



Some women indulge their hearts' desires by traveling to the world's capitals for the latest designer wardrobes, shoes, and bags. Global explorer **CECILY MABASA**, founder of Sea to Summit Explorations ([seatosummitadv.net](http://seatosummitadv.net)), revels in the discovery of the unique and lavish **SPA TREATMENTS**. The adventure specialist, who customizes tours to suit her clients' dream trips, has circled the globe in search of the most exquisite pampering sanctuaries. Here are some of her choice picks.

# GLOBAL SPA



The Mandarin Oriental Dheva Spa in  
Thailand. Opposite page: Patagonia.

# SAFARI



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## DREAM DESTINATION EXPLORA PATAGONIA-HOTEL SALTO CHICO in Torres del Paine, Patagonia, Chile

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More of a luxury adventure lodge than a destination spa, Explora Patagonia rests in the heart of Torres del Paine National Park. It is surrounded by views of Lago Pehoe, a picturesque camping area brimmed with turquoise waters, and Macizo del Paine with its magnificent granite towers.

**PERSONAL TOUCH** Guests can bask in the beauty of Patagonia nature by going on different hiking excursions and horseback rides. With the breathtaking landscape, even the non-adventurous will want to try at least one of the many activities available to guests.

After a long day of exploring nearby sites, the lure of Explora Patagonia's

outdoor hydromassage pools will be irresistible. It is one of the most effective methods to ease sore muscles – soaking in the heated tubs as the temperature around you dips to zero degrees with the finest view of nature will make it a truly unique and memorable experience.

**COST** Massages from US\$100, rooms from \$ 2,780+ for 4 nights/person, inclusive of transfers, full board, daily explorations

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## DREAM DESTINATION MANDARIN ORIENTAL DHEVA SPA in Chiang Mai, Thailand

No need to travel halfway around the world to find the best. Some of the most excellent massage technicians and unique treatments can be found in Thailand and undoubtedly, the Dheva Spa has the finest this country can offer.

**PERSONAL TOUCH** The spa's Lanna Signature Ceremony is a therapeutic experience unlike any other. After the foot bath ritual and a fragrant steam bath, I was led to a villa worthy of royalty—imagine the king of Siam's room in the film *The King and I* and you'll get an idea of how opulent the place is. Yet more than the air of luxury in the room, it is the entire experience that makes it truly exceptional. A body scrub enriched with northern Thai herbs mixed with tamarind was lathered all over the body, leaving my skin with a healthy and nourished glow afterwards. The

main event is the traditional Thai Tok Sen massage, where a special wooden stick, made from the bark of the tamarind tree, is used to tap rhythmically on my body. While it may sound painful, it actually is the opposite. Following that is an invigorating herbal oil massage, using specially prepared warm compresses called Luk Pra kob. The finishing touches, a heavenly scalp massage and a cup of freshly-brewed ginger tea, cap off the royal treatment.

**COST** Lanna Ceremony from THB 5,000.

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## DREAM DESTINATION THE AMANKORA SPA in Amankora Punakha and Amankora Paro, Bhutan

The Amankora Spas delve deep into the roots of its location, with its usage of organic Bhutanese plants and herbs. The aroma of cedarwood, traditionally used in Bhutan as a medical remedy and a circulatory stimulant, lingers in the private spas.

**PERSONAL TOUCH** At the Amankora Paro Spa, I immersed in the traditional hot stone steam bath, filled with indigenous herbs. After a long day walking up to the sacred Tiger's Nest, this steaming bath soothed my tired muscles. Feeling rejuvenated, I tried the Amankora Therapy—the long, rhythmic strokes and aromatherapy blend lulled me into a deep sleep. I also tried the Reiki therapy available at the Amankora Punakha. Emphasizing a more spiritual healing path, the Punakha Spa relies not just on Bhutanese therapy but also the *chakra* system of India. The Reiki guru used light, gentle strokes, unlike most of the massage techniques I've tried. It left a very calming and soothing effect on my nerves.

