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Special feature: Pacific Spa Treatments



These days there's nothing hick town about the spa treatments available in the Pacific. In fact, your Pacific holiday could be the ideal time to catch up on some much needed pampering. Experts are increasingly extolling the health benefits of those things we might have thought of as frivolous treats (not that there's anything bad about treating yourself on holiday!) So all the more reason to get that massage, sit in a mineral pool, or have a luscious body wrap: it's all good, for mind, body and soul!

Around the Pacific, savvy operators offer a wide range of treatments and all the best of modern techniques, training and equipment, combined with traditions and materials unique to the Southern hemisphere. You'll find friendly people, idyllic outlooks, secluded spots, and some extra special touches drawn from Pacific geography and flora.

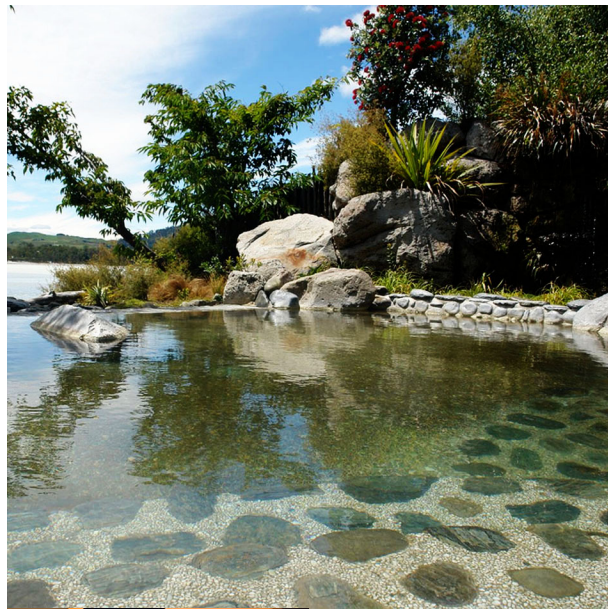
Let's look at some of the specialties of three favourite holiday destinations:

Tahiti

Massage has been an important part of French Polynesian life since ancient times. There are some amazing stories about traditional therapists with wide reaching healing powers. Delicious and healing aromatic oils using natural products such as vanilla and pineapple are often used.

Pineapple is known for its moisturizing and revitalizing properties, and used to gently buff away dull skin cells, unclog pores and rejuvenate skin. Vitamin rich coconut, sometimes called "the South Pacific secret to beautiful skin" is used to nourish and moisturise, and considered particularly good for sun exposed skin.

You can also try a fabulous hot stone massage, using local volcanic stone. Being also well known for its romantic and relaxing atmosphere, Tahiti is an all round excellent spa treatment destination.



Fiji

Like Tahiti, Fiji has wonderful coconut oils infused with tropical fruits and flowers such as tiare and pineapple. (Make sure you bring some products home with you: you'll feel on holiday again with one sniff!) Some treatments also use fresh sugar cane crystals, which contain naturally occurring alpha hydroxyl to gently buff away ageing skin cells.

Fiji also has a strong tradition of massage, such as the bobo technique consisting of long fluid strokes from the hands, elbows, and forearms of your therapist combined with an application of warm coconut massage oil. It was in Fiji that an innovative technique of massage using the therapist's feet was developed, that has since spread to many other countries.

New Zealand

Traditional Maori knowledge of native herbs and healing has influenced spa treatments in New Zealand. Among New Zealand's varied geographical aspects are the many areas of geothermal activity, giving rise to naturally heated mineral pools and some excellent rich mud for use in wraps, facials and baths. (This can also be purchased to take home)

New Zealand offers a great range of fantastic locations, whether you prefer something urban, countryside or oceanfront as a backdrop for your pampering. The advantage to holidaying in New Zealand is the ease with which you can move from the action of a city to the stillness of a secluded scenic retreat within minutes. A thriving wine and food industry adds to the wonderful indulgence possibilities.

The options really are many and varied, with every place you look offering its own unique take on treatments for greater wellbeing. Coming up, we hope to bring you an in depth review of a spa location... watch this space for more tempting ideas!

