

Mum's the word

Mums-to-be and new mums deserve some TLC and a spa break is just the tonic, says Aby Dunsby

@AbraDunsby

If anyone deserves some pampering, it's a weary expectant mum with tired feet, an aching back and a belly the size of Santa's after Christmas dinner. Equally worthy of some R&R is the sleep-deprived new mum, for whom a facial, massage or quick manicure can offer a stress-busting respite from baby duties.

Whether clients are seeking a trendy 'babymoon' package before their bundle of joy arrives, or a closer-to-home spa break for time-pressed new mums and dads, we round up the best options to offer spa-seeking clients.

PLAY IT SAFE

Some mums-to-be shy away from a spa visit, unsure which treatments are safe, but there are plenty of options suitable during pregnancy. Though heat is best avoided – so saunas,

steam rooms, hot tubs and spa baths are off-limits – there is no danger associated with standard manicures and pedicures, facials (though suggest options for sensitive skin, as break-outs are more likely when pregnant) or certain massages.

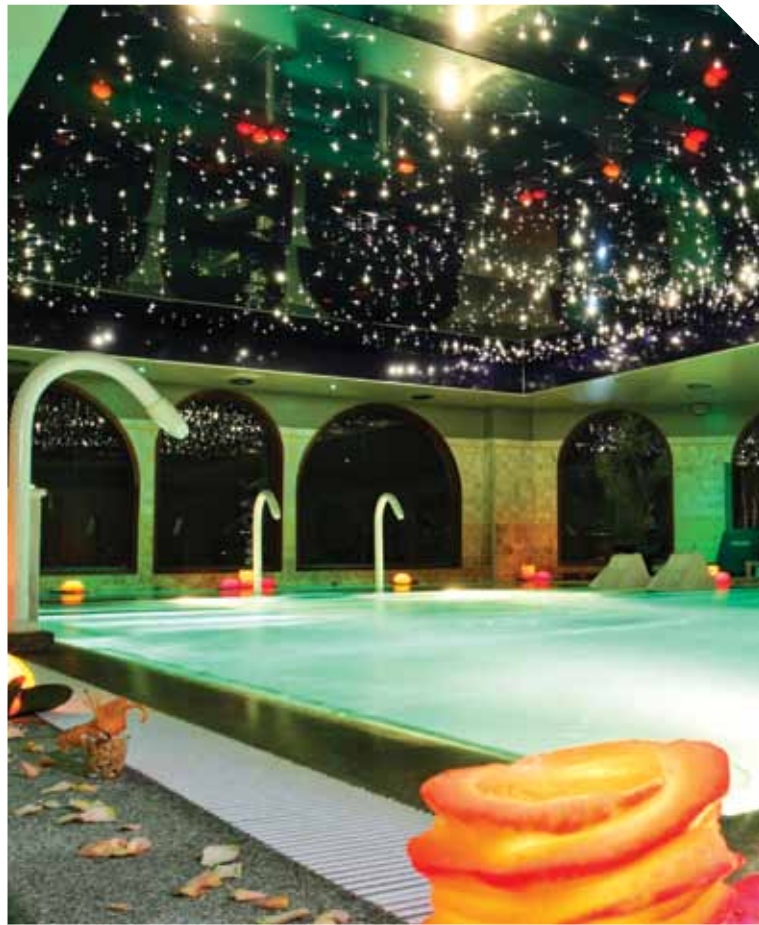
Aromatherapy massages using essential oils are to be avoided during pregnancy and

until a new mum has stopped breastfeeding. To be on the safe side, recommend spas offering pregnancy massages – some even have beds with space for a bump – as these will focus on problem areas such as backs, necks, shoulders and hips. A good therapist can also offer suggestions for massage techniques that a birth partner

can use during labour.

"Treatments to avoid during pregnancy will be displayed in the contra indications on the hotel's spa menu," says Kerry Finlay, personal travel expert at Kuoni Brighton. "It's always advisable to speak to the therapist if you have any concerns or to find out if a treatment is suitable."





ABOVE: Heritage Le Telfair, Mauritius

LEFT: Loews Portofino Bay Hotel, Orlando

FAR LEFT: Princesa Yaiza Suite Hotel Resort, Lanzarote

► PREGNANT PAUSE

Expectant mums and dads looking for downtime have a host of short-haul options. Fuerteventura's five-star Gran Hotel Atlantis Bahia Real offers a 50-minute pregnancy massage in its Spa Bahia Vital, one of Europe's largest hotel spas (€90).

The spa offering is equally impressive at Marbella Club Golf Resort & Spa, which offers a four or seven-day 'Thalasso for Pregnancy' programme, with treatments including a mineral-rich sea-mud body mask designed to relieve tension, a body wrap with spirulina seaweed extracts to improve skin firmness, and a body exfoliation based on mineral salts. The four-day package starts from £985 per person.

