

# 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



**Le Scandinave Spa** *Mont-Tremblant, Que.* Scandinave is modelled on the Finnish tradition of bathing outdoors in different temperatures, and alternates between warm and cold treatments. The ritual is best done in three to four cycles. Each starts with warming the body followed by cold-water dips to snap the pores shut (an effect reputed to strengthen the immune system), and ends with relaxation sessions. It took two hours to do three cycles, including one where I lounged in an outdoor hot bath, then plunged into the freezing cold Diable River. Afterwards, I relaxed indoors on a chair in the Zero Gravity Pavilion (the chair tilts back so your feet are above your head). Circulation

pumped up and endorphins released, I felt my stress melt away. ([scandinave.com](http://scandinave.com))

*NOTE: Le Scandinave Spa has spas in Old Montreal and Blue Mountains, Ont. Its newest location opened in Whistler—just in time for the Olympics.*

**Forgot your suit?**

Not to worry. Le Scandinave Spa sells sandals, bathrobes and bathing suits at their boutique.



**BRING HOME THE SPA** A whiff of Aromatherapy Lemongrass Cardamom Stress Relief Body Cream by Bath & Body Works is reminiscent of the fragrant Thai herbs used at the Amanpuri. (\$18, 177 mL)

❖ For where to buy, see page 159

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**Amanpuri** *Phuket, Thailand*

At this flagship property of Amanresorts, my spa treatment pavilion had a private dressing area, steam room, shower and outdoor meditation “sala.” The two doors on the shower meant I could step from the treatment room into the shower and from there directly to my dressing room. My two-hour “Amanpuri Awakening” began with traditional Thai massage. I wore soft pyjamas while the therapist did pressure point massage and stretched my limbs into yoga-like positions, climbing onto the massage table to use the whole force of her body. Meanwhile, my personal steam room was heating up, aromatized with fresh crushed exotic herbs, including *plai* (part of the ginger family) and lemongrass, which acts as an antiseptic and muscle relaxer. After the steam I was “stamped” (softly punched) with a hot, wet Thai herbal compress. A Swedish massage using *plai* oil followed, capped by one more visit to the steam room to allow the oil to penetrate. Two hours may seem like a long time—but I didn’t want it to end. ([amanresorts.com](http://amanresorts.com)) □

**Travel plans**

**LE SCANDINAVE** Direct flights are available to Mont-Tremblant from major cities in Canada, or the town is 90 minutes away from Montreal’s Trudeau International Airport. Once in town, you can rent a car or take a taxi to get to the spa; some hotels also offer a shuttle service.

**AMANPURI** Air Canada has daily flights via Hong Kong and Tokyo that connect with Star Alliance partner Thai Airways to Phuket. ([aircanada.com](http://aircanada.com))