



Left: A spicy wrap treatment at Taman Sari Spa in British Columbia. Above: A pampering pedicure at The Desert Spa in Mexico.

PARADISE, HOME AND AWAY

EACH ISSUE, WE TAKE YOU ON A JOURNEY—IF NOT IN BODY, THEN IN MIND—
TO UNIQUE SPAS BOTH HERE AND ABROAD BY MARGARET SWAINE

Taman Sari Royal Heritage Spa at the Summit Lodge & Spa

British Columbia
Taman Sari, located in Whistler ski country, is a Japanese-style spa where most of the therapists have been trained in Indonesia. The massage I chose, the two-hour Royal Balinese treatment, was unlike any I've ever had. It started with an exfoliating scrub using candle nuts (with their high oil content, they moisturize the skin), followed by a wrap treatment designed to stimulate body warmth. Clove, ginger root and cinnamon were plastered like a poultice onto my body; then I was wrapped in sheets and warm blankets. Next came the amazing massage. My therapist, less than five feet tall and slender, awed me with her strength as she worked over my entire body, including climbing on the massage bed to knead muscle knots, and later putting deep finger pressure on reflex points in my feet and hands. It was all capped off with a refreshing herbal shower. The result? After my day of skiing, I was totally loose and relaxed. (tamansarispa.com)

The Desert Spa at Villa del Arco Beach Resort

Mexico
Los Cabos, at the southern tip of the Baja Peninsula, is a lure for many Canadians. (WestJet has direct flights from several Canadian cities.) The area is known for its gorgeous beaches, great golf—and fabulous spas. One of the newest is The Desert Spa, where the aroma of lime blossom wafts through the air. At 31,000 square feet, the spa building is one of the largest in the area, with separate men's and women's hydrotherapy centres. Each has a huge Jacuzzi, cold plunge pool, cold pressure showers, body-temperature pool, steam room and sauna. (Clothing is optional in these segregated centres.) I loved the skin-softening agave and lime-scented Tequila Wrap, and enjoyed the scalp massage, but I most cherished the motherly warmth of the soft-spoken Mexican therapists. They made me feel loved and coddled, whether stroking my head, or holding my arm while escorting me to and from each treatment. (villagroupresorts.com)



BRING HOME THE SPA Taman Sari Spa uses a papaya body polish. Like the sound of that? Try Papaya Body Scrub from The Body Shop, a creamy-texture exfoliant that includes papaya seed oil as a key moisturizer. (\$20, 200 mL)

◆ For where to buy, see page 114