

Country Roads: Beauty and body treatments at spas close to Montreal

BY ROCHELLE LASH, SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE JANUARY 6, 2012



Spa Eastman has expanded its water therapy under the name Eastman-les-Bains.

Photograph by: Spa Eastman

New, creative water therapies and progressive treatments are among the hot trends for 2012 at spas around Montreal.

Life changes at Eastman

Spa Eastman is one of Canada's most comprehensive wellness centres, featuring the services of such expert consultants as a kinesiologist, a naturopath, a nutritionist and a yoga teacher, as well as a menu of 75 beauty and body treatments. Eastman offers a fabulous, fulsome visit at relatively moderate rates that include attractive hotel accommodations, tasty organic cuisine, extensive hydrotherapy baths and seven wellness seminars per day, such as nature walks, stretching sessions, stress management or cooking classes.

But spa doyenne Jocelyna Dubuc, founder of this trendsetting institution, never rests. She recently launched Eastman-les-Bains, which integrates the spa's water facilities, including the Kneipp circuit of hot and cold baths, plus two steam rooms, a sauna and the indoor pool and hot tubs. The Discover Eastman-les-Bains day pass is a best-buy at \$89, including the baths, daily activities and lunch. And you can add a massage for \$60.

Dubuc ensures that Eastman goes much deeper than relaxation. She describes her Health and

Wellness Immersion as “a five-to-seven-day path to improve your life.” Eastman also co-ordinates with Medisys clinics and customizes clients’ treatments to match their medical assessments.

Guests can pursue weight-loss programs any time, but Eastman is presenting dedicated workshops with fitness expert Miranda Esmonde-White. One starts Saturday and runs until Jan. 14, and another takes place April 7-14. Eastman also is holding a Raw Food Cure week, Jan. 13-20. And even if you are travelling alone, you’ll have company. The spa thoughtfully organizes one dining table for singles.

Kids’ Stuff at Stowe

Giggling if it tickles is de rigueur. Kicking your masseur during a foot massage is definitely forbidden. Those are some of the rules at the Chillax KidSpa, the newest installation at the Spa and Wellness Center at Stowe Mountain Lodge.

This hotel spa is a big-time, lavish sanctuary with a vast outdoor heated pool, exceptional treatments and sublime hot and cold baths, all operating in a deluxe resort of major proportions. Now, managers have brought the spa experience down to size, specifically children’s size. Chillax helps children and teens “chill and relax” to reduce stress, a need that has been identified in psychological studies. It also pampers young people from 6 to 16 with mini-massages and princess manicures.

The signature Chillax Session starts in a bright salon filled with colourful bowl chairs, each equipped with a mechanical massager. After lots of jiggling and giggling, the children settle down with breathing exercises, aromatherapy washcloths and cool cucumbers to rest their eyes. From there, they might go on to a facial with chocolate extracts or a Tasty Toes pedicure with a sugary scrub for smooth feet.

Children under 16 must have an adult present during treatments, but grown-ups also should make their own time for the splendid indulgences at Stowe’s Spa and Wellness Center. The new Sacred Ritual embraces reiki and a unique, soothing “sound chair” that resonates with meditative music. The sublime Sacred Union for two uses a rhythmic hot oil massage and aromas of cedar, rose and vanilla. The Splendor is a total restorative makeover of hands, feet, scalp and hair.

Sporty Spa Bromont

The innovative Spa Bromont marked its 25th anniversary months ago with a significant expansion and a new watery road to fitness. Spa Bromont is connected via an indoor passage to Château Bromont, a boutique resort at the foot of Ski Bromont, so there is lots of incentive to get fit for sports.

Outdoors, Spa Bromont’s bubbling hot tubs have more than 50 jets for exhilarating massages. A new Aquatonique circuit includes such novel underwater facilities as a stationary bicycle and a contra-current for low-impact muscle workouts. Indoors, the hamman is a large sanctuary with heated benches, jet showers, a sauna and a steam baths.

Spa Bromont’s special pampering services include the Sugar Body Scrub for smooth skin; the Cocoa Wrap, which both soothes and stimulates; and the ultimate Massage Spa Bromont, in which two masseurs work on you, relieving muscles that you might not even have known about.

If it’s fitness and recovery you are after, spa director Philippe Lebel worked with Olympic bobsledder

Yannick Morin to develop programs for elite competitors, weekend athletes or anyone who needs R&R. The Muscle-Mind Activation enhances performance with massage and invigorating water therapy of 30-seconds in heat contrasted with 30-seconds in cold, repeated eight times. The Partial Regeneration bolsters the body for more action using cold water to fight inflammation. The Complete Regeneration uses massage and Aquatonics to rebuild muscles after the workout. The final treat is a succulent meal of Brome Lake duck confit, couscous and veggies that just happens to be the perfect combo of protein, carbs and fat.

If You Go

Spa Eastman: 800-665-5272, 450- 297-3009, spa-eastman.com, 895 Chemin des Diligences, Eastman. Packages with lodging, three organic buffet meals daily, indoor and outdoor spa baths and wellness programs, start at \$165 pp, double occ., or \$199 for singles. Spa treatments are extra. Deals with Mont Orford are available.

The Spa at Stowe Mountain Resort, Stowe, Vt.: 800-253-4754, stowemountainlodge.com; Chillax KidsSpa Session, \$25; princess manicure, \$20; mini-me massage or facial, \$75. The Stowe Mountain Lodge, a deluxe, slopeside condo-hotel with an outdoor heated pool and fitness centre, starts at \$299 U.S. per night for four people. Packages are available with spa treatments, gourmet dining and skiing/snowboarding.

Spa Bromont: 800-567-SPAS (7727); spabromont.com; 90 rue de Stanstead, Bromont. Access to Aquatonic baths, \$45 (\$40 for hotel guests). Ski Bromont pass-holders get discounts. Château Bromont: 877-562-4727, chateaubromont.com; rooms start at \$150 (for up to two adults and two children under 18). Evasion Santé is one night with massages, breakfast, dinner, indoor pool and spa baths, starting at \$514 for two.

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