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Review: Rolling In The Deep Release Of Mandarin Oriental KL's Hot Sand Therapy



We tried Southeast Asia's first Psammotherapy treatment at The Spa, Mandarin Oriental Kuala Lumpur, and are officially spoilt by the miraculous rejuvenation derived from the warm, golden quartz sand bed.

We've had our share of the best spas around town, but none can top the plush standards that of The Spa, Mandarin Oriental Kuala Lumpur. From a Tibetan ZenNaTai ritual to haute facials by Biologique Recherche, some of the cutting-edge wellness offerings have unfolded here—earning it the honour of a Forbes Travel listing.

An ever-rotating string of treatments means no session is the same. On my recent visit, I got to try the one-of-a-kind Psammotherapy treatment new to Southeast Asia, which applies mother nature's energies (metal, earth, wood, water and fire) in a holistic rejuvenation experience on a natural golden quartz sand bed designed by leading spa authority, Gharieni.

First Things First



Photo credit: Mandarin Oriental Kuala Lumpur

Piqued by the extraordinary technique, I chose the Psammo Gold Serenity ritual. This 3-hour experience took place in the privacy of an immersive 800-sq m Psammotherapy suite, with the striking Petronas Twin Towers in plain view.

You also have a chance to upgrade a massage from The Spa menu to a Psammo Gold Elevation, or a compact the Psammo Gold Intensive Muscle Release using powerful stretching and a dry massage. A warm cup of tea revved up my internal organs, before I changed into a robe and motioned to a pleasant foot soak. Experienced therapist Shanvelorie, The Spa's specialist Thai masseuse, was to take me through the transformational relaxation.

A Glorious Scrub



Photo credit: Mandarin Oriental Kuala Lumpur

The treatment began with a body scrub on a spa bed. Vibrating frequencies of Tibetan singing bowls placed upon the body signalled the start whilst funnelling the energy of metal within. The remineralising properties of the in-house-made paste singlehandedly cleansed all trace of dead skin as it infused the wood element in my body. I was then motioned to rinse and take a warm, 15-minute dip in a detoxifying Himalayan and essential oil bath to further relax the muscles.

Haute Highlight: The Hot Sand Therapy Bed



Photo credit: Mandarin Oriental Kuala Lumpur

While I soaked away the tautness, Shanvelorie prepared the highlight of the session—the Gharieni MLX Quartz bed—for my massage. Interesting fact: the unique bed of fine alpha-quartz sand is inspired by the healing ancient Greek ‘psammotherapy’, using a therapeutic heated sand bed to melt away aches and soreness. Shanvelorie helped me up and soon I was familiar with the rolling sensations of quartz stones. It was heated to a comfortable temperature, with a fabric separating skin from direct contact. With expert motions, she carefully but firmly moulded the quartz beneath my body to support every curve and cranny before the myofascial release massage commenced.

Magical Hands



Photo credit: Mandarin Oriental Kuala Lumpur

Prior to the session, my preference for a medium pressure massage was noted, as was focus points for the shoulders and head. Shanvelorie worked from my feet up, kneading and rolling away tension and soreness until the areas had relaxed, using the Aromatherapy Associates De-Stress Mind body and oil. Now and then, she would gently enquire if the pressure was alright, taking time to unravel the tightness at my back until I dozed off in a cloud of sensorial pleasure. The warmth of the sand accelerated the rejuvenating process, melting away pressures and aches trapped within muscles and wbones. This was, by the way, the fire element at work. My body experienced a snug relaxation, and I wished I could stay in that cocoon. But alas, the Tibetan singing bowls gently marked the end of my session.

The experience concluded with a cold platter of fresh fruits, intended to boost antioxidants and restore hydration. It felt like tension had magically lifted from my shoulders and lower back, and my head was peacefully clear. Back at work, my colleagues commented that my facial muscles were less tense—a surprise given that there were no facial massages involved. My sensitivity to cold vanished the next couple of days (improved blood circulation!) and at my next yoga class, it was easier to tackle challenging poses.

If you're looking for a stimulating reset combined with therapeutic healing, this one will have you rolling in perpetual bliss for days.

Exclusively available at The Spa, Mandarin Oriental Kuala Lumpur. For more information or to place reservations, call The Spa at 03-2179 8772 or email mokul-spa@mohg.com.

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