



Treat of the week... A truly relaxing experience at the **g**

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THERE'S only one way to describe this week's treat - sheer bliss. After a recent one-night stay at Galway's five-star **g Hotel**, I came away feeling as though I'd been there for three nights and with more and more people opting for breaks at home this year rather than abroad, the **g Hotel** is definitely worth checking out with five-star luxury available at some bargain prices, including a stay for two nights get a third night free offer running at the moment.

Arriving at the **g Hotel** (after ringing ahead for directions when I got a little lost!) I soon forgot the blustery day outside and stepping out of the lift I couldn't help but be impressed with the Philip Treacy designed **hotel** where the most minute details were thought of. From the friendly concierge to the efficient and helpful receptionist and Avril, who gave us a quick tour of the **hotel** before showing us to our room, the check-in was, in a word, perfect and I was already beginning to relax after the drive in pouring rain from Athlone.

I quickly took in the room with a view overlooking Lough Atalia and noted the trend of seashells throughout, from the seashell cushion taking pride of place on the bed to the seashells embedded in the marble throughout the bathroom. When I say I took in the room quickly, I had more important things on my mind, such as my appointment at ESPA at the **g**.

The ESPA experience was truly unique and before I ever entered a treatment room I was fully relaxed after spending some time in the spa's thermal suite. With low lighting and atmospheric music, the thermal suite is absolute paradise and at one stage as I lay on a tepi-

darium (which is made from heated tiles) and closed my eyes I could have sworn I was on a beach in some exotic location. The thermal suite consists of the aforementioned tepidariums, sauna, steamroom, an ice fountain, rain showers and a vitality pool, which even for those of us who don't have a particular love of water, was a relaxing experience with jets and showers located within the pool.

Suitably relaxed I left the thermal suite and wandered upstairs to the treatment rooms where I was greeted by Irene, my therapist for the boutique facial. As I settled in the chair Irene explained the facial to me and before we began she carried out a 'smell test' with some of the products, explaining that I should choose the products which appealed to me as these were probably what would be best for my skin. With my products selected, it was onto choosing the lighting, with a choice of amber, soft greens or violet. I opted for amber and it was then down to the difficult task of the facial! As Irene gently cleansed my skin and massaged my face and neck it was off to the land of nod for me. Before she had started my facial Irene had asked if I minded having products in my hair and I was glad I said I didn't. She used ESPA pink hair and scalp mud to massage my scalp and hair and after completing the facial she left me for a few minutes to relax. When all was complete Irene advised me to leave the oil on my face and the mud in my hair for as long as possible for added benefit. As I headed to the Zen garden I took Irene up on her offer of a smoothie, which was served with a side of chocolate, just my type of smoothie! Even though it's located in a business park, the **g Hotel** has managed to create

a wonderful Zen roof garden with beautiful bonsai trees where you can thoroughly relax after your treatment.

With my time in the spa complete (after a quick detour back to the thermal suite!) I decided to head for lunch in one of the **hotel's** lounges. With the Grand Salon pretty full, I opted for the Pink Lounge over the Blue Lounge. Looking out at Lough Atalia, I enjoyed a goat's cheese ciabatta for lunch and coffee, which was accompanied by a sweet treat from the chef, perfect! Frequented by guests and locals alike, it was easy to see that the **g's** hallmark afternoon tea was quite popular and watching it being served I can see why, but with dinner booked in the Matz restaurant that evening, it might have been a tad too much for me.

Completely relaxed and fed, I wandered back to the room to spend a relaxing afternoon with my book before getting ready for dinner. While I generally choose a book over a movie any day, the room was equipped with an LCD TV and a DVD player for the movie fans out there. I also took the opportunity to enjoy the bath and was delighted to see that the bathroom had different

light settings, allowing for soft lighting that almost, but not quite, sent me to sleep!

After partaking in a champagne reception and hearing all about the Volvo Ocean Race, which is stopping off in Galway for two weeks in May/June, it was time for dinner at the Matz restaurant, which is decorated in the same vibrant, opulent style seen throughout the entire **hotel**. Dinner was truly delicious with a special menu allowing me to sample a little of everything, from goat's cheese, to lobster ravioli, lamb, pheasant and chicken and of course a delicious dessert to complete the meal.

Enjoying drinks in the Grand Salon afterwards, I admired the lighting that has become somewhat of a signature feature for the **hotel**. After a relatively early night and breakfast the following morning in the Matz, it was time to reluctantly check out of the **g Hotel**, but I left the **hotel** feeling completely relaxed and vowing to return soon.

For more information on the **g Hotel** and the special offers available you can log onto www.theghotel.ie or phone 091 865200.



The Pink Salon at the **g**.



The Zen relaxation room in ESPA.



The cocktail bar in the **g Hotel**.



The Grand Salon at the **g Hotel**.