have had in years!

Australian spa brand Subtle Energies has introduced a Sleep Well Journey at Six Senses Spa in Crete, which is now being rolled out in various incarnations globally, including Australia. Based on clinical research and ancient knowledge, this ritual is devised to remedy sleep issues by recalibrating the body's natural rhythm. Learn yogic breathing and relaxation techniques followed by a sublime marma-point massage and Nasya herbal oil application for calming the brain. The treatment concludes with a warm oil-pouring treatment, Shirodhara, all curated to take you into that desirable state of mind.

Float tanks are making a comeback following their 1980s heyday.

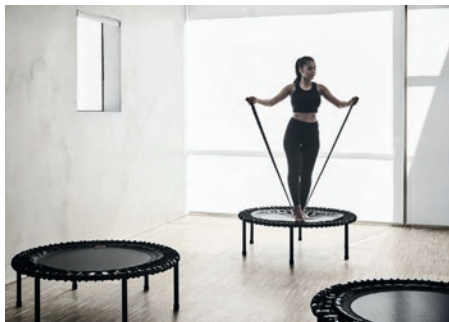
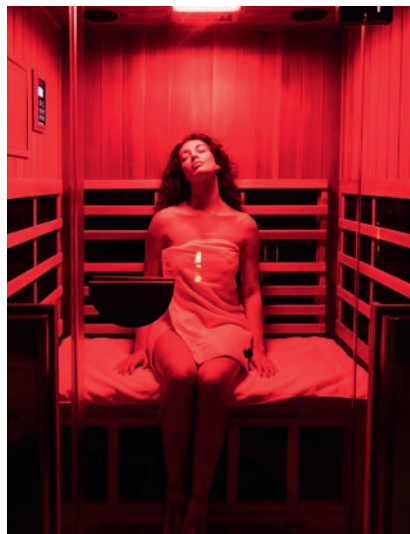


SACRED SILENCE
As we live in a world of round-the-clock connectivity, it makes sense more of us are booking silent retreats and opting for silent days and wifi-free destinations as a way to maintain a healthy mind. The annual Silent Night event, held each December at Mandarin Oriental spas around the world, are dedicated to 'no talking, no music' sessions with a silent therapist to help you unplug and restore. The Hedon Spa & Hotel in Estonia offers an entire silent spa fitted out with steam, sauna and thermal bathing areas.

What's new is a move towards urban silence such as no-noise zones at airports, gyms and even silent eating spaces such as at the Japanese Ichiran restaurant chain that has more than 60 silent restaurants across Japan, Hong Kong and New York. And, at the Blo/Out hair salons in Philadelphia, customers can opt for a 'Zen Silence' station to indicate they don't want to engage in any small talk with their stylist.

DESIGNER SALT PODS
Float tanks are also going through a renaissance. Popular in the 1980s for expanding consciousness, today's revival is more about our need to unplug and decompress. In Melbourne, athletes head to Beyond Rest for sensory deprivation. Gravity Flotation Center is another upscale venue as are Resthouse Float Centre and Sydney Float Centre.

The letting-go sensation of floating in a cocoon of warm salty water is thought to reduce blood pressure and calm the mind. Similarly, salt rooms are increasing in popularity, particularly in urban environments. Thought to help alleviate respiratory issues, these



are likely to continue to rise in popularity given diseases caused by pollution are responsible for an estimated 16 per cent of deaths worldwide.

MAINSTREAM MEDITATION

Any treatment that helps us keep mentally calm is always a good idea, which is why chic meditation studios and pods are booming around the globe. At MNDFL in New York, book your cushion and select from 15-minute self-guided sessions to 30-, 45- and 60-minute slots. Closer to home, Happy Melon in Melbourne makes meditation accessible with their range, from 30-minute power sessions to Mindful Mums classes, and YogaBar, with several locations across Sydney, is known for 25-minute super power CALM meditation sessions.

A IS FOR APOTHECARY

When it comes to the leading names in spa brands, Australian labels Sodashi and Subtle Energies can be experienced in the world's most luxury spas. There's a rise in apothecary and farm-to-beauty products, mostly driven by Millennials who prefer brands with a story to share rather than mass-produced brands. An example is the Simple as That range by Melbourne pharmacist Danielle Glover. It's affordable, organic, fair trade and vegan. Meanwhile, celebrity facialist Marianne de Candia is about

to launch her boutique Mx Skincare line targeting the mature over-50s market.

TRANSFORMATIVE TRAVEL

It's also the era of storytelling and journeys offering us new ways to explore ourselves. One of the best is the full-day NihiOka spa safari at Nihi Sumba resort in Indonesia. Your voyage begins with a morning village walk that leads you to the edge of the island where an off-the-grid spa awaits. Breakfast is cooked on an open-fire, after which you are treated to a full day of free-flow spa treatments. There's no wifi so it's a rare opportunity to truly be in the moment and let go. Closer to home, Gaia Retreat and Spa in the Byron Bay hinterland offers a diverse and extensive menu influenced by ancient health practices from around the world. Their two-hour Inner Serenity Signature Treatment includes a relaxation massage, energy work, smudging and a hot oil scalp massage. Gaia's own product range, Retreatment Certified Organic Skincare, is freshly blended with Australian organic ingredients.

