

Magazine > Experience A Treatment Journey At The Coach House Spa

EXPERIENCE A TREATMENT JOURNEY AT THE COACH HOUSE SPA

By Caroline Phillips

The English countryside, a glass architect and a massage. What do they have in common? This is what I discover when I have a treatment in the Coach House Spa, at Beaverbrook, the luxury country estate hotel near Leatherhead, England. The Coach House was previously used for the Bentleys of the then-owner of the property, the late press baron and politician, Lord Beaverbrook. There's little to remind of that time, given the spa's water-blue, fern-green and poppy-red tiles and golden-leaves-on-sky stained glass skylights by Brian Clarke, creator of the world's most monumental stained glass works. A scheme by the glass architect that evokes English country fields and water or looks like a psychedelic trip on the Underground, depending on your point of view.



Spa membership is by invitation only. It's rumoured (in whispers) to cost around a quarter of a million pounds, for this life and the next. Or there are a limited number of weekday memberships. It's also open to day guests (from £240 per day) and hotel residents.

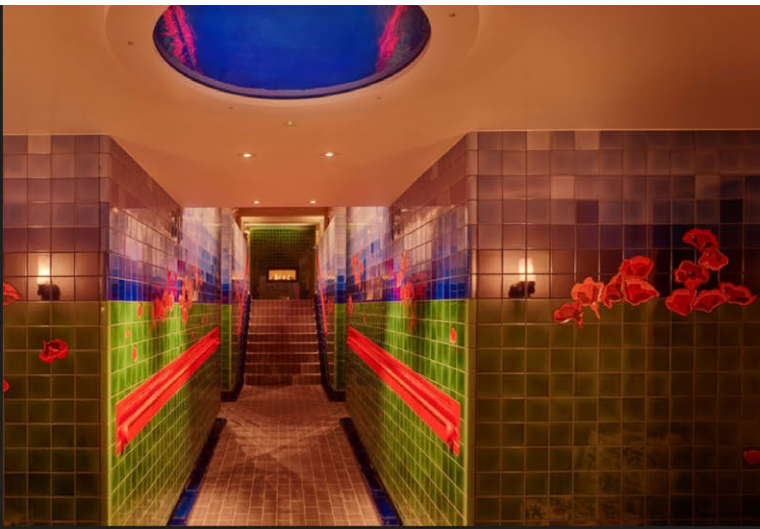
There are six treatment suites, a sauna, nail lounge and indoor and al fresco swimming pools. And a gym stocked with Technogym Artis cardio machines and free weights. Plus The English Bathhouse — a version of a hammam — that's clean and white, like a futuristic space ship or pod. The original coach house has morphed into a studio, with fitness, yoga, meditation and Pilates offered in rotation.

VIDEOS



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Then there's the Boutique and Apothecary, a place I'd be happy to spend hours in sniffing and purchasing healing lotions and potions. It reflects the spa's ethos of keeping it simple and holistic. It sells Coach House oils — made in consultation with Beaverbrook's head gardener and created from medicinal plants, flowers and fruits from the estate — that are used in the spa treatments. Additionally there are unusual artisanal products, such as Lola's Apothecary bath salts from Devon and Amanda Serin's (of A.S Apothecary) herbal alchemy, plus seaweed-fibre exercise gear and natural sponges.

As for the spa menu, there are exfoliating body treatments to honey-filled facials on offer. Plus therapists trained in everything from Swedish, Thai, Remedial, Shiatsu, Lymphatic Drainage and Biodynamic Bodywork, ready to offer bespoke massages. My therapist, Carrie (as in Caroline) offers me an Epsom Salts footbath, washing my feet with green tea soap. Then, with expert hands, she gives me a massage that combines myofascial release, energy work, acupressure and Swedish strokes.



She's instinctive, and doesn't work generically: the massage truly is tailored. It's also relaxing, healing and, best of all — erstwhile ballerina that Carrie is — she enlightens me with (what proves to be) a spot-on tip about my feet (missed both by my doctor and a reflexologist) and the adverse impact my specific problem is having on my posture and musculature.

After my pampering, my BF appears, bleary and happy, declaring her massage excellent. Then we nip to the spa's eaterie, The Deli — a place of Kilner jars, cold pressed juices, Ottolenghi-style salads and banana bread. We eat our wood-fired, stone oven baked flatbread 'sandwiches' in the sunny courtyard, my shoulders unhunched and my knotted back released. What's not to like?

FURTHER INFORMATION

Spa Day packages at Beaverbrook start from £240 per person – [click here](#) for further details. To read Caroline's full review of Beaverbrook, [click here](#).

Caroline Phillips is an award-winning freelance journalist who contributes to publications from Sunday and daily newspapers to glossy magazines and various luxury websites. To see more of her work, go to www.carolinephillips.net.

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