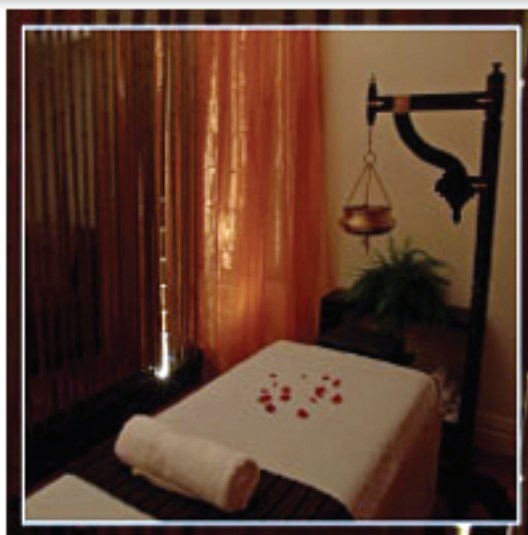


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tamara spa

I wasn't having a good week. I was feeling anxious and had worried myself into a state of insomnia every night. My inner turmoil had physically manifested itself in the form of a large, ugly, angry red protruding spot. The rest of my face didn't look too good either; dry and patchy. I needed help...

My rescue was a visit to the Tamara Spa. Neelu Ameen, the spa director soothed and pampered my skin and the wonderfully relaxing environment of the spa calmed my troubled mind. The Tamara Spa is relatively new (opened in February) and is unique amongst local spas. The contemporary beauty therapies (massage, facials, microdermabrasion etc) are combined with Indian, Ayurvedic (ancient Indian

principles to promote rejuvenation and harmony) and holistic practices. The Tamara Spa is also a great alternative for those seeking a chemical free form of beauty treatment, as all the products are specially imported from India, natural, eco friendly and not tested on animals.

From the outside the spa, a villa in Ponsonby, has an unassuming appearance. Inside is a totally different matter. The interior is elegant, uncluttered and stylishly decorated in warm earth tones. Softly lit by low lights and candles, it is a peaceful environment. After meeting Neelu, I changed into a soft white cotton robe, ready for my beauty therapy, a pineapple enzyme peel. The first step was to cleanse my skin of make up and (ick!) dead skin cells. A cooling cucumber and aloe vera cleanser was applied to my skin followed by refreshing cucumber pulp and gauze. My cleansed skin was then ready for the pineapple enzyme peel. Besides pineapple, the peel also contained clay and apple juice and the purpose of the peel was to brighten and improve my skin's texture. During this time I also received a blissful head massage. The final step was a nourishing honey and apricot mask with cooling rose water. While the mask was left on for a further 10 minutes I relaxed, with the background sounds of gentle Indian instrumental music.

Afterwards I was invited to enjoy a cup of cardamom tea, a thoughtful ending to my visit. So obviously I thought the Tamara Spa was a wonderful experience. Why? Well, I really do believe that with any spa beauty treatment, not only do you want the physical benefits of great skin, but you also want to feel emotionally good about yourself, to feel as if you have treated yourself on many levels. And to my thinking the Tamara Spa achieved exactly that. The environment was stylish. I really did relax and forget my woes. And Neelu was fantastic. Not only did she have awesome skills as a beauty therapist but she was gracious and affably answered my many questions, explaining every step of the "peel." and anything else I could think of.

So how did my skin fare, afterwards? Within a day the nasty spot had calmed down and within two days gone. Within five days my skin tone had evened out and was no longer dry or distressed looking. Even my perpetual frown mark had disappeared. About half an hour after I left the Spa, I noticed that I had left my dress unzipped. Normally I would berate myself and feel kind of embarrassed. Not this time, I calmly zipped up my dress, unworried about such trivial matters.

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