**COST** Massages from US\$ 130 ++, Suites start at US\$ 1,400 ++ / night, full board, beverages, laundry, airport transfers included

Paro Thimphu, Punakha, Gargtey, Bumthang, Bhutan; +975.8.272.333; [amanresorts.com/amankora](http://amanresorts.com/amankora)





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### DREAM DESTINATION CEMBERLITAS BATH in Istanbul, Turkey

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Located at the prime spot in Çemberlitas Square on Divanyolu Street, the Çemberlitas Bath is an iconic landmark as it is the oldest **hammam** in Turkey's capital. The very essence of an authentic and traditional Turkish bath is what makes Çemberlitas one-of-a-kind. Privacy should not be expected as it is an open type of bath but it has separate areas for men and women.

**PERSONAL TOUCH** At the entrance to the bath, you will be asked to select and pay for one of the bathing options and will be given tokens and directions. Wrapped in a **pestemal** (a traditional cotton body wrap), I headed to the main bath area where dozens of unclothed women are, as it was the busiest time of the year for the historical Turkish bath. The area includes **göbek taşı** (a marble platform at the center), surrounded by **kurna**, or bathing basins, and **halvet**, which are private bathing cubicles. I lay down on the **göbek taşı** while an attendant treated me to a body scrub that exfoliated my skin, which cleaned out my pores. After the scrub, the attendant led me into a **halvet** to wash off. The heat of the place also helped in detoxifying my body. I finished with foot reflexology—a much-needed treatment to relieve my exhausted soles.

**COST** Hammam from US\$ 40, massages from US\$ 25

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## DREAM DESTINATION THE LIME SPA in Huvafen Fushi Resort in the Maldives

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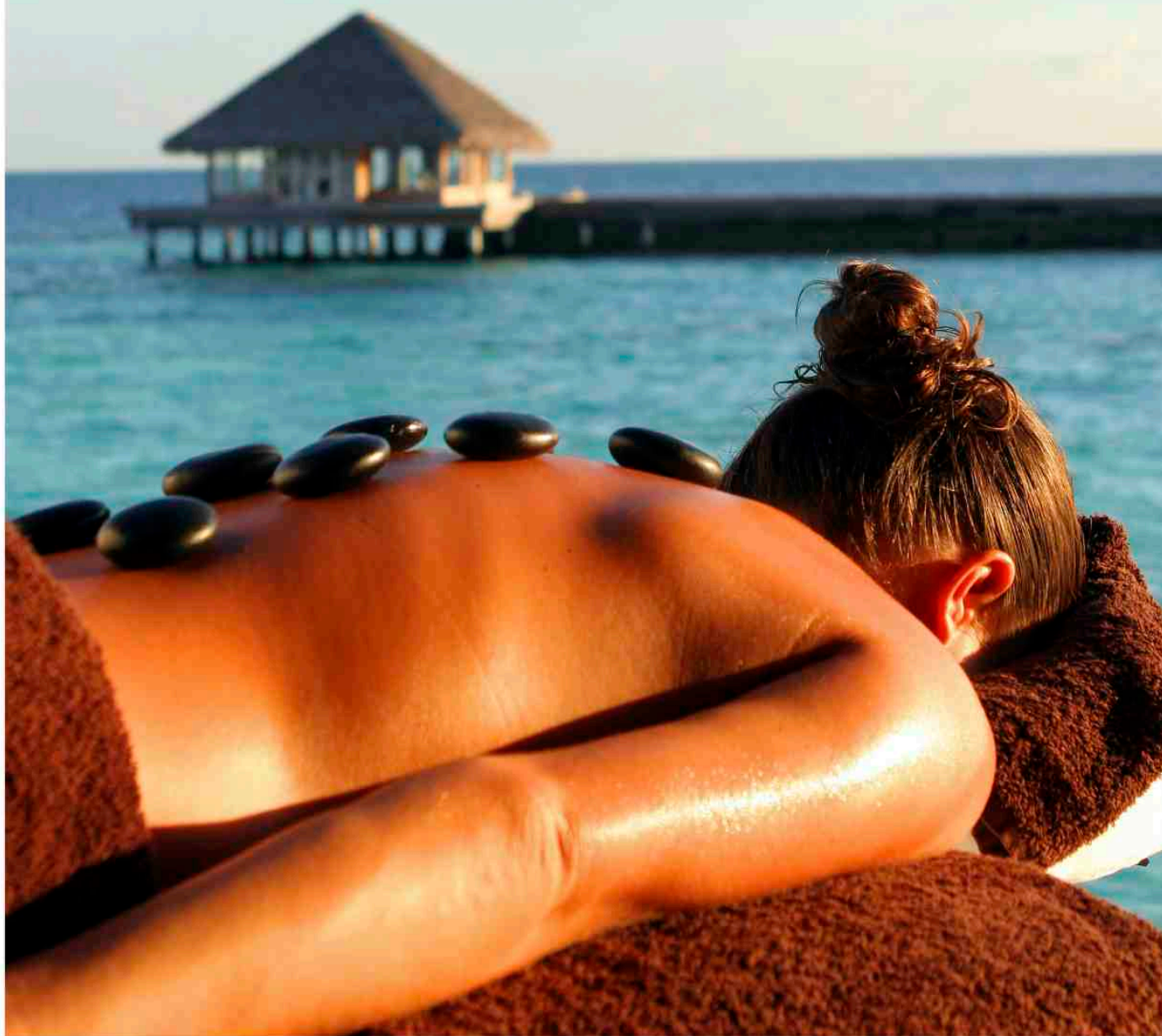
The Huvafen Fushi Resort & Spa is situated in a private lagoon, surrounded by the sparkling azure waters that the Maldives is known for. Taking advantage of the wonderful sights of sea and shore, the resort delivers an impeccably luxurious experience. Its resident spa, an underwater architectural masterpiece, is the first of its kind, designed by the innovative Richard Hywel Evans.

