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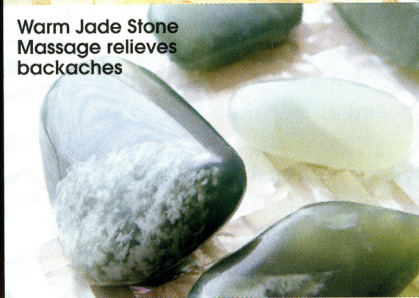
CHIC STAYS IN SHANGHAI AND BEIJING



Farida puts a new spin on pampering at the Remede Spa



The sculptural ice dispenser is an alternative to a cold plunge



Warm Jade Stone Massage relieves backaches



The Vichy Shower provides a high-pressure massage

Heated marble loungers ease muscle and joint aches

the luxury of remedy

Spa consultant Farida Chettab Brouwer tells why her latest, most **INDULGENT** health spa project, Remede Spa at St Regis, is the epitome of exquisite world-class pampering. By Annie Tan

“Beauty has more depth than the shape of an eyebrow or the colour of a lipstick – it has a holistic and spiritual aspect,” declares Farida Chettab Brouwer, managing director of Salamander Lifestyle, a Spa Development Consultancy that has developed several top-notch spas such as the Remede Spa at the St Regis Singapore.

When Farida, who hails from Paris, first discovered the importance of holistic healing in the 1980s, she immediately took off to the US to study it. Later, this passion took her to India to practise Reiki, Thailand to learn Thai massage, and to China to master *tui na*, a traditional Chinese massage technique.

creating sanctuaries

When Farida returned to France in 1988, she put these techniques to use at a professional physiotherapist practice. Before long, she was invited by Clarins's founder to join the French beauty label as head trainer. She was eventually made Development Director Asia-Pacific of the Institut Clarins, and returned to Asia again to develop the first Instituts Clarins at Wheelock Place in Singapore and at The Peninsula in Hong Kong.

After eight years, she struck out on her own in 1998 and started Salamander Lifestyle, a spa consultancy in Singapore where she has made her home with her family. Her quest: “To design spaces and treatments to help people find balance and tranquillity.”

This, she does by seeking out innovative ways to fulfil her quest. Over the years, her company has won contracts with internationally recognised spas like Decleor Institute at The Raffles Arcade, where she livened up the decor with a yellow theme and the use of backlit photos of nature, and the first W Resort & Spa in the Maldives, where she conceptualised a white sails-inspired roof to create an unobstructed view of the sky and sea.

ultimate sybarium

In her latest project, Remede Spa at the St Regis Singapore, she created a sense of balance through hot and cold water therapy with Steam Chambers, hydro-massage pools, ice fountains and rain showers. The rationale behind the amenities shows an understanding finely-attuned to the body's physiology.

The eucalyptus-infused Steam Chambers for instance, comprise three compartments to allow bathers to progress from moderate heat of 40°C to a more intense temperature of 55°C. Then, they can pick up a handful of ice chips from the ice fountain to cool themselves off, a pleasanter alternative to a cold plunge that still gives your blood circulation a real boost.

Before their treatments, spa patrons can relax on marble loungers, which are heated to different temperatures at different points using an infrared heating system, which warms the body in the same manner as natural sunlight, to help ease joint and muscle aches.

new state-of-the-art

Where the art of luxury is concerned, the Remede Spa has it down pat. Farida handpicked every little thing at the spa, from the Bossa Nova and Baroque playlists on the iPods, to the inspirational reading material. Champagne and artisan chocolates are served.

Cedar wood is used to build the sauna for its subtle aroma, and volcanic stones are replaced with grade-A jade stones in the signature Warm Jade Stone Massage. “We’re in Singapore, and jade is considered precious in the Chinese culture. It also has healing properties and is particularly beneficial on the kidneys and therefore is highly recommended for back problems and fatigue in general.”

Farida adds, “All elements of a spa have to give you a sense of peace and well being.”