



THE PEAK

SINGAPORE

SEPTEMBER 2008

Engineering a cultural revolution

Vinod Kumar, President,
Tata Communications

The F1 issue

The billion-dollar billboard
A guide to the hottest parties
Buy an actual F1 racing car

Elegance updated

Men's fashion gets a
classic makeover



Urban Sojourns

Spas are more than just places to unwind. Young Lim discovers why male executives are signing up.

PHOTO TOM HAN ART DIRECTION KRISTY QUAH

LOCATION REMEDE SPA AT ST REGIS SINGAPORE MODEL WESLEY G/AVE

Exotic Moroccan hammam at Remede Spa, Singapore.

"My first spa experience was when my wife dragged me to a couple's massage during our honeymoon ten years ago," recounts Delvyn Goh, chief executive of biochemical research firm Hargass, "Now, I'm addicted to deep tissue massages and can't do without them."

Like Goh, many men who baulked at the idea of taking up spa treatments are gradually coming round. Femme Findlay, manager of Remede spa at St Regis Singapore notes the establishment has seen an increase in the number of male professionals and business travellers coming through its doors since it first opened in May.

"Men are becoming increasingly educated in the areas of health and well-being, especially with the stresses of urban lifestyles, CEOs are realising that its important to project a sharp image, be physically prepped and mentally alert during boardroom negotiations."

"Some tag along with their spouses for the couple's package," says Caroline Lim, spa manager of Spa Botanica located at Sentosa resort, "But when they learn about the benefits of deep tissue therapy in alleviating fatigue as well as anti-aging facials that make them look less tired, the men will also begin to appreciate spa rituals."

Adding to the sentiment, Yong-Han Wee Lin, deputy general manager of [comfortspace] HelioAsia located at Paragon shopping centre pointed out that a significant number of surgeons from neighbouring Mount Elizabeth Hospital are regulars at the spa. "These specialists are required to be on their feet most of the time in the operating room. Simply relaxing in the sauna or getting their muscles unknotted becomes a quick pick-me-up".

Catering to the male segment in the spa market is by no means easy, "Some men think spas to be indulgent and a waste of time, they

may take up treatments while on vacation, where they can spend the whole day lounging away,” says David Bollati, chairman of Davines group which produces high-end hair and skincare products.

“But when some try reviving the same type of experience in an urban landscape, it’s difficult. So they think it’s of no real use or benefit. What we need to do is make men realise that more than anything, spa treatments can effectively maintain mental and physical wellbeing, and it should be a regular practice.”

A booming market

For Melissa Austria, owner of Toronto-based Gotstyle Lab, a one-stop retail and spa concept exclusively for men, developing the spa section was a logical thing to do, “Research shows spa usage among men up double digits in the past five years, it’s the fastest growing segment in the spa industry. As the boomer population ages, they become more aware of personal grooming.”

Helping ease patrons into the practice of urban retreats, establishments like Remede take preferences of male guests into account when it comes to decor, adding dashes of masculinity into colour schemes and design. Farida Chettab Brouwer, MD of Salamander lifestyle — developer of the Spa, drew inspiration for the treatments and design from elements of water, with Moroccan-inspired Hammam bath rituals. Treatment rooms are dark coloured, in Italian grotto style with water trickling softly down stoned walls to create a soothing ambience, the perfect ambience after a long day cooped up in the boardroom or stuck in your Herman-Miller monitoring the bulls and bears.

Ready to stretch out and unwind? Here are some picks from cities around the world to check out on your next touch down.



SINGAPORE

CASABLANCA CHIC

Remede Spa at St Regis Singapore

29 Tanglin Road Tel 6506 6888

It’s first outlet out of the United States in the Asia Pacific region, all of their treatments are based on the detoxification process of moving from hot to cold therapies. Its personalised service means they will try their utmost to accommodate last-minute bookings as you shuttle in and out of the country. Every treatment ends with Champagne, chocolates made specially for the spa and floral infusions.

RECOMMENDED TREATS The warm jade stone massage uses heated and cooled pieces of jade to ground, cleanse and relax. Olive and Eucalyptus black soap body wash and scrub, a multi-step Middle Eastern traditional bath technique administered on a heated marble bed. Dead cells and impurities are removed with the Kassa glove.



THE PARAGON OF TRANQUILITY

[comfort space] HelioAsia

290 Orchard Road #06-19 Paragon Shopping Centre Tel: 6836 9988

“Men are lucky, because their skin is more reactive to the benefits of facials than women,” says Monica Poll, education manager of the spa and its main skincare line [comfort zone], “But most men also tend to neglect their skin’s needs and be lazy about going for regular sessions.” To help them, the spa has created five exclusive face and body treatments for men using anti-oxidant ingredients to reshape the body and lighten wrinkles for men above the age of 40.

RECOMMENDED TREATS The aromasoul massage scrub, based on exotic scents from five continents, promised to revitalise the entire body.