

The Business Resource for **SPA & WELLNESS**

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Bright Ideas

THIS SEASON'S TOP
BEAUTY TRENDS



French Bliss

In the idyllic countryside, the Spa at Terre Blanche provides rest—and results.



Tucked within the rolling, silvery-green slopes of Provence, France, you'll find Terre Blanche, a 720-acre resort and spa organically placed among the pale lavender fronds and cypress trees. It may seem unusual for such a sprawling estate to be so unassuming in the rustic Provençal landscape, but Terre Blanche takes its cues from the natural backdrop: Two championship golf courses undulate along the hilly terrain rather than carve through it; the 115 guest suites and villas, low-lying and terraced, harmoniously hide away; and the award-winning spa—one of the largest in the country—is postcard perfect in buttery, sunshine-hued ochre, crafted in the style of a charming traditional French *bastide*.

YEAR OPENED

2007

OWNER

Dietmar Hopp

THE SPACE

35,000 square feet, with 12 treatment rooms, 2 treatment suites, and communal spaces including a gym, tearoom, beauty salon, sauna, hammam, sensory shower, laconium, spa gardens, outdoor Jacuzzi and indoor swimming pool

STAFF

20-25 (depending on the season):
5 front desk staff,
10 massage therapists,
5 trainers, 5 service staff

MOST POPULAR TREATMENT

Californian Massage
(60 min./\$175)


PRODUCTS USED/RETAILED

Valmont, KOS Paris,
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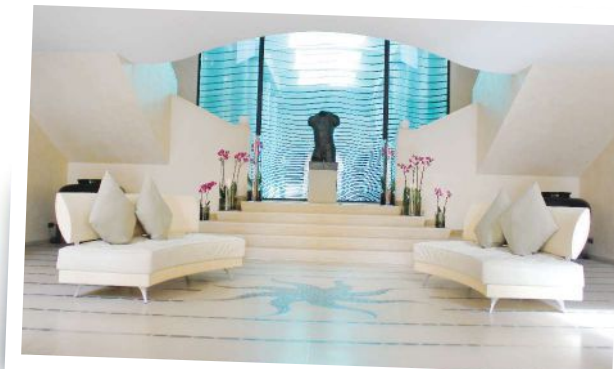
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spa hopping

Lounging in Luxury

The Spa at Terre Blanche is officially palatial in terms of sheer size (a whopping 35,000 square feet), yet its interior is far from cavernous. Clever structural and architectural features like slanted ceilings, gently curving arches



and natural stone accents make it feel intimate, as though you're inside a seashell.

Upon entering, I immediately noticed the 65-foot heated pool sparkling in the sun, casting cool watery reflections over white backdrops. Extending into the spa's gardens, it becomes a Vitality Pool with mist showers, waterfalls and "bubble beds," or underwater bubbling platforms on which guests can recline.

The spa also boasts a sleek fitness center, tearoom, beauty salon, sauna, hammam, sensory shower and laconium (dry sweat room). There are 12 treatment rooms upstairs (overlooking the pool), and two additional private treatment suites are located in the garden area. These spaces feature warm amber lighting and a soothing soundtrack of meditative melodies and birdsong. The spa even diffuses a bespoke fragrance with notes of local rosemary, myrtle, lavender and a hint of lemon to encourage relaxation.

Of course, the locale itself has a long history of holistic wellness, as southern France's invigorating sunshine has been sought as a cure-all for centuries. At one point, it was even standard practice among English doctors to prescribe a health trip to the Riviera (roughly 35 minutes away from Terre Blanche). Provence boasts some of the region's warmest weather, and as such, the property takes advantage with plenty of windows to ensure it's thoroughly soaked in sun.

Double Duty

During services, all of this timeless Provençal beauty meets with modern smarts through the spa's recently debuted partnership with Swiss cosmetic brand Valmont. Terre Blanche selected the company because of its reputation for results, says assistant spa manager Maud Rousseau. "It's almost like surgery—after a facial, clients see immediate results because the products are very concentrated. They use collagen and RNA," she enthuses, referring to the brand's patented ingredients formulated to rebalance skin on an intercellular level.

Such a cutting-edge approach isn't necessarily what you'd expect from a cossetting

country spa in rural France—and that's what makes it so impressive. Diving face-first (literally) into this results-driven mindset, I lay back for the Energy Ritual Facial (90 min./\$300). The impressively lengthy duration of this "cell renewal booster" sets a serious tone: It's extra decadent with double cleansing, double massages and double masks.





The thorough treatment began with a milk cleanser and an illuminating foaming wash, both designed to soothe rather than strip the skin. Next, a rhythmic “butterfly motion” technique that stimulates microcirculation was used to massage in a gel-to-oil formula, followed by an effleurage with a rich and nourishing cream. The service concluded with a thick moisturizing mask, and then a skin-firming collagen one (applied to my hands as well). Afterward, my complexion was undeniably replenished and refreshed—it’s no wonder that the service brings clients back for more.

Great Escape

Although such innovative treatments entice new guests and encourage repeat visits, the staff—selected for their personalities as much as their skill sets—are constantly praised as a draw. Their amicable approach is a point of differentiation from some of the formal and more reserved hotel spas in the area. According to Rousseau, that’s thanks to a management style that encourages collective decision-making and ultimately gives everyone a stake in the outcome. As a result, staff members genuinely care about guests and take extreme pride in their work.

Positioning the spa as a top choice for locals seeking respite is a key objective of Terre Blanche’s marketing strategy, and it’s accomplished through multipronged efforts. The first is accessibility.

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Even when the hotel is closed (December through February) the spa is open year-round, save for certain holidays. There's also a monthly membership program in which local residents can enjoy the facilities, treatment discounts, and access to gym and fitness classes like yoga, Pilates, Aquabiking and Aquaboxing.

Finally, Terre Blanche offers rejuvenating daylong retreat specials. The sanctuary aspect is a major selling point for guests near and far. "We're quite lucky we have all this space," notes Rousseau. "We're bigger than Monaco, and cocooned in the middle of the forest—no noise, no traffic. We welcome so many locals because they like to take a couple of days, just to exit the rush of the city."

In that vein, the spa's most popular package is the Journée Évasion, or Day Escape, which starts at \$215 and includes access to the spa facilities, a 60-minute massage, and a two-course lunch at Terre Blanche's tearoom or the hotel's golf clubhouse restaurant. "It really reflects what our guests are looking for," opines Rousseau. "They're going to forget everything, whether they're visiting for the day, the weekend even a full week. They don't think about work—they're just here." 🍵



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