

ESPA at Yas Viceroy has long been a favourite of the female staff at Abu Dhabi Week. Many a time we've had to endure gushing accounts of the luxurious treatments they've received while trying in vain to write up some boring press conference or other that we've been forced to attend



So when we heard that they were launching a special rejuvenation package for April – an intensive facial plus back, neck and shoulder massage – it seemed the perfect opportunity to find out for ourselves if all the praise was justified.

Stepping out of the lift and walking into ESPA, it immediately becomes obvious that this is a cut above other spas we've been to. From the beautiful dark wooden steps descending over a calming water feature to the floor-to-ceiling glass walls offering fantastic views of the marina, the décor just exudes style, sophistication and serenity.

After being greeted with a refreshing glass of lemon water, we're led through the male relaxation room and into the changing area, where we don our paper pants, slippers and robe.

After a quick discussion with our therapist about which oils and creams we want her to use and what we want the effect to be, it's time to get started.

The soft lighting, fragrant aroma of candles and gentle background music set the tone and as we lie face down on the table, our body is draped with towels and a steaming bowl of essential oil-infused water is placed beneath our noses for us to inhale.

The treatment starts with a glorious back, shoulder and neck massage. Our therapist gently but firmly works lavender-scented oil into our back – we can't see exactly what she's doing but there's definitely magic in her fingers as we relax instantly.

All too soon the massage is over and it's time for the facial. After a brief consultation and an examination of our face under ultra-violet light, we discover that our skin's got good elasticity but there are some dry spots on our forehead and around our mouth as well as some blocked pores on the sides of our nose.

Selecting suitable cleansers and toners, our therapist starts by patting our face with hot flannels before massaging a light, fluffy foam into our neck and onto our cheeks. This is then washed off before an exfoliant is rubbed onto our faces. After a few seconds this is then washed off and the therapist gets to work firmly squeezing our nose to unblock all the pores.

This is followed by round upon round of hot flannels, cleanser, toner and exfoliant as our therapist really goes to work. We're definitely starting to unwind now; in fact it's all we can do not to fall asleep.

Ninety minutes later and it's all over – we feel completely revitalised, relaxed and surprisingly calm. It's not something we'd do every day but we're definitely going to be back – most people have their cars serviced regularly so why not our bodies?

Jon Muller

What? April 'Renew' Rejuvenation package

Where? ESPA at Yas Viceroy

Cost: AED 380 for one hour facial plus either a full body salt and oil scrub or a back, neck and shoulder massage

We say: Relaxed, refreshed and renewed – Yas please!

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