Another next-level vacation experience will soon be launched with Six Senses in Bhutan slated to open later this year. Journey across the resort's five lodges as part of the multi-chapter wellness circuit, all inspired by Bhutan's Gross National Happiness index.

Clockwise from top left: The beautiful Gaia Retreat is set in the Byron Bay hinterland; the striking hamam is a highlight at Miami's Faena Hotel; infrared saunas are increasing in popularity; eat well at Golden Door Elysia in the Hunter Valley; Six Senses Bhutan is set to wow guests when it opens later this year; bounce your way to health at Willow Urban Retreat in Melbourne.

URBAN RENEWAL

Can't get away for a weekend to do a digital detox retreat? Take heart. Urban spas such as the new Willow Urban Retreat in Melbourne offer inspiring alternatives. Willow's retreat programmes are available as half-, full- and three-day treatments. There is also a six-week programme and bespoke options. All comprise wellbeing consultations, mindful and movement classes, ayurvedic treatments, infrared saunas, lifestyle workshops and personalised meal plans – making it much easier to stay well all year round!

SAVING FACE

We need to move our body to stay toned, so why not our face? Face Gym, also known as Face Fitness, is the new results-driven facial of choice based on this premise. Treatments are less about the products and more about the massage that lifts and sculpts the facial muscles. We recommend Herbario in Melbourne for the unique Face Detox that consist of lymphatic

drainage and vigorous facial massage to boost circulation and vitality. In Sydney, Japanese facial master Fumi Yamamoto at Zen Facial is sought after for her tension-releasing facial massage that leaves your skin looking toned and youthful.

SAUNAS & HAMAMS

From communal cocoa rituals led by 'sauna meisters' to floating saunas on lakes and social sauna nights, these popular treatments are being reinvented. The centerpiece at Karma Spa at Karma Kandara in Bali is their cliff-hanging Infrared Detox Sauna that offers 180-degree views over the Indian Ocean. The architectural showstopper at the Tierra Santa Healing House spa at the Faena Hotel Miami is an 84-square-metre hamam cut from Amazonite stone where you self-apply scrubs, clays and butters presented in copper bowls.

Infrared saunas are a positive way to feel and look good with research proving that regular saunas can lower our risk of dementia, improve cardiovascular health and reduce heavy metals in the body. HigherDOSE is a New York-based brand offering serotonin-boosting saunas enhanced with high-vibration music and colour therapy in cool urban hotels spaces.

“Chic meditation studios and pods are booming around the globe.”

The next wave in wellness will be Infrared Sauna Detox Body Wraps and LED Light Therapy Facials that give you an instant detox and glow.

EXTREME & HAPPY FITNESS


Adrenalin junkies will love 'Go Get Lost' adventures where you are dropped into the middle of nowhere and left to fend for yourself. Another emerging field includes programmes that help you train like an athlete and boost brain optimisation. Perth-based SpeedFit offers efficient and effective 20-minute gym sessions said to improve posture, reduce cellulite and sculpt your body. Expect to see more 'brain gyms' opening up, some with personalised programmes based on your DNA and genetic testing.

At the other end of the scale, fitness has never been so fun. Trampoline bounce classes are said to be one of the best exercises for our lymphatic system and are popular in New York and LA. Melbourne's Willow Urban Retreat offers rebounding trampoline classes. In Byron Bay, Australian Ninja Warrior competitor Lisa Parkes has opened the Ninja Play Academy with a schedule of fun functional-fitness, animal flow and ninja movement classes that exercise new muscle groups and are good for the brain.

FOR ACTIVE KIDS

The average person, including kids, spends several hours a day in front of screens and, according to some, our digital addiction will become more challenging to treat than other substances abuse problems. Parents will love the vibe at the Free Range Kids Club at Bali's Hotel Komune, featuring a skate park and flying fox as well as a strict no-screens rule. Says co-founder Tony Cannon: "As a parent, I've never felt comfortable offloading my kids in hotel kids' clubs where they play inside on iPads and PlayStations. At Komune, it's all about an active lifestyle for the entire family."

WELLNESS ON WATER

Wellness cruises is another emerging trend. Belmond has launched Mindfulness Journeys with on-board juice bars, spa treatments and fitness classes while Seven Seas, Seabourn and Virgin Voyages also offer cruises with a wellness focus. Bon Voyage! 

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The wellness industry is constantly evolving. Here are a few more spa trends worth keeping your eyes on: mindfood.com/three-future-spa-trends-you-need-to-know.