

hot spots Spa on the Rocks, The Ritz-Carlton, Bali

What is it? There are spas and then there is the Spa on the Rocks. The Ritz-Carlton on Jimbaran Bay, Bali, has built not one but two pavilions upon rocks lapped by the ocean on three sides and joined by a walkway of more than 100 steps.

Boasting rights: The Ritz-Carlton Thalasso and Spa Bali has won all the major industry awards. The trophy cabinet has shelves bending under the weight of five *Spa Asia* Crystal awards, three *Condé Nast Traveler* awards, six *Travel + Leisure* awards, one CNN Choice award and a *Luxury Travel* award. And all this won since opening in December 2003.

What about the rocks? Your personal buggy-driving butler will transport you from the soothing garden of the Thalasso

Spa to the rocks on which the pavilions perch. A therapist then accompanies you to your private personal-spa retreat surrounded by ocean. Only two treatments are offered at the Spa on the Rocks. A two-hour Aroma Sensation is performed in the morning and consists of an aromatherapy massage that works the chakras for muscle release and lymphatic drainage. It includes the Thermes Marin facial, which utilises seaweed. The sound of waves crashing on the rocks below means it's all very "aqua". Wind up with a fruit juice on the deck. The afternoon therapy, offered at lunchtime and sunset, is the Diamond Miracle treatment: a foot bath accompanied by sweet lemon tea and followed by a pearl-oil massage. After-

wards, dunk yourself in a bath of 500 red rosebuds and follow it with a Crème de la Mer diamond-dust facial.

Can I bring a friend? Yes, this is a spa for romance, with villas made for two. The Diamond Miracle treatment ends with sunset champagne – Veuve Clicquot, of course. For an extra charge, a romantic dinner will be served *après* treatment.

And after dark? Follow your pampering with a martini at the Dava restaurant, or head to your villa for a dip in your private pool. Ask Jeeves to light the candles.

What's the bottom line? Treatments are available to guests and non-guests of the hotel. A Diamond Miracle therapy for a couple costs US\$700; if you're alone, you'll pay US\$450. Add US\$100 each for



Rachael Oakes-Ash

a romantic dinner. The Aroma Sensation treatment costs US\$400 for two or US\$250 for each single customer.

Spa on the Rocks, The Ritz-Carlton Thalasso and Spa, Jimbaran, Bali; tel: 62 361 702 222 or see www.ritzcarlton.com. Rachael Oakes-Ash

spree Sunshine Coast, Queensland

An hour's drive north of Brisbane, Queensland's Sunshine Coast has kilometres of sandy beaches and some of the best surfing conditions in Australia. With sunshine almost all year round, and a maze of waterways that promote an aquatic lifestyle, it's no wonder the area's boutiques specialise in beachwear. From the Aussie bikini to chic European fashions, here's where to go to stuff your beach bags.

Sunburn (www.sunburn.com.au), a chain of stores throughout Queensland, stocks a large range of bikinis. Popular Australian brands such as Seafolly (from A\$64/\$356), Bond Eye (from A\$54) and Heaven (from A\$29) specialise in bright, eye-catching designs. For a more sophisticated look, try the Finch range (from A\$74). The chain has recently added two new home-grown upmarket labels to its list:

Shine by Zimmerman and Lisa Ho.

Hi Tech Clothing (shop 4, Rovera Plaza, 2 King Street, Cotton Tree, tel: 617 5443 2448) has a multitude of bikinis in the A\$35 to A\$100 range. **Lorna Jane** (shop 202, Sunshine Plaza, Maroochydore, tel: 617 5451 0666; www.lornajane.com.au) is a popular clothing brand that produces bikinis for the active woman (from A\$50). For the sleek, sporty swimwear that Australia's iron women wear to gruelling beach carnivals, head to **Rebel Sport** (shop G, 1/2 Sunshine Plaza, tel: 617 5479 2518; www.rebelsport.com.au).

Comfortable yet smart resort-style outfits abound. **Lilly's Boutique** (shop 1/87 The Esplanade, Mooloolaba, tel: 617 5444 0899) is the place to go for gypsy-inspired bohemian skirts (A\$50) and chiffon tops (A\$35).

Next door is **Flash Boutique**, which stocks Australian leisurewear brands such as Tomato, Ping Pong and Simona Sport. Slacks and matching tops cost about A\$200. **Yoshima Boutique** (83 The Esplanade, Mooloolaba, tel: 617 5444 4522) imports designer resort clothing from France and Italy. A pair of stylish flowered trousers by Jeans Votre Nom will set you back A\$399. **Bo Niks** (85 The Esplanade, Mooloolaba) sells dainty painted beach shoes (\$24).

In the Sirocco resort (59 The Esplanade, Mooloolaba), **The Works** is noted for upmarket outfits (from A\$150). At **Coco Beach**, choose a lime-green, yellow, lily-white or orange top with shorts (A\$189). And for anything black or white, head to **Carmel's**, where matching tops and slacks start at A\$100. Christina Pfeiffer



Christina Pfeiffer

trial run



What is it? Lufthansa's business-class seat, which extends to become the 2.02-metre PrivateBed, the longest in its class.

Where can you find it? On Lufthansa's Airbus A340 and Boeing 747 aircraft flying from Hong Kong to Munich or Frankfurt. The PrivateBed is the main attraction of the carrier's new fleet-wide business-class cabin.

What's so good about it? To ensure the seat is an especially good fit, it has a six-way adjustable headrest and buttons to fine-tune all components. A memory function remembers favourite positions. Offered gratis is an in-house massage: press a button and mechanical fingers knead your back.

The PrivateBed, unlike the flat bed of at least one competitor, does not require you to get up to lie down. One click does the trick. Another press of the button provides an S-shaped position for those who sleep on their backs. A privacy screen and the seat's high-collared design allow partially cocooned sleep.

If slumber is not your priority, you can plug in your own headphones and stay up for music or blockbuster movies, or set up your laptop on the spacious table. Power sockets between seats allow easy PC connection; wireless internet access is provided.

And the downside? Because the bed is inclined at nine degrees it feels like you're camping on a gentle slope. And despite its massage function, the chair is not quite Homer Simpson's Spinemelter. It also seems to require constant button pushing for it to continue working.

Anything else? Space for shoes below the armrest stops their being kicked into the aisle; and because the distance between seats reaches 150cm, your legs don't feel as though they're being swaddled like a Chinese newborn, even when they're sharing space with hand luggage.

Charmaine Chan