

WEDNESDAY, JULY 2, 2014

Rub a dub dub ... three ladies in a tub



Actually, it's three ladies in a really cold tub. Technically, it's three ladies in the cold plunge pool, one of three therapeutic pools at body blitz, health by water. Quite frankly though, this little urban Arctic soiree between strangers is not going to last long. In fact, sixty seconds to be exact.

The circuit instructions posted indicate I should spend one minute in the cold plunge pool. I will obey this suggested time limit but not one second longer. I flap my arms quickly as I count to sixty. I make sure my neck is submerged because I am told this is good for the thyroid. I have seen ladies linger longer as if they are polar bears and this frigid water is their natural habitat. Others dunk their head. Me? - I flap, count and exit.

I am at body blitz east and tension, stress and the noise-in-my-head begins to slither out of my body. I am teetering on becoming a lethargic blob which is ok because there are comfy lounge chairs along the wall just waiting for mushes like me.

Submerge body in warm Dead Sea salt pool, lie on cedar bench in infrared sauna, shower, sixty seconds in cold plunge pool, laze on lounge chair, drink protein shake, shuffle into aromatherapy steam room, breath deeply, shower, drift into oblivion in hot Epsom salt pool, waddle to lounge chair, drop horizontally, read book, daydream, meditate, power snooze – whatever one's vegetated body and soul fancies.

It's as simple and glorious as that - madwoman to womb-toasty sloth in under an hour. However, most visitors follow the posted 'water circuit' a few times, no doubt feeling a sense of melting as the wicked witch did in the Wizard of Oz...only in this movie-in-your-head, it is a melting of physical and mental stiffness.

This water circuit alone is perfect for thawing the outside world, healing and rejuvenating the body however I want more. My skin is rough and snakeskin-like, so I have booked a 'sweet ginger + milk body glow'. Not only do I want to continue my downward spiral into internal tranquility, I want my skin to be smooth and silky.

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I lie on the lounge chair by the hot Epsom salt pool as I wait for my spa therapist. Only women are allowed at body blitz and the owner has brilliantly created an environment where woman can feel safe - safe in their vulnerability of body and emotion, no matter their state of dress (or undress) and spirited well-being.

Anne, my spa therapist, walks into the pool area. She greets me with a handshake and immediately puts her hand on my shoulder as she guides me upstairs to the scrub rooms. She tells me to take off my robe, put on the disposable thong and lie face down on the padded scrub table. She leaves the room and returns only when I am settled.

She tells me what to expect during this treatment: she will wash my body before she scrubs me with a sugar, ginger, cardamom and sweet orange scrub. After rinsing with water, she will massage my body with a mixture of warm milk, sweet orange, vanilla and grape seed oil. Another rinse and the finale – grape seed oil infused with sweet orange rhythmically applied to my body.

I suppress my glee as I envision the hour ahead. In fact, I suppress all that is inhibiting me. I simply lie there and allow Anne's spell to infuse me with her magic potions. I don't lift a finger or an arm...she moves them gracefully, particularly when she scrubs my underarms, which by the way is totally decadent. The warm water spray hose douses my body between wash and scrub, and again after the warm milk mixture. I feel as if all that is layered on my skin is swirling down the drain. I am scrubbed, kneaded, tickled (my feet are ticklish) and polished.

A sensation of floating into a blissfully drowsy state takes over. It is like I am being lifted into a universe of sweet smelling vanilla, orange and ginger...a place where one can turn off the brain and just be in the moment.

My galaxy experience has come to an end and I could easily have stayed on this scrub table for at least another hour. Anne gently assists me in sitting up, putting my feet into my flip-flops and tying my robe. It occurs to me that in the past hour, I have felt like a young child. I did not have to wash myself, dry myself off with a towel, moisturize, put on my shoes or tie my robe. Anne did all that for me like a parent does for a child.

My experience at body blitz was not that of a typical spa. It is different. It is classy yet comfy. It is not stuffy. It is visionary. It is a European-style health by water spa with a personal spin. It is decadent, yet necessary. It is special.

Beverly Anne

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