



just relax Need a break from your hectic tour schedule? Newly converted spa-goer Enette Ngoei is convinced the spa experience is your answer.

I HAVE NEVER been one to indulge in luxuries, but after trekking up and down countless hilltops to reach the ancient temples of Cambodia, I was convinced a spa treatment was more of a need now than a desire. So off to the Kiannora Spa I went. It was situated inside a hotel aptly named Angkor Palace Resort and Spa.

I had just stepped into the lobby and it already felt like I was a million miles away from the hot, dusty, busy roads just beyond the gates of the resort. My feet began to feel light already.

Down the stairs, past a man-made waterfall and out into the tranquil surroundings of the pool terrace, I came to an abrupt halt. My scorched skin was in dire need of a cool-down and the sudden urge to jump, fully clothed, into the pool with reckless abandonment took hold of me with a firm grasp. I was sure there'd be some sort of a fizzling sound (like when a hot frying pan touches water) had I let my impulses guide me, but my quarter of a century old restraint proved stronger and I never found out.

At the spa entrance, the pretty face of a local girl greeted me. After confirming my appointment, she gave me a key to a locker where I would find something more comfortable to slip into, a robe and slippers. Changed and out of the locker room, I tried to look like an experienced spa-goer as I shifted awkwardly in my robe. The same girl sat me down, offered me some cold tea in one of those tiny teacups and showed me the different massages available.

Wanting to try something different, I picked the Traditional Khmer Massage to which she paused and then proceeded to gently



warn me that it might bring on more pain than pleasure. I wasn't sure if she was referring to my size and thus her estimation of my ability to take on such a massage, but I decided to heed her advice and go with the popular Aromatherapy Massage.

I expressed that I'd be more comfortable with a female masseuse and so the girl led me into a room that had its own tub and a massage bed. I lay face down on a headrest with a hole in it so I could rest comfortably without suffocating. I looked down into the basin of water with a floating water lily below and thought, "talk about a time to reflect". And so began my massage.

Lavender oil was rubbed deep into my tired muscles and soothed aches I didn't even know I had. It was a thorough massage literally from head to toe and the aroma of the oil sent me into a semi-conscious resting state. When it was over in 55 minutes, I felt a strange sense of calm and decided there and then that the spa experience would henceforth be a necessary luxury. In the days ahead, I actually looked forward to more exploring and hiking just to give myself an excuse to escape to the spa again. ■

WHERE TO GO

**RAFFLES AMRITA SPA /
RAFFLES HOTEL LE ROYAL**
92 Rukhak Vithei Daun Penh,
Sangkat Wat Phnom.
Tel: 023 981 888

SENSES SALON & SPA
157, Sisowath Quay. Tel: 023 990 224

SPA BLISS
29, Street 240. Tel: 023 215 754

**ISLANDS - WESTERN-OWNED TRADITIONAL
KHMER MASSAGE**
At the Old Market, near Kokoon restaurant.
Tel: 012 757 120

KIANNORA SPA - ANGKOR PALACE RESORT & SPA
555, Khum Svay Dang Khum. Tel: 063 760 551

**THERAPY MASSAGE CENTER - TRADITIONAL
CAMBODIAN MASSAGE & REFLEXOLOGY**
421, Sivatha Boulevard
Tel: 063 964 888

SIHANOUKVILLE
**THE LOTUS SPA - TRADITIONAL CHINESE
HEALTH MASSAGE**
At the end of Ocheuteal Beach,
next to the Jasmine Hotel
Tel: 034-933936 for more details.