

Hot, Hot, Hot
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Lucky
April 2005

From Turkish-style *hammams* to Russian *banyas*, the best steam treatments across the country are big on atmosphere.

Steam rooms have been detoxifying and destressing people for thousands of years. "You find versions of cleansing steam rituals in almost every culture," says Surinder Bains Kassur of Miraj Hammam in Vancouver, British Columbia. "They boost the immune system, plus they improve breathing, circulation, and lymphatic drainage." While the steam shower in the gym does the job, these spectacular, indulgent spaces are a serious step up. Some spas charge for daylong access; others offer free, unlimited access in conjunction with any of their services. Some are coed; some are single-sex. Either way, they're superluxe and Old World-y all at once.

Vancouver

Miraj Hammam

mirajhammam.com

Phone: 604-733-5151

What: Basic Package, about \$75 (U.S.), 45 minutes. You have your own private *hammam* (or steam chamber) for 30 minutes, during which an attendant comes in and gives you a scrub; you move on to a 15-minute massage with an aromatherapist, then enter the public, pillowy Sultana lounge (where they serve mint tea and Persian sweet cakes, and you stay as long as you want).

Bonus: If you bring a friend and share the steam room, your *hammam*/scrub time jumps to 45 minutes--at no extra charge.

Vibe: This is probably the most authentic *hammam* this side of Damascus; the black-olive soap is Moroccan, and the walls are made from gold marble from Jerusalem.