



Image Credit: Marienlyst_Strandhotel

A SHORT drive north of Copenhagen is the Danish Riviera; a long stretch of sandy beaches where numerous luxury spa hotels can be found. Clients, looking to unwind, can indulge in the wellness facilities at Kurhotel Skodsborg; offering massages, beauty treatments, and 16 different warming and cooling spa experiences. Active guests can also take part in a cross fit programme which uses the Nordic waters of the Baltic Sea. Further north is the Beach Hotel Marienlyst, the largest seaside hotel in Denmark with views of the famous Kronborg Castle from Shakespeare's Hamlet. Here old Nordic bath traditions and exclusive treatments in its classic spa facilities combine to help bring guests closer to nature.

Lithuania's Birstonas bursting with a choice of spas – and some to spare by PAUL SCUDAMORE

WHEN IT comes to spa holidays, many people would not immediately think of a small town in central Lithuania as an obvious choice. They would be wrong.

Birstonas is roughly halfway between Kaunas and the capital Vilnius (both of which have good flight access from the UK) and sits island-like in an ox-bow of the Nemunas River, the country's longest. The town is low-rise, spotlessly clean and scattered with modern street art and sculptures which provides an appropriate setting for its health-giving and health-rejuvenating reputation which can be traced back several hundred years, with its 'modern' establishment as an official health resort in 1855.

No-one seeking the vast range of treatments across the entire panoply of the spa sector would be disappointed by what Birstonas has to offer, much of it based on "a philosophy that unites the five elements of natural wellness – phytotherapy, hydrotherapy, nutrition, exercise and harmony".

There are several sanatoriums and luxury hotel/spa/medical complexes, including the Egles medical spa and hotel which offers a choice of consultations by a doctor before embarking on a programme of treatments

and therapies, available for both adults and children aged from three. Two other luxury hotel complexes are the Royal Spa Residence and the Vytautas Mineral Spa, whose slogan is "Recharge your body and put a smile on your face". For variety, the town features smaller hotels and a choice of private villas and apartments, restaurants, cafes and a popular Bir-Bur-Bar licensed burger bar with a separate children's play area.

There is also a museum and the Nemunas Loops Regional Park, riverside walks, cycling, river trips, canoeing, mineral water springs and a Tourist Information Centre in a preserved wooden building which should be a first stop for a first-time visitor to take advantage of a wealth of local knowledge.

Apart from river trips, hot-air ballooning is an option and can be organised by, for instance, the Egles hotel which happens to have a branded balloon.

Baltic Holidays offers a range of packages which can be tailor-made and include stays in Kaunas or Vilnius as well as holidays on the Baltic coast.

Details can be found at balticholidays.com or for more destination information see visitbirstonas.lt

BodyHoliday upgrades spa facilities

LOCATED ON the North West of St. Lucia is the all-inclusive BodyHoliday wellness resort.

Set amid tropical gardens on the beachfront and renowned for its approach to health, fitness and wellbeing, being pampered is an everyday experience at the resort.

Upon arrival, guests will receive a tailored schedule according to their needs, with daily complimentary 50-minute sessions. These include massages, aloe vera body wraps, Thalasso Therapy and skin-specific facials and more, all designed so that each guest leaves feeling relaxed and rejuvenated.

The resort is currently undergoing a multi-million dollar refurbishment, which will include the complete renovation of all 33 rooms found in The Wellness Centre. Visit thebodyholiday.com

'Wellness Bliss' packages available at Mauritius' Heritage Le Telfair

HERITAGE RESORTS has introduced a 'Wellness Bliss' programme at the re-opened and refurbished Heritage Le Telfair Golf & Wellness resort, situated in Southern Mauritius.

The programme can be booked as an additional package on a seven-night stay. It starts with a consultation between guests and the resort's wellness director and includes one wellness experience a day, along with a host of opportunities to both indulge in and learn from. Treatments include massages, private yoga, tai-chi or Pilates sessions, osteopathy services and fitness plans with a personal trainer. Workshops are also on offer to advise on correct posture, breathing, healthy eating and stress management. Guests also receive a plan to carry on their programme at home.

Alongside the services offered on the 'Wellness Bliss' experience, guests can enjoy a healthy selection of food and drinks in all restaurants of the resort and in-room amenities including a yoga mat and spa products. The package costs £45 per day. For more information go to heritageresorts.mu/mauritius-hotels/le-telfair-resort



spaholidays

Grotta Giusti launches thermal yoga sessions in ancient on-site cave

THERMAL YOGA sessions are now available at the Grotta Giusti in Tuscany, the only hotel in the world to have an underground thermal cave and hot spring lake as part of its spa.

