

A Luxe Getaway at Ilika Spa at Outpost 12, Kanha

If you are looking for a relaxing experience amidst a wildlife getaway, Ilika Spa at Outpost 12, a sustainable eco-lodge at Kanha National Park in Madhya Pradesh, is your answer

Words | Bindu Gopal Rao

Wildlife holidays are exhilarating and enjoyable but also quite tiring with strict wakeup schedules and long safari hours. And this calls for rest and relaxation, and I found exactly this at the Ilika Spa.

Ensconced in nature

Outpost 12 in Kanha is a nine key boutique retreat by Sinali Experiences and is all luxury getaway that is rooted in sustainability. Overlooking the Banjar River, the rooms are spacious at 700 sq.ft. with a 375 sq. ft. private deck. The bio lodge redefines a luxe stay with gourmet meals and experiences to match.

A sanctuary of healing

Likewise, the inhouse Ilika Spa is a mindfully created wellness space positioned as a 'healing sanctuary within a jungle heartland.' The spa operates on two interconnected dimensions: **Inside-Out** (utilising highly potent, hyper-local botanical and earth ingredients to heal the skin and body) and **Outside-In** (incorporating the sensory elements of the surrounding wilderness, such as forest soundscapes, the gurgle of the adjacent Banjar River and guided forest bathing)

Design rooted in the land

Reflecting the architecture of Outpost 12, the design of the spa rejects industrial synthetic fixtures in favour of a raw, 'indigenously Kanha' design aesthetic. In alignment with the property's bio-lodge ethos, the spa prioritises **100% natural, unadulterated raw ingredients** over commercial chemical brands. Hyper-local, community-sourced raw materials take precedence. This includes **organic dairy** from adjacent villages, **wild honey** harvested directly by the Baiga Tribal Community and **botanical essential oils**.



“Safaris take a physical toll on the body. Our heated herbal potli treatments are designed specifically to target deep muscular tension & erase safari fatigue”

- Sunita, Spa Therapist,
Sinali Experiences Private Limited.



Getting the basics right

Because the spa serves as an interpretative window into the jungle ecosystem, the staff undergoes a rigorous **two-tier training** framework. On the **onboarding level training**, emphasis is placed on structural anatomy, deep-tissue physiology, traditional Ayurvedic alignment and safety protocols. Critically, staff are trained in environmental integration, learning how to synchronise treatment rhythms with ambient sensory additions (e.g., matching massage cadences with the acoustics of the natural habitat).

The **ongoing/long-term training** includes continuous educational workshops focusing on natural ingredient handling, client personalisation, advanced marma point therapy and community engagement. Because the property is conservation-led, staff interact regularly with resident naturalists to deepen their understanding of local ethnobotany (the tribal use of forest plants for medicinal purposes).

Relaxing session

I choose the 60-minute full-body oil massage/malish treatment. My therapist Sunita tells me that using warm aromatic oils would release the tension in my muscles. Considering that I had been travelling for six days prior to this, these words sounded like music to my ears.

After I fill in a basic health assessment form, I am led inside. Here there is a spa room, changing room, steam room, and a washroom. My therapist asks me to change, and I lie down on the spa bed face down. The session begins with a warm towel rubbed on my feet that is instantly relaxing. After this, a quick dry massage is done.

Starting with the back, my masseur uses a variety of techniques to relax my body. Interestingly, the most effective one feels like a braided movement that is calming. Applying oil and using pressure from her hands, fingers and thumbs, the back massage is quite rejuvenating. The legs are also



massaged with long strokes, and the feet are given a special massage that is perfect for my very tired feet. Once I turn over, she massages the front of my legs, stomach, and shoulders. You can also have a head massage (I opted for oil) that is again done using pressure from her thumbs.

At the end of the hour, all my fatigue and stress seem to have vanished. I shower and change and sip a glass of warm tea and feel ready to take on my next adventure. **SS**

Fact File

- **Name of The Spa:** Ilika – The Spa (at Outpost 12, Kanha)
- **Established:** 2024
- **Founders:** Sinali Experiences Pvt. Ltd.
- **Architect:** Setu Design Studio, New Delhi
- **Treatment Rooms:** 2 dedicated indoor treatment rooms + specialised open-air/ outdoor treatment areas.
- **Number of aestheticians:** 1 (1 more to be hired).
- **Signature Treatment:** Outpost 