**PERSONAL TOUCH** There is an immediate relaxing vibe once you step inside the Lime Spa. The serenity of the marine world, visible through the glass walls, pairs superbly with the unique choices in the spa menu. For my Underwater Ritual, I chose the Marine Wave, a personalized

massage experience for body and scalp. The soothing movements of the therapist's hands revitalized the sore and tense muscles of my body. After the treatment, I got to revel in a very exclusive and private personal time with cocktails and island fruits while observing the astonishing aquatic life of the Maldives.

**COST** Underwater Rituals start at US\$230 ++, Ultra modern Lagoon Water Villas from US\$ 1,500 ++/ night

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## DREAM DESTINATION THE AMANJENA SPA in Marrakech, Morocco

As the first Aman resort on the African continent, the Amanjena boasts a serene yet majestic setting. The allure of the ancient city of Marrakech adds vigor to the resort. The hammam, or Turkish bath, is an essential part of the Amanjena Spa. There are two hammams, separating men and women, equipped with a dressing area, showers and washrooms, including a whirlpool in a private courtyard.

**PERSONAL TOUCH** For anyone who has ever fantasized of having a hip tattoo à la Angelina Jolie, this is the place to make it happen. Seeing it being offered in the Amanjena Spa Menu in a painless non-permanent art form, this was undoubtedly what I was going to indulge in. In the privacy of my villa's pool lounge, I lay face down while the tattoo artist started painting an intricate lace pattern. The tattoo design started from the back of my neck down my spine and all the way to my lower back, giving the term exotic a whole different meaning. Once done, I wanted to go a step further and had her bedazzle my tattoo with glitter.

**COST** Tattoos from US\$ 70 ++, Pavilions from US\$1,050 ++ / night, Maison from US\$ 2,650 ++ / night

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