

Destination: Spa

Written by Written by Melissa Larsen

What's better than hopping in the car or aboard a plane for a short trip and ending up in paradise? Here's a look at five spa destinations in the Southwest where massages aren't simply ahh-inducing rubdowns but Spirit Flights and sage salt and red-earth clay are just as important as nail polish during a pedicure.



Aman Spa at Amangiri

Located at the Four Corners—where Utah, Colorado, New Mexico and Arizona all meet—there is a 600-acre desert escape: Amangiri. Not only is Amangiri home to deluxe accommodations and a plush pavilion complete with a gallery and library, but within the resort resides Aman Spa. Among the standout features at Aman Spa are the water pavilion and its spa journeys that are designed to help spa goers achieve the utmost in relaxation, reconnect with the environment and become more aware of their bodies. At the stone-lined step pool in the Water Pavilion, guests are swept away in hydrotherapy treatments. The aforementioned spa journeys (there are four to choose from) are designed around sacred elements, reflecting Navajo healing traditions and holistic techniques. The morning treatment, or the Dawn Journey, energizes the guest and commences with a Himalayan crystal salt body scrub, followed by a full-body massage. Lastly, the acupressure facial massage helps to increase focus and energize the mind.



Miraval Resort & Spa

We're pretty confident that Oprah has been pampered at some of the world's top spas. However, it is Arizona's very own Miraval, located in Tucson, that tops her list of favorite spas. Nestled at the foot of the Santa Catalina Mountains in the southern part of the state, the award-winning spa offers its guests rest and relaxation in a gorgeous desert oasis (which is best enjoyed via Miraval's alfresco treatment rooms, each designed by notable designer, Clodagh). As an all-inclusive destination spa, treatments—or Chill Out services, as they are referred to at Miraval—aren't the only draw. Healthful, locally sourced fare; luxe accommodations; and activities that are designed to boost one's heart rate and sense of well-being are all on the agenda. When it does come time to let your hair down and turn your senses up, the transcending Spirit Flight is among the spa's signature Chill Out services. During the Spirit Flight, which is designed to renew the body's energy and balance, guests are indulged in a massage, acupuncture, craniosacral therapy and spinal alignment as well as the healthy practices of spiritual shamanism and drumming.



Cal-a-Vie Health Spa

For more than 20 years, Cal-a-Vie, a French Provencal spa, has brought the essence of Europe to Vista, Calif. Cal-a-Vie visitors are invited to take part in three-, four- and seven-night packages that provide services intended to aid in overall health, wellness and utter relaxation. (The packages feature gourmet spa cuisine, fitness classes, beauty and spa treatments, mind-body awareness programs and health and nutrition lectures.) Cal-a-Vie's European Plan is a relaxation seeker's ultimate fantasy, featuring seven days of sheer sumptuousness. In addition to 16 spa treatments—that range from thalassotherapy to a hot-stone massage to hair and scalp treatments—guests are invited to take part in a cooking demo, a make-up application, a fitness evaluation, a nutritional lecture and more. What's more, after a day that does a body good, Cal-a-Vie visitors get to spend their nights drifting away in their own private villa, complete with a sundeck or balcony, gorgeous antique furnishings and—perhaps most important—a king-size bed outfitted with Frette linens.

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The Spa at Wynn Las Vegas

The Spa at Wynn Las Vegas does more than just ease sore dice-shaking arms and proves that a spa doesn't have to be in some far-off place to be fabulous. As one of the first two spas to receive a Five Diamond Award in Sin City (the other award went to the Wynn's sister property, Encore), The Spa at Wynn Las Vegas provides a blissful respite among the city's hustle and bustle. The spa is decked with natural-inspired décor (think plenty of stonework and fauna) as well as soothing water elements that create a sense of peace and relaxation before guests even step one slippered foot into a treatment room. Once they do, spa goers indulge in such services as the Good Luck Ritual. The service is based upon the five elements of Feng Shui—health, wealth, prosperity, happiness and harmony—and includes a massage with heated Thai herbs, a lemon verbena-and-peppermint foot treatment, a moisturizing hand therapy and a wild lime botanical scalp treatment. And the pampering doesn't stop there as guests are then invited to take a dip in the cold or hot plunge pools or whirlpool and spend some blissful moments in the sauna or steam room.



Sagestone Spa & Salon at Red Mountain Resort

Those who seek a little outdoor adventure alongside their spa day endeavors have found the perfect balance at Sagestone Spa & Salon at Red Mountain Resort amid the terra cotta-toned rocks of St. George, Utah. In addition to stellar spa services, guests are offered more than 50 fitness classes to choose from, National Park excursions, kayaking, canyoneering and even the opportunity to enjoy hikes with dogs from a nearby animal shelter. When it's time to let the pampering take place, the resort's Sagestone Spa & Salon offers a variety of indigenous treatments, like the Bee Perfect Body Wrap (a combination of whipped honey and a fine sea salt scrub topped off with a honey-based glaze to seal in moisture and replenish color). Treatments such as these offer a sense of place as they highlight native ingredients, including desert botanicals, mineral-rich muds, clays and salts.

TO LEARN MORE

Amangiri 435.675.3999, www.amanresorts.com.

Cal-a-Vie Health Spa 760.945.2055, www.cal-a-vie.com.

Miraval Resort & Spa 800.232.3969, www.miravalresorts.com.

Red Mountain Resort 877.246.4453, www.redmountainresort.com.

Wynn Las Vegas 702.770.7000, www.wynnlasvegas.com.