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Dominic Lawson

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From Times Online

April 16, 2008

Hotel Adlon Kempinski Berlin

Massage vows and spiritual bodywork at this landmark German hotel's day spa



Rachael Scott

RECOMMEND? (1)

USP The Adlon day spa offers a mean Lomi Lomi massage. It's so good they named it twice.

AMBIENCE Since it opened in 1907 the Adlon has been home to royalty, statesman and celebs. A tourist attraction in itself Greta Garbo uttered the immortal lines "I want to be alone" [at the Adlon].

Situated next to the Brandenburg Gate and a few steps away from the Reichstag, the Adlon burned to the ground shortly after the Second World War. It was rebuilt in 1997 when it re-opened as part of the Kempinski chain of hotels.

The spa mixes a few tricks with clever design. A cinnamon scented aroma hits you the minute you step out of the lift into the spa. I waited on sofas that appeared to be covered in crushed beige velvet surrounded by enormous Balinese necklaces sitting in various corners that looked too heavy to pick up let alone wear.



10 classic lifestyle holidays

We've sifted through our archive to dig out the most spiritually uplifting breaks to help you feel good

The Good Spa Guide: Budget

BACKGROUND

- Top 5 exotic detox retreats
- Top 5 serene retreats
- Top 5 adventure retreats
- Top 10 breaks to get you out of a rut
- 10 classic lifestyle holidays



After a 3-hour walking tour of Berlin – the only way to see this fascinating city if you're time poor – I was more than ready for my massage.

EXPERIENCE I was due to have Lomi Lomi Nui, an ancient massage that my therapist, Antje, insisted was a holy ritual used as a healing tool by Hawaiian shamans. Antje would summon past and future shamans by saying a prayer for me before she started, and I should make a wish. Because the body and soul is combined I might start crying afterwards, I was warned.

Lomi Lomi Nui means "massage from the centre of being". Being an agnostic in matters of spiritual bodywork I was open to suggestion, but more than a little sceptical.

Jojoba oil was poured onto the

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Times Online

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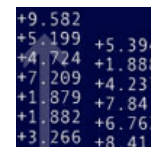
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Liquid bliss in Germany
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Baden-Baden, Germany
Kempinski Grand Hotel
Spa Helligendamm
Spas: Deutsche detoxing

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I managed.

Skinceuticals is an American line geared towards anti-ageing. Annina examined my skin, cleansed, toned, moisturised, and extracted and tidied up my eyebrows. A refreshing mask was left on my face for 15 minutes while Annina gave me a hand massage. The Beauty Flash is a relaxing but standard facial.

A spot popped up on my nose an hour later. Maybe my skin didn't take to Skinceuticals products or perhaps it was a demon escaping from my past.

FOOD The spa bar located by the pool area serves 12 different types of water, poached pike, lobster sandwiches and various salads, including a tofu one.

Anything you might desire for breakfast is on offer. Choose from traditional cooked, smoked salmon, pastries, fruits, cereals with optional organic soy milk and exotic juices. Champagne and strawberries is also included.

IN-CROWD Time magazine voted the Kempinski Adlon the hotel of the century. It's most definitely the hotel of choice for any self-respecting celebrity or politician visiting Berlin. The President of Yemen was staying when I was there and Catherine Deneuve and Penelope Cruz graced the historical site during the recent Berlin Film Festival.

WALLET WATCH Lomi Lomi Nui costs £140 for 90 minutes. A Skinceuticals Beauty Flash Facial costs £140 for 90 minutes. A Superior Deluxe Room costs £420. There are special rooms for people with allergies.

"Time to Spa" includes: two nights bed and breakfast, a 90-minute treatment of your choice, an Adlon bathrobe and slippers to take home and a "vital" surprise in your room. Price per person in a double room from £445 per night.

Lufthansa return flights from London City Airport to Berlin-Tegel start from £85. For reservations visit www.lufthansa.com. For personal guided tours contact Sabine Müller at www.visitberlin.net. A three-hour guided tour costs £135.

NEED TO KNOW Hotel Adlon Kempinski Berlin, Unter den Linden 77, 10117 Berlin, Germany (+49 (0)30 22610; www.hotel-adlon.de)

For more than 260 independent spa reviews click here: timesonline.co.uk/goodspaguide

massage bed before I lay down and I told Antje that I didn't want any in my hair so she would have to forego the head massage part.

After 30 minutes of Antje doing what felt like the massaging equivalent of trance dancing all over my body, her slender arms cradling, caressing and sweeping across the full length of my back (minus my head) with long wave-like strokes, I was begging her to mess up my barnet.

I think I was asleep the last time I felt this relaxed. The Lomi Lomi is simply wonderful. Antje doesn't really know how it works, but says the combination of strokes, music and a dedicated therapist who believes in its power is key.

Then Annina arrived to give me a Skinceuticals Beauty Flash Facial. More? I wasn't sure I could cope with so much luxury, but of course



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Dr Mark Porter

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