

WELLNESS

Ticket to a new you

Relax, revive, get ready to face 2016 at destination spas



Art Meripol

Big Cedar Lodge's Cedar Creek Spa near Branson, Mo., invites relaxation at its candle-lined grotto pool, which is warmed and features jet massages.



Edward C. Robison III

The recently opened showcase spa at Big Cedar Lodge blends modernity with rustic Ozark comforts and includes private suites for groups.

By JUNE NAYLOR
Special Contributor

New Year's resolutions focus less on the severe crash diet, fortunately, but rather more on creating good health habits. And there's hardly a more enjoyable place to find new practices than at a spa. The number of hotels and resorts equipped with superb spas grows each year, meaning your options for travel that restores and renews have never been greater. Herewith, a handful of our country's newer destination spas.

Cedar Creek Spa at Big Cedar Lodge

Ridgedale, Mo. 417-335-2777 or 1-800-725-6343. bigcedar.com/spa. Lodging from \$149; spa treatments start at \$100; spa packages from \$185.

The popular longtime resort near Branson in the Ozarks recently opened a showplace of a spa. Designed by Dallas-based HKS Hospitality Group, the 18,000-square-foot spa is notable for a clever blend of modernity and rustic mountain retreat. Each of 11 treatment rooms has its own cozy fireplace; both men's and women's lounges provide creek views, fireplaces, sauna and steam rooms and hot tubs for soaking; there are outdoor, open-air showers; an indoor-outdoor suite begs for girlfriend getaways and bachelorette parties; and there's a full-service salon on-site.

Get melty: The 90-minute package combining a Swedish massage with cocoa butter body wrap (\$195) guarantees relaxation and soft skin.

Hot and cold therapy: Maximum energizing comes from alternating time in the chilling Ice Room with plunges in the candlelit grotto's hot pool equipped with jet massages.

Prime stay: The new Spa Cottage sits alongside a stream, connecting to the spa via a pretty little bridge. You can hear the creek trickling outside and see it through the bathroom floor's glass inset. The king bed, oversized luxury bathtub and living room with fireplace and wet bar make this a romantic stay. Call for rates.

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Photos by Darren Edwards

The Ocean Crest Spa north of San Diego sits inside Hilton's Cape Rey Carlsbad Resort, the only Pacific-access resort between Del Mar and Oceanside.

Ocean Crest Spa

Cape Rey Carlsbad Resort by Hilton, Carlsbad, Calif. 202-926-8333, oceancrestspa.com. Lodging from \$79. Spa treatments start at \$120, treatment packages from \$270.

At the new Cape Rey resort facing South Carlsbad State Beach and the notorious Ponto surf break just north of San Diego, a small but lovely spa provides the requisite respite from hiking, kayaking, stand-up paddle boarding, body surfing and other beach fun, to say nothing of a day of frolic at nearby Legoland. Tucked within the only beach resort between Del Mar and Oceanside, this retreat offers a quiet patio for relaxation in the company of ocean sounds before and after treatment. A contemporary design finds plentiful use of teak, bronze, stone, amber and glass. A focus on plant-based products is aimed to provide the best results from skin and body treatments.

Book two: Deciding is too hard, so make a pair of bookings to enjoy first the deep-tissue massage that integrates aromatherapy to get rid of muscle tension and bring in energy; then indulge another day receiving the Thai massage that works on stretching and muscle work through pressure points (\$130 each).

Best package: The Sea Melody combines a 25-minute soothing body scrub with a 50-minute massage and a 50-minute facial, followed by a spa lunch, for \$355.

For couples: The Sound Therapy Massage combines sound vibration therapy and deep relaxation massage in a candlelit room with adjacent treatment tables (\$280-\$380).



There's a lot to do in Southern California, but if you want to chill and get away from everything, an afternoon at Ocean Crest Spa's pool might be the ticket.

Recharge in style at upscale spa resorts

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Julian McRoberts

At Sunrise Springs, guests can choose from a variety of activities, including musically accompanied yoga, walking, meditation and gardening.

Sunrise Springs Integrative Wellness Resort

Santa Fe, N.M. 505-780-8144, sunrise-springs.com. Packages start at \$275 for two nights and extend to \$705 for nine nights.

