

PAMPERED IN PERTH

Sarah Gamboni takes a VIP look at the newest luxury retreat in the West



Perth has a new home of pampering: the palatial Crown Towers resort in Burswood. Overlooking the Swan River and Perth skyline, this luxurious retreat is home to 500 guest rooms, lagoon-style pools, fine dining and a state-of-the-art day spa. The jewel in Crown Towers is the spa. Designed by interiors whiz Blainey North, this shimmering space of cobalt, gold and powder blue offers a sophisticated nod to the Roman baths of old. A treatment here grants you access to the Aqua Retreat, home to a hammam-style steam room and vitality pool with high-powered jets that pummel your

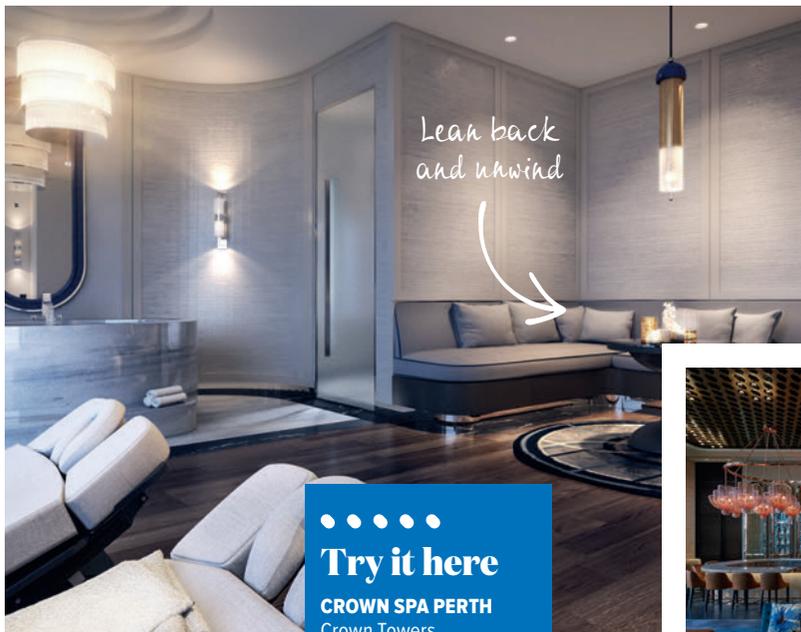
muscles into submission. After taking a dip, I head to the adjoining relaxation rooms to sip mint tea while I wait for my session. Just as I'm about to doze off on my day bed, my therapist Sonia softly pads into the lounge and ushers me into a sleek treatment room of ivory, bronze and grey. I've booked the Subtle Energies Mukha Chikitsa facial, an all-natural treatment based on Ayurvedic holistic health principles that's designed to invigorate the skin and restore radiance.

My facial begins in an unexpected place – my feet – as Sonia cleanses each foot with fragrant oils before wrapping them in hot towels.



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Next, it's time for that awkward spa dance of disrobing and clambering onto the massage table clad only in a flimsy paper g-string. Any awkwardness is forgotten as Sonia swaddles me in blankets and towels. With the touch of the button, the foot and head of the bed rise, gently curling »



Try it here

CROWN SPA PERTH

Crown Towers,
Great Eastern Highway,
Burswood, WA
[crownhotels.com.au/
crown-spa-perth](http://crownhotels.com.au/crown-spa-perth)

Subtle Energies Mukha
Chikitsa Holistic
Anti-Ageing Facial:
90 minutes, \$250
Aqua Retreat: \$65 (free
with any spa treatment
of an hour or longer)

me into a zero-gravity position.

With the swipe of another button, the sound system swings into action – forget about warbling birds or flute tunes.

Here, in keeping with the subtle energies’ aim to energise and stimulate, the soundtrack skips from trippy tribal beats to the kind of electronica usually reserved for raves. You’ll either love it or find yourself craving Kenny G.

Over the next 90 minutes, Sonia paints my face with perfumed jasmine oil, a saffron scrub, and a rich rose-scented cream that feels like liquid velvet as it’s brushed onto my skin. While the hydrating mask sets, Sonia treats me to a Mukha marma massage, gently kneading my face, neck and shoulders, and pulling my hair until she hits

that sweet spot between pleasure and pain.

After a final dab of jasmine, rose and sandalwood oil, I’m sent on my way with a renewed sense of vitality, a welcome change from the cloudy fug that normally follows a spa treatment.

Which is just as well, as the Crown team has plenty more in store. Over a poolside lunch of bento boxes and Aperol spritzes, our group debates the merits of venturing into Northbridge to visit Perth’s art galleries, or soaking up the sublime

weather here at the resort. For this sun-starved Melburnian, the lure of the pools proves too strong. Later, we’re invited into The Enclave, an exclusive retreat with a private infinity pool and chic cabanas with couches, minibars and TVs. Hours slip away as we sip Champagne and paddle in the river-view pool.

As the sun sets we emerge just in time for cocktails in The Waiting Room, the hotel’s Belle Époque-inspired bar adorned with copper accents, jade-green tiles and lavish peacock prints. Over dinner at Epicurean, we bemoan the lack of a suitable word to describe the globe-trotting food offering – neither

“buffet” or “smorgasbord” do justice to the string of cooking stations serving everything from sushi and dim sum to lip-smacking Indian curries. The *pièce de résistance* is the dessert counter, an island of glass cases filled with petite sweets, whole cakes you can slice yourself, and the world’s largest chocolate fountain. It’s a fittingly decadent end to an indulgent stay. ✈

Sarah Gamboni was a guest of Crown Towers Perth.

Travel info

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