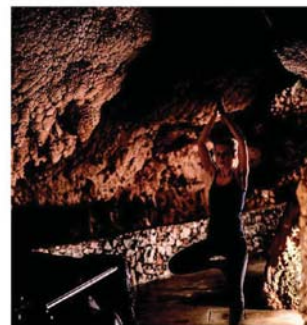
Yoga practiced in the natural warmth of this underground labyrinth reputedly amplifies sensations, aids concentration and raises body temperature while guests benefit from the therapeutic effects of the cave's thermal vapours.

The water running through the Grotto is rich in salt, sulphate, and alkaline earth and comes out of the ground at approximately 34°C. Its vapours generate a steam bath that aids in the effective treatment of respiratory, circulatory, osteo-muscular, nervous, and skin complaints.

Classes can be booked individually, or guests can be booked onto the hotel's two-night thermal yoga experience. This special package includes a choice of scuba diving or floating therapy in the underground hot spring lake. The thermal yoga follows the floating therapy or scuba diving, with the experience topped off with an Ayurvedic Massage. Guests on this package will also enjoy full access to the hotel's thermal hot spring swimming pools and bioaquarium circuit, fitness centre and guided morning hike.

Rates for the two-night thermal spa package start from 664 euros per person based on double-occupancy, including bed-and-breakfast accommodation, one a la carte dinner

and one tasting dinner.
For further information email booking@grottagiustiapa.com



LOCATED HIGH in the Andes and with piping-hot therapeutic waters supplied by nearby and still active volcanoes, the Termas Papallacta Spa and Hotel in Ecuador can be experienced as a day visit or as a short break. It offers visitors five outdoor thermal pools fed by natural hot-springs along with a range of natural therapy treatments such as volcanic mud body wraps, thermal steam cave immersions, aromatherapy treatments and therapeutic massages. High quality cabin and bungalow accommodation is available and it is located one hour from Quito's city centre. Prices start from approximately £150 per night for a two person room or £200 for a large family room, sleeping up to six. Visit termaspapallacta.com

Jetset sees demand for Portugal grow

ACCORDING TO Jetset, the demand for spa holiday packages in Europe is on the rise along with a particular increase from the UK market in breaks to Portugal.

Chloe Smyth, product executive at the company, said: "Portugal is no longer just your bucket-and-spade summer destination, but is also the perfect Winter Sun destination for relaxation, and is still one of our fastest growing destinations for package bookings for all durations and budgets."

West of Lisbon is Cascais, a coastal resort town known for its sandy beaches and busy marina. Here, the five-star Hotel Cascais Miragem has proven to be one of the operator's top selling properties. Designed for moments of pure relaxation, the hotel recently opened a new state-of-the-art water lounge complete with a 40m long pool and hydro-massage circuit, a family pool and a relaxation lounge with a salt-lake, Turkish bath, sauna and ice fountain. The operator hosted a fam earlier this year, giving agents the chance to stay at Hotel Cascais Miragem and to be among the first to experience the Water Lounge first hand.

Another top-selling chain noted by the operator in Southern Portugal is Grand Muthu Forte Do Vale which, alongside Miragem, offers spa breaks and discounts for longer durations.

The company will also be hosting a series of spa days for agents. Two have already been held this summer including a 'Mega Spa' to celebrate Independence Day with two more planned before the close of this year.

Feel the rhythm and bass at the Hard Rock Hotel Tenerife's Rock Spa

HARD ROCK Hotel Tenerife has introduced 'Rhythm and Motion' at its Rock Spa; a fully immersive music-inspired spa menu that utilises amplified vibrations, pressures and patterns, as the foundation to guests' rhythmic centric spa journey.

This new experience – available across Hard Rock Hotels & Casinos – delivers bass vibrations rippling through the massage table along with treble beats from above which sends pulses through the body to help leave guests energised and invigorated.

Treatments include the 'Wrap Mix' and 'Smooth Operator'. The Wrap Mix experience begins with a cleansing shot of ginger tea to jumpstart the detox process, followed by a brisk, rhythmical Sweetgrass inspired dry brushing. Following the detoxifying wrap, the 50-minute rhythm and motion massage and cleansing facial mask complete the treatment. The two-part Smooth Operator treatment starts with the rhythmical Sweetgrass inspired dry brushing followed with a wrap to hydrate and smooth the skin.

A night in a Deluxe Silver room in January at the property starts at £220. The Wrap Mix is priced at £160 and The Smooth Operator priced at £115.

For more information visit hardrockhotels.com/tenerife