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Gem of a Spa

Precious pampering awaits at Grand Fiesta Americana Coral Beach Cancún. BY SUSAN B. BARNES



Go with the Flow:
Gem Spa sensation
pool

PHOTO: © GRAND FIESTA
AMERICANA CORAL BEACH
CANCÚN

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Walking into the lobby of Gem Spa at Grand Fiesta Americana Coral Beach Cancún, I instantly felt my body relax, the tension releasing from my neck and shoulders and a sense of calm washing over me. After I checked in, a kind spa attendant quietly led me to the changing room to slip into a robe and pair of slippers, and I felt even more tension release.

I arrived early for my treatment at Gem Spa to allow plenty of time to fully enjoy the spa's 10-step hydrotherapy ritual, complimentary for spa guests who have booked treatments. After I changed into my bathing suit, another spa attendant led me into the aquatic sanctuary; I began in the aromatherapy steam room filled with the scent of essential eucalyptus oil. Time easily slips by at a spa, and the same is certainly true at Gem Spa. Fortunately, there is no need for a clock or to wear a watch at the spa; my attendant collected me at the right time every step of the way, guiding

me from one hydrotherapeutic step to the next.

After the steam room I took a multijet shower to reawaken my senses, followed by the clay steam room with healing mineral properties; the ice room to close my pores and activate my metabolism; the sauna to naturally cleanse my body; and a refreshing rain shower to rinse off. Next up was the hot whirlpool, then a (very) quick dip into the polar plunge pool. I finished the hydrotherapy circuit by slowly walking through the shallow pebbled maze with warm water jets that massaged my feet and calves. There is one more step in Gem Spa's hydrotherapy circuit — the "pool of sensations" with bubbles, geysers, cascading waterfalls and a truly impressive relaxation lounge — but it was time for my treatment.

The spa's sense of tranquility flows through its two floors and 40,000 square feet, including its 26 treatment rooms. As my therapist led me into our quiet space, I briefly noticed the warm wood tones, Italian mosaics and marble that blend to create a soothing



environment before I sank onto the table.

Perhaps the hardest decision I made in advance of my visit was selecting one of the spa's myriad treatments in which to indulge. Taking a cue from the spa's name, I landed on one of the signature Gemstones Healing Wonders treatments inspired by the healing powers of gemstones from around the world: the Seventh Wonder Luxury Massage. During the 80-minute treatment, my therapist placed seven quartz stones on the seven corresponding chakras, using aromatic oils to deliver me into a deep and complete state of relaxation.

Additional Gemstones Healing Wonders treatments include a Deep Tissue Massage with Malachite Stones, known for transformative qualities; an Obsidian Hot Stones Massage — obsidian is known to transform negativity; and Reflexology with Gems, inspired by traditional Chinese reflexology to massage acupressure points to promote overall well-being.

The spa menu includes other internationally inspired body treatments such as Bamboo Massage; Balinese Massage with long, gliding strokes; Traditional Thai Massage; Purifying Massage with Swedish Herbs; Ayurvedic Massage that stimulates the master chakra at the crown of the head; and Asian Wisdom Massage, incorporating Chinese reflexology, Thai acupressure and stretching, and Indian Ayurvedic and Balinese techniques.

Gem Spa also takes inspiration from elements local to the Yucatán Peninsula in a handful of its treatments, including the Mayan Princess Massage, incorporating vanilla (which Mayas used as an offering to the gods) and orange in a body mask; and the Mayan Prince Massage, featuring chaya, a medicinal herb the Mayas used for centuries that helps soothe and heal sunburned or stressed skin.



Additional locally inspired treatments include a Chaya Body Wrap; the Mayan Body Wrap with Copal Resin, an element used by ancient Mayas and Aztecs in spiritual ceremonies; a Chocolate Body Wrap — Mayas treasured chocolate for its uplifting ingredients, most notably serotonin; and the Mayan Emperor Facial with Amethyst to stimulate the skin's natural defenses to work against signs of aging and fatigue.

Guided meditation and yoga practices in the resort's fitness center complement the spa's treatments, too. Whichever treatment you choose, you will feel as special as a precious stone at Gem Spa at Grand Fiesta Americana Coral Beach Cancún.

Essential Elements:
Clay steam room (top), and clay and mud display (bottom)

PHOTOS:
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