



A COMPLETELY STRESS-FREE HOLIDAY AT GREEN VALLEY.

THE *All-Indulgent* VACATION

Incorporate luxurious spaing into your vacation for the ultimate relaxation getaway. BY STACY KENNEDY

Forget about all-you-can-eat buffets and bottomless glasses of daiquiris and rum punch. If you're looking to take the perfect vacation and your main priority is to relax, relax, relax, why not skip the all-inclusive resort this year, and head to a spa instead. Jim Corcoran, owner of Ste. Anne's Country Inn & Spa, a destination spa in Ontario, Canada, says he experienced first hand the benefits of vacationing at a spa. It was during a trip

to Mexico 15 years ago, when he learned how a treatment or two could completely improve your vacation. "When I would go away to the tropics, halfway through the trip I would be bored out of my mind, resisting the relaxation and I'd be ready to come home. But once I added some spa treatments into the mix, I enjoyed myself so much more." According to Keri Printy, spa manager at Green Valley Ranch Spa & Casino in Las Vegas, incorporating spa treat-

ments into your vacation has a great advantage: since you do not have any of the effects of work and everyday stress to get in the way, you are in a different mind-set as far as allowing yourself to get in touch with what the massage and body work is all about.

learning to let go

When the body is fully relaxed, combined with the healthy eating always offered at spas, the body shifts, making it much eas-



BODY TREATMENTS ARE A GREAT INDULGENCE.

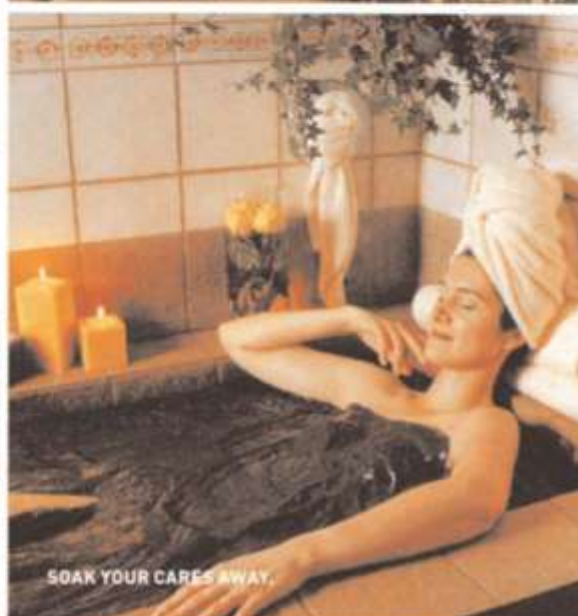


A SPA IN VEGAS TRAVELLING DOESN'T GET MORE FUN THAN THIS!

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A BEAUTIFUL SETTING CERTAINLY DOESN'T HURT.



SOAK YOUR CARES AWAY.

ier for you to read a book, enjoy quality conversation and partake in physical activities. "You're no longer in high-octane mode," explains Corcoran. "You're well into rest and relaxation mode."

If you're like Corcoran and find yourself bored on a tropical getaway, where there isn't much else to do besides alternate from lying on the beach to lounging by the pool, it's possible you're mistaking your boredom for restlessness. "Doing 'nothing' does not feel comforting," says Corcoran. Therefore people use alcohol to try and combat the boredom. Instead of coming home refreshed, they often come home feeling exhausted.

baby steps

For first timers who've never experienced the pampering that comes from some time spent at the spa, it's best to start off slow. Many people get nervous at the idea of a stranger touching them. Corcoran says for the more modest spa guest, it may be best to

start off with a massage. This way, if you know your therapist is a registered professional, it's more like seeing a doctor than anything else. "I recommend first timers ease themselves in with a Swedish massage," explains Corcoran. "Also hand and foot therapies are nice. For the more adventurous there's mud baths, wraps and Vichy showers." (Vichy shower is a stimulating shower treatment from several overhead water jets of varying pressures and temperature.)

Corcoran says, ideally, a guest should have at least one treatment a day. The purpose of treatments is to release the body of toxins. But too many treatments will have the opposite affect. According to spa director and registered massage therapist Christine Pearson, "Having too many treatments over the course of your stay can have a negative impact on your detoxification program. First, you have the Herxheimer reaction, which occurs when the body is detoxifying too rapidly

and toxins are being released faster than the body can eliminate them. The other is dehydration. When we lack water in our diet, we lower our ability to combat the free radicals and pathogens that create a toxic environment within us." Pearson adds signs the body is detoxing too rapidly include headaches, nausea and vomiting. Corcoran believes two to three treatments a day is appropriate.

the atmosphere

Corcoran says it's not only the treatments that provide an amazing experience, but the spa's environment is a big contributor as well. "Ste. Anne's is very unpretentious, and people feel welcome instantly. We greet them warmly and get them into the facilities right away – sauna, spa, hot tub." Also, at Ste. Anne's, guests are encouraged to immediately put on their complimentary robes. This way, the relaxing process begins right away, and you lose the stress of fussing with your appearance.