

StyleSpeakTM

The Journal



September 2022 ₹100

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Issue

COCONUT LAGOON

A state that is known for Ayurveda, there really is no better place to experience an authentic massage than here.

Words | Bindu Gopal Rao



The 5000 plus year old science of Ayurveda has been the home of Kerala and this is where one can experience the best of the treatments and massages using traditional techniques and ingredients.

Visiting the **Coconut Lagoon Kumarakom** is a sensory experience from the start. The entrance to the property is via a short boat ride from the jetty located 10 minutes away. The calming backwaters of the Vembanad Lake and the bordering greens from the bird sanctuary sets the tone for a relaxing break.

On entering the property, sustainability is seen in spirit here. All the guest rooms have actually been recreated to resemble traditional houses by re-assembling on-site using old homes from neighbouring villages.

The Ayurveda Centre

The spa located within the property is called the Ayurveda Center that has traditional Kerala wood and roof tiled architecture. **Mridula Jose, Vice**



President Marketing, CGH Earth says, "The wooden bed, steam boxes are made to order with traditional carpenters of Kerala. All the structures at Coconut Lagoon

are old traditional wooden houses or tharawads that were saved from demolition or sold as parts in the antique market to the international market. Some of these structures were collected from the central Kerala region, dismantled piece by piece and re-assembled at Coconut Lagoon by traditional carpenters. The Ayurveda Centre sits in one of these structures that have been protected. We retrofitted massage rooms into these structures with wooden walls and pitched roofs. The centre has a waiting lounge, a consultation area, massage rooms and staff facility areas."





Treatments

Spread over 2000 square feet with six rooms, the center uses Ayurveda and Marma Chikitsa in combination as part of its treatments. If you are wondering what Marma Chikitsa is, it is the ancient unique method of healing related to kalaripayattu, the traditional martial art form. Sacrosanct, this goes back to Indian mythology where it is believed that this was discovered by Lord Shiva. The system has two branches Sarira siksha (for ailments) and Sarira raksha (for beauty). “Staff training is a continuous process with training happening every week. As a part of traditional Kerala classical Ayurveda practice, the therapists practice Kalari Payattu as a form of exercise for strength and flexibility on alternate days,” adds Jose.

The products being used are specially prepared medicinal herb infused oils. The base oil is either coconut or gingelly oil and different combinations of herbs are infused for specific treatment oils.

One of their signature treatments is the **Kalari Uzhichil** (deep tissue massage). “Kalari” means “martial arts”, Uzhichil means “massage” and the treatment has a head massage with the prescribed medicated oil and a complete shoulder and spine massage focusing on the marmas using medicated oil. Once complete, two therapists perform a vigorous and rhythmic massage which alleviates fatigue, relaxes the body, improves blood circulation and complexion, improves sleep, and vitality, and reduces stress and strain. The massage also improves lymphatic

circulation and reduces the tendency of swelling in different parts of the body. Towards the end of treatment, a steam bath may be prescribed depending on the person’s condition.

I chose to do the 45-minute **General Body Massage**. The session started with an invigorating head massage that was done using herbal coconut oil. My masseur, Biji, started with gentle strokes and used her fingers to massage my head for close to five minutes. She followed this with a shoulder and hand massage. After this I was asked to lie face down on the spa table and she started the body massage using a sesame oil infused with herbs. Sesame oil is meant to be good for the skin as it has a high vitamin E content. Biji first spread the oil all over and then started with the back and legs massage. Her deft strokes and quick hand movements that work in tandem, removed all the stress from my muscles and comes from her 20-year experience. Little wonder that many guests ask for her services while booking a stay here. She used a combination of short strokes and elongated ones as she massaged both sides of the back and legs. Once done, I turn on my back and she completed the massage on the front as well. You can choose to do a face massage that was done with a face cream. After this she wiped my feet clean before I headed for a shower. Once I was outside, she put a pinch of Ayurvedic powder on my head to prevent me from catching a cold.

A warm cup of ginger tea brings an end to the refreshing session. **SS**

Fact File

Name: Ayurveda Centre at Coconut Lagoon

Established: 1993

Founders: CGH Earth

Architect: The Ayurveda centre was set up by the in-house projects team of CGH Earth led by one of the owners, Mr. Thomas Dominic

Treatment rooms: 6

Number of estheticians: 16 therapists, 6 men and 10 women

Signature Treatment: Kalari Uzhichil (deep tissue massage) for 1.5 hours

Timings: 7:00 am to 7:00 pm

Contact: +91 481 2528200, coconutlagoon@cghearth.com

Address: Coconut Lagoon, CGH Earth, Kumarakom, Kottayam District, Kerala-686563

Website: <https://www.cghearth.com/coconut-lagoon/facilities>