

SAY Spaaaah

La Costa's New Look Includes a Bevy of Amenities Sure to Rejuvenate You During the Hectic Holiday Season

Written by Anastacia Grenda

The holidays are a time of gift giving, visits with relatives and festive parties with fabulous food. They can also be a time of exhausting errands, flare-ups of family tensions, too-full stomachs and too-little sleep. Which is why one of the best gifts to give—to loved ones or yourself—is a break at the La Costa Resort & Spa.

The spa is the recipient of a makeover—part of the resort's \$50 million renovation (see box)—that debuted earlier this year. Not only were the men's, women's and coed lounges renovated, but the spa menu itself was revamped, with an emphasis on simplicity and quality products, says Michelle Frye, spa director.

"Everything is really about nature," she says. "We have the orange trees and the bougainvillea here so we created a menu that incorporates the elements of nature into all of the treatments."

The Citrus Renewal body treatment, for instance, is an 80-minute opportunity to escape the gray of a winter's day with scents such as lime, grapefruit and mango incorporated in a body scrub, scalp massage, body wrap and massage. The Bamboo Massage, similar to a hot stone treatment, uses bamboo sticks in different sizes to target various muscles. The Restorative Facial, derived from the stone crop cactus plant, is the spa's number-one facial.

There have been other changes, too. The former Billy Yamaguchi salon is now operated by the resort and has a full-service menu, which includes deluxe manicures and pedicures, as well as makeup application using Jane Iredale cosmetics. The spa's retail boutique has a new buyer, which means new merchandise, including the popular Lululemon brand. The 15,000-square-foot spa courtyard boasts its own pool, as well as a new herb garden and reflexology path. The garden crops are used at the Spa Café, which has expanded and has a seasonal menu that includes items such as mango quinoa lettuce cups and yellowfin tuna. And you don't even need a treatment to enjoy

the spa—pay the day-use rate (\$60 all day; \$30 after 2 p.m.) and use the sauna, steam room, hot tub, and the outdoor Roman waterfall that relaxes shoulder and upper-back tension with its 100-degree jets of water, then cap off the day with a poolside spa Bellini from the café. If you go on the weekend, you can get a complimentary loofah scrub, too.

It's details like that—and the Carlsbad strawberry-mint drink served in the spa, the front-desk tablet computer where guests can sign up for the e-newsletter (including the 12 Days of Christmas deals), the way treatment oils and lotions are presented like a flight of wines for a client's perusal, the heated beds in all 42 treatment rooms—that make the charms of La Costa spa's new look more than skin deep. "One of things we tried to do first," Frye says of the refreshed spa, "is go back to the service experience." •

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The revamped spa and the remodeled guest rooms are already done, and fall brings even more new amenities to La Costa Resort & Spa as part of its renovation project. Among them:

- **Diversions Sports Lounge.** This recently opened lounge offers sports fans large-screen TVs to catch all the games, plus special cocktail, beer and menu items. If your team is on a bye week, sit outside on the terrace and enjoy the views of the resort.
- **Edge.** La Costa has its variety of family-friendly pools, but Edge is definitely not for the kiddos. Situated by Diversions, this adults-only pool—set to open in early November—comes with three infinity-edge hot tubs and fire pits, plus its own café and bar with signature drinks.
- **Restored golf courses.** Famous for its courses, the resort is unveiling their new look in November. The project on the Champion and South courses was the work of golf architects Damian Pascuzzo and Steve Pate—they enhanced the native grass areas and added length, bunkering and contoured greens. Plus, they installed a drainage and irrigation system to stop the rainy-day flooding that plagued players.





Hot, pressurized water pours down to melt tension in the Roman waterfall.



The coed lounge was completely redone as part of the spa makeover, as were the men's and women's lounge areas.



Warmed bamboo sticks are used to target various areas of the body during one of the new massage treatments.



Food is served at the expanded Spa Cafe, as well as poolside in the courtyard.



The Spa Cafe's Vegetable Thai Wrap