At Lanzarote's Princesa Yaiza Suite Hotel Resort, clients can choose from one of two oils for an Ultimate Rose Pregnancy Massage, safely formulated to reduce the risk of stretch marks. The treatment is followed by a

full scalp and facial massage to melt away worries (€90).

Pregnant clients who aren't keen on flying long-haul will also find wellness options in sunny Cyprus, where the Almyra has a lavender and chamomile full-body massage and a nourishing rose essence facial for those in the second trimester (€145).

► MATERNITY LEAVE

If they're keen to squeeze in a more exotic escape before creches and kids' clubs become a deciding factor in holiday plans, suggest jetting off to sunnier climes. Luxury Maldives hotel Amilla Fushi boasts the award-winning Javvu Spa, with a pregnancy massage using special techniques and positioning.

Those seeking even more indulgence will find it at Park Hyatt Maldives Hadahaa, which offers a lavish babymoon package where mums-to-be will be primped and preened over six days (from £413). Treatments

range from circulation-boosting salt foot scrubs to massages, facials and yoga classes. Dads-to-be are also welcome to enjoy bespoke treatments at the Vidhun Spa, although more outdoorsy types can go fishing, snorkelling or kayaking instead.

For expectant mums planning a trip to Mauritius, Heritage Le Telfair's Seven Colours Spa offers a 'mother-to-be' massage, plus an anti-fatigue facial refresher and nail grooming or nail varnish application for £70.

"Our favourite mum-friendly hotel in Orlando is Universal's Loews Portofino Bay Hotel," says Rebecca Evans, senior marketing executive for Funway Holidays. "It features the Mandara Spa, offering world-class pampering that blends exotic Balinese and Indonesian healing traditions with North American influences."

Specialist treatments include the Elemis Nurturing Massage for Mother-to-Be, designed to increase circulation and alleviate

swelling in the hands and feet using Japanese camellia oil. "Working on 40 energy points, this is the total MOT massage for mothers-to-be," says Evans.

► TAKE IT EASY

Once baby has arrived, new mums will relish an opportunity to indulge in some much-needed relaxation, even if they're not quite ready to embark on a flight. Upscale Hampshire hotel Chewton Glen can create a bespoke post-baby package, selecting treatments such as a haute couture facial or personalised massage. Bespoke Spa Day prices start from £165, which cover full use of the spa and leisure facilities, breakfast box on arrival, a healthy buffet lunch, refreshments and free entry to fitness classes, together with a 60-minute treatment.

Clients can also get away from it all at the Last Drop Village Hotel and Spa in Lancashire, which enjoys standout views of the West Pennine Moors. SuperBreak offers a one-night spa revival package here from £85, which includes B&B accommodation and £70 credit towards any treatment. Choose from a file and polish; back, neck and shoulder massage; mini facial or Indian head massage; plus use of the swimming pool, sauna and gym. The hotel can book additional treatments on request such as the New Mum Indulgence Treat, a top-to-toe therapy that uses Decl  r products to ease backache, a draining massage to combat fatigue, followed by an illuminating facial (  68).

► BABY'S FIRST BREAK

Venturing farther afield need not be as tricky as new parents might fear, with many spa hotels geared up for them to bring baby along, and all the facilities – including steam room, sauna and hot tub – back on the cards post-baby. If they'd rather skip airports, they can hop on the Eurostar in London and be relaxing in the spa at The Peninsula Paris in less than three hours.

Its exclusive Peninsula Sleep Ceremony has been developed by skincare company ESPA and is ideal for mums looking to combat the stress of sleepless nights. The treatment combines an indulgent sleep bath with guided meditation and breathing, followed by a hot-stone body massage and a facial massage to relieve tight jaw and forehead muscles (  130).

At The Peninsula Bangkok, pampering comes in the form of a pre or post-natal massage, with luxurious calendula-infused oil, pink-clay mud and nourishing creams to massage away aches and pains (  75). The treatment is also known for its toning qualities, making it perfect for those looking to reduce the appearance of stretch marks, while calendula oil is safe for breastfeeding mums.

Several Banyan Tree resorts, including Phuket and Samui, also offer dedicated post-natal packages, with treatments such as the Banyan Toner – a contouring therapy that consists of a scrub, massage, wrap and facial – formulated to have new mums feeling back on form. **TW**

Downtime for dads

Plenty of hotels and spas offer treatments for dads-to-be and new dads. Examples include the Alpha Male Ritual at the Iridium Spa at The St Regis Dubai, which combines a massage and facial, and the Mankind energy-releasing foot massage at The Peninsula Spa in Bangkok (pictured).



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DO

Ask the therapist if you are not sure whether a treatment or product is suitable for use in pregnancy.

DON'T

Have a spray tan or use aromatherapy oils such as nutmeg, peppermint, rosemary and jasmine.

Source: spafinder.co.uk