

10 OF THE Best CANADIAN SPAS

Nikki Bayley selects the pick of the pampering crop in Canada

Canada's biggest sell for tourists may be its landscapes, but increasingly the quality of life that keeps its citizens happy is rubbing off on visitors too, from the delicious cuisine to the chance to kick back and relax.

So it's of little surprise that wellness tourism is on the rise, with more clients taking advantage of spa stays on their holidays or even basing their break around destination spas. Tap into one of the fastest-growing trends in tourism with any of these superb spas. From downtown urban day spas to mountain top relaxation centres, we've picked 10 of our favourites across Canada.

1 LE GERMAIN CHARLEVOIX, QUEBEC
Take the private train from Quebec City through the Charlevoix region, which links Le Massif's ski mountains to the city. The last stop is the boutique hotel Le Germain Charlevoix (formerly known as La Ferme and recently taken over by Le Germain group) with its acclaimed restaurant and chic farm-themed Spa du Verger. Clear your head in the eucalyptus steam room, lie back in the outdoor heated pool then cool down in the icy barrel plunge or the snow fountain. The spa's speciality is a candle massage that uses the warm aromatic wax as the oil, or a body mask using iced apple cider elixir, from £82. Day passes start at £12 for hotel guests and £17 for visitors. When you're done relaxing, the

picturesque village of Baie-Saint-Paul is just a few minutes walk away, complete with its artists, craft-making artisans and microbreweries.
legermainhotels.com

2 BODY BLITZ, ONTARIO
A water spa by women, for women, Body Blitz has two locations offering modern and sociable spa relaxation for solo travellers and groups in downtown Toronto. Bathing suits are optional at this women-only space, which has a recommended therapeutic water circuit that takes in a Dead Sea salt warm pool, an Epsom salt warm pool, and steam and sauna rooms with cold plunges. The spa suggests that the circuit has a range of health benefits, from relieving muscle pain and aiding joint mobility to eliminating toxins from the body and improving sleep. There are also house-made scrubs and mud body treatments on offer, while as an extra cool touch, the spa robes are brightly coloured kimonos and the changing rooms are stocked with plenty of pampering extras. A pass to use the water circuit starts at £25, with body mud treatments from £72.
bodyblitzspa.com

3 MIRAJ HAMMAM SPA BY CAUDALIE PARIS, SHANGRI-LA TORONTO
Take a trip to the Middle East, by way of Bordeaux's vineyards, all without leaving the Shangri-La Toronto. You

can book in for a 'vinotherapy' treatment, such as the slimming Crushed Cabernet Scrub for £75, which is the spa's most popular, using grape seeds to soften the skin. Alternatively, you can head east and indulge in a private hammam experience in a marble steam chamber, followed by a full-body scrub using Moroccan black soap infused with eucalyptus (from £65). Relax on silky cushions sipping refreshing mint tea afterwards or continue the wine theme by heading for the lobby bar.
shangri-la.com

4 SPA LE FINLANDAIS, ROSEMERE
One of the country's most exciting spas is only a 30-minute drive north of Montreal. Located in the Spa & Hôtel Le Finlandais, it is packed with cool gizmos and fresh takes on the hydrotherapy concept. In the multi-sensory room, you can slip on headphones and listen to music while relaxing in a suspended egg-shaped chair that vibrates as the room glows with different colours. Later, hang out in suspended circular pods dipped in warm water, before chilling under a waterfall. Day passes start at £19. There is also a range of treatments on offer, including a signature exfoliating and hydrating facial from £48. Add on a stay at the adjoining ultra-modern 70-room hotel for a super-chilled break and reduced rates in the spa.
spalefinlandais.com

5 CHI, THE SPA AT SHANGRI-LA, VANCOUVER
This is Vancouver's best spa for solo travellers – or those who value their privacy – as each treatment room offers a spa-within-a-spa experience with a private steam room, fireplace, changing room and bath. As you'd expect from Shangri-La, the service here is second-to-none, and the Asian-inspired treatments will delight even the pickiest client. For those wanting serious pampering, Chi 'journeys' combine a series of treatments and begin with a foot bath and tea service, plus a relaxing steam treatment. Pricey, but worth every penny. Chi journeys start at £166, with signature massages from £84.
shangri-la.com

6 WILLOW STREAM, FAIRMONT PACIFIC RIM, VANCOUVER
Unlike many urban spas, Vancouver's superb Willow Stream, in the luxurious Fairmont Pacific Rim, is not tucked away in a basement, but takes pride of place on the fifth floor. Guests can enjoy sweeping city and mountain views from its luxurious outdoor terrace, where they can snuggle under blankets in cabana beds next to a fire pit, or soak in a bubbling hot tub. It's perfect for couples and girlfriend groups, with a raft of high-end facial and body treatments and a nail spa. Then they can stay for lunch

→ in their robes in the spa lounge and enjoy a sushi bento box from the award-winning Raw Bar restaurant. A Coastal Mountain Body Wrap, which uses Canadian maple butter, costs £89. fairmont.com

7 SCANDINAVE, WHISTLER

A few minutes from the bustle of Whistler Village, the Scandinave packs a powerful 'wow factor' punch. Tucked away in the mountains, you wander along a forest path to reach it. Once within, it's a silent space surrounded by soaring mountains and dense forest. A hydrotherapy spa with steaming outdoor hot pools and thermal waterfalls, saunas and steam rooms, there are also ice-cold plunge pools and plenty of spaces in which to rest between hot-cold sessions. It's the perfect place, after a



Reached via a forest path, it's a silent space surrounded by soaring mountains and dense forest

strenuous few days of hiking or skiing, to book in for a massage or just to enjoy the water, peace and quiet. Access to the baths starts at £29, with a Swedish massage from £73.

scandinave.com

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THERMEA, WINNIPEG

Even in the heart of winter, you can enjoy a spa day in style 20 minutes from downtown Winnipeg at the new Thermëa spa, which features traditional



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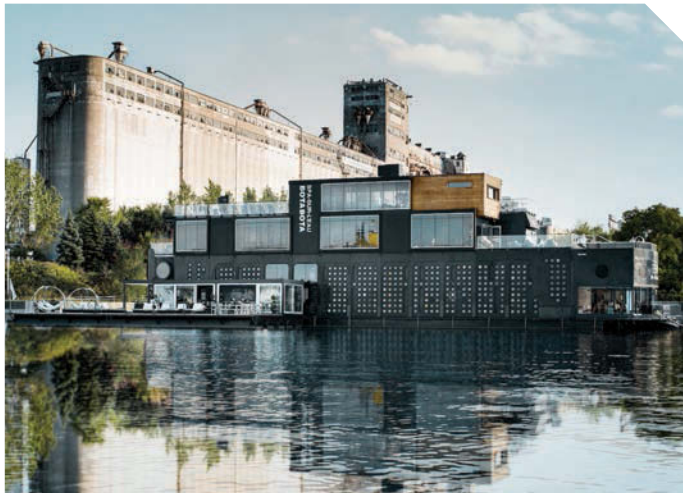




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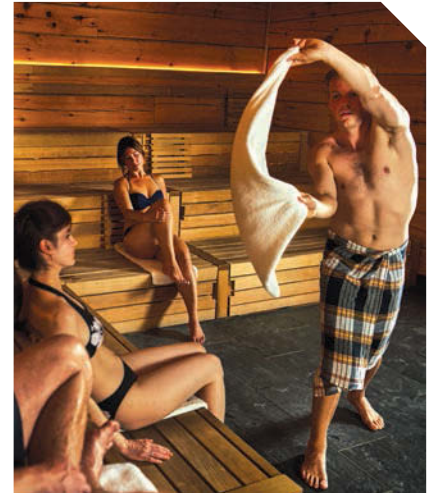
Stella Foti, founder and managing director, Wellbeing Escapes
 “If wellbeing was a country, it would probably be Canada. It offers all the positive results of wellness travel from energising fitness activities and rejuvenating spa treatments to healthy organic food. Its beautiful landscapes and great outdoors encourage you to engage in nature, digitally detox and optimise your health, so you can lap up all that it provides. There are some stunning wellness destinations dotted around the country. One of the most unique is Le Monastère des Augustines in Quebec City, which offers holistic health programmes in a deeply healing atmosphere led by a caring team who truly believe wellbeing is for all.”



LEFT: Bota Bota

RIGHT: Thermëa

BELOW: Nordik Spa-Nature



Nordic steambaths, waterfalls and saunas. Make sure you take a woolly hat (or ‘toque’ as the Canadians call them), along with your swimming costume, to keep your head warm as you luxuriate in the piping-hot outdoor baths while the snow softly falls. It’s an amazing experience to be so warm, and yet have your hair freeze into icy dreadlocks! Check out the incredible Finnish-inspired steam and music Aufguss ritual, which blasts spa-goers with hot air by a towel-spinning sauna master. There’s a restaurant on site serving everything from bison burgers to chocolate fondue, plus wine and cocktails, so clients can be pampered inside and out. Day rates for the thermal baths start at £22, with massages from £53.

thermea.ca

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NORDIK SPA-NATURE, OLD CHELSEA

Once you’ve seen the sights of the nation’s capital, Ottawa, cross the bridge and you’re in French-speaking Gatineau, where you’ll find the super Nordik Spa-Nature. Easily big enough to spend the day in (with a rather delicious licensed restaurant on site), this spa offers experiences that you’ll not find elsewhere, such as the Källa treatment, a saltwater floating pool that instantly lulls users into a deep state of relaxation. There are even heated hammocks to snooze in, in between dips or steams. Coming this spring are a Russian ‘banya’ combining dry and humid heat, and a thermal mud cave nestled in the rocks. A day pass for the thermal experience starts at £50, with the Källa treatment from £34.

lenordik.com

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BOTA BOTA, MONTREAL

Another Scandinavian-style hot-cold-rest-and-recover spa, the twist is that this floating gem in Montreal’s Old Port is set on a large revamped boat with adjoining spacious gardens and pool areas. Lie back and relax in the onboard hot tubs or enjoy the silence from the swing chairs, as you watch the city through the port holes. Day rates for the water circuit start at £26. Treatments are extensive and unusual, with a particularly wide range of massages, starting at £60, from shiatsu and lomi-lomi to massage timed to music, with hot shells and a Japanese kobido facial massage. It’s perfect for a pre or post-flight break, to soothe any stress.

botabota.ca

