

POSTCARD

Dominican Republic

For a tranquil spa retreat, Sanctuary Cap Cana in the Dominican Republic is an excellent bet, finds [Sarah Bridge](#)

There's nothing quite like a 10-hour flight on a packed-out plane to get the nerves thoroughly jangling, but just a few minutes in the spa at Sanctuary Cap Cana in the Dominican Republic will have them un-jangled in no time.

It helps that arriving at this luxury all-inclusive resort itself is deeply calming – from the mere 15-minute transfer from Punta Cana's airport to the hotel's lobby, complete with water fountain, high ceilings and ocean views that help you unwind the moment you're handed a refreshing welcome cocktail.

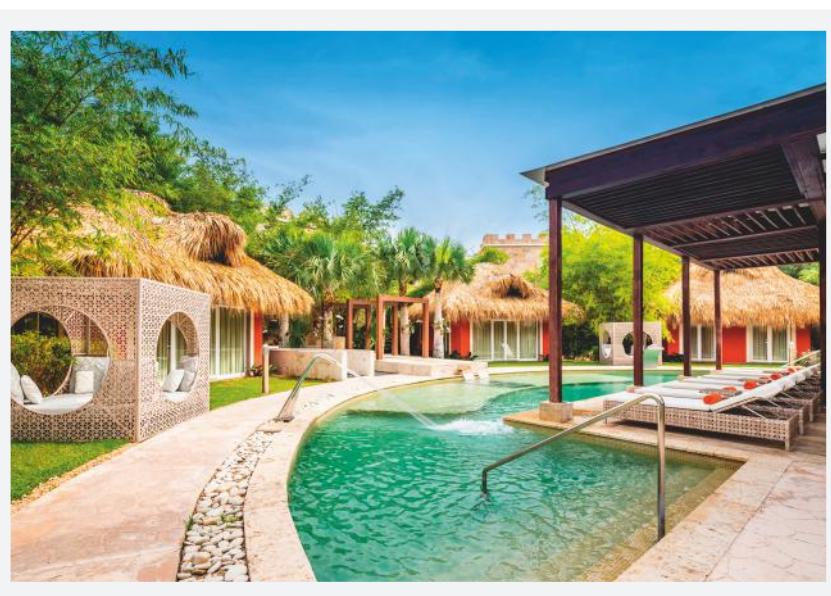
A quick buggy ride later and I was at the sumptuous Sanctuary Spa, located in the resort's striking Castle building, trying to decide on a treatment from a vast brochure of options – from massages and body polishes to facials and bath treatments.

I chose well, emerging from the aptly named 80-minute 'Truly Peaceful' hot stone massage thoroughly soothed, thanks to my excellent masseuse who had greeted me with: "You can relax now – I'm going to take good care of you." She was true to her word, and the stress of the earlier flight disappeared almost immediately.

As the name of the treatment promised, I felt truly at peace post-massage – helped along by the Sanctuary Spa's 'inner sanctuary', a private garden area with a sauna, steam room, hot tub, ice-cold plunge pool and outdoor hydrotherapy pools, as well as loungers, cabanas and all the fluffy towels you could wish for.

It was a great introduction to the resort, whose 324 suites are tucked away in a Spanish colonial-style setting overlooking the ocean. Across this adult-only, palm-fringed retreat there are five à la carte restaurants, six bars and lounges, six swimming pools, fitness centre, nightclub and private sandy beach. It's also home to Sanctuary Town, a collection of bistros, bars and restaurants designed around local culinary experiences.

With excellent service, immaculate facilities and an idyllic beach location, just 24 hours here felt like a holiday – although I still envied the guest I met at the spa who was in the middle of a 10-day stay. It was her second visit, and it's not hard to see what lured her back. **TW**



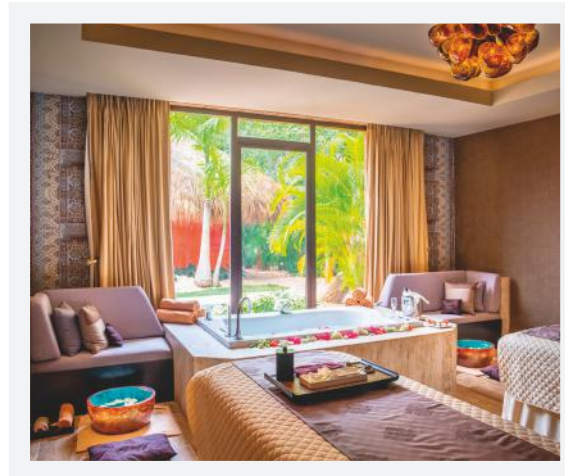
BOOK IT

Gold Medal offers seven nights' all-inclusive in a Junior Suite Ocean View at Sanctuary Cap Cana from £2,229 per person, based on two sharing with flights from Gatwick and return transfers, departing on June 13, 2024.

goldmedal.co.uk

The 80-minute Truly Peaceful massage with warm basalt stones costs from \$275.

sanctuarycapcana.com



TOP: The spa's hydrotherapy pool

ABOVE: Treatment room

PICTURES: C2A Studio/Corey Weiner