Officially known as an Integrative Therapeutic Spa, the new 70-acre retreat in Santa Fe sits in the high desert among cottonwoods with views of spring-fed ponds. Sister resort to the popular Ojo Caliente Mineral Springs Resort & Spa closer to Taos, Sunrise Springs blends Eastern and Western therapies with American Indian philosophies and practices, all meant to help find balance in spiritual, emotional and physical well-being. Spa services range from healing ayurveda massage and reflexology to deep tissue and facial treatments.

Avenues to wellness: The wellness concierge and other experts guide guests through options that include yoga and walking, meditation for mindfulness, American Indian rituals, culinary and therapeutic gardening, art studio sessions and more.

Culinary revelations: Chef Paul Novak, formerly chef de cuisine at Geronimo in Santa Fe, focuses on food that heals, and he works with locally sourced seasonal ingredients. The chef and his team teach culinary theories and practices, as well.



Sunrise Springs Integrative Wellness Resort

Guests stay in modern casitas at the 70-acre Sunrise Springs resort in Santa Fe.

Breakfast and lunch in the Sages Cafe take in a setting that includes a koi pond; dinner at the Blue Heron Restaurant features dishes such as grilled polenta and wild mushroom and roasted squash with three-onion soup.

Relax in comfort: Each casita has its own private courtyard, king bed and gas fireplace. Guest rooms in two lodge buildings offer balconies and queen beds. All have coffee and tea service in the rooms.

The Spa at Sun Valley

Sun Valley Resort, Sun Valley, Idaho. 208-622-2610, sunvalley.com/the-spa. Lodging \$329-\$549. Treatments start at about \$120; spa packages \$165 and up.

The venerable resort in northern Idaho's Wood River Valley has long been a playground for skiing in winter and hiking in summer. New to the resort, the Spa at Sun Valley is a 20,000-square-foot addition with 15 treatment rooms, a lengthy menu of treatments and a fabulous fitness center. There's also a full beauty salon, yoga studio and heated saline pool. Design elements of note include paneling made of African hardwood, as well as granite floors throughout. There's a new poolside deck and poolside cafe.

For great skin: Pick a green-tea herbal wrap or detox clay wrap to pull away toxins and boost the immune system (\$120) or have the signature facial with exfoliation and booster serum to make your face radiant (\$130-\$185).

Romantic choice: Book a couples' massage for 50 or 80 minutes, choosing aromatherapy oils to energize or relax, scalp treatment, muscle-soothing creams or reflexology add-ons. Follow with a relaxation bath for two, \$280-\$380, plus \$25-\$65 for additional options.

Don't miss: The acupuncture option can address issues from aches and pains to sleeplessness (\$140-\$190).



Photos by Kevin Syms

The Spa at Sun Valley is a recent addition to Idaho's venerable Sun Valley Resort



On the menu at the Spa at Sun Valley are couples' massages in sumptuous surroundings.

La'aKea Spa Hawaii

Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort, Honolulu, Hawaii. 808-926-2682 or 866-926-2682, lokeaspa@hawaii.com. Lodging from \$245; spa treatments start at \$65 and spa packages start at \$340.

A landmark property on Honolulu's famous beachfront just opened its new spa on the second floor of the resort's Diamond Head wing. The spirit of aloha flows through the menu of body and skin treatments, many employing products made from Hawaiian ingredients. Find also a full complement of salon services to include waxing, manicures and pedicures and haircare with Aveda products.

Pure island magic: The Lomi Lomi massage is touted as a holistic Hawaiian healing treatment that incorporates rhythmic motion to ease away jet lag and welcome bliss, \$65-\$195.

The Spa Journey: A dreamy three hours is spent in a massage that blends various techniques, followed by an aromatherapy facial, pedicure and make-up touch-up for \$340.

First one's free: The yoga and Pilates sessions offer choices in restorative, strengthening and sculpting work. Best of all, the first class is free, and mats are provided.



Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort

The new La'aKea Spa at the Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort offers a menu of treatments and activities, including yoga and Pilates classes in a Zen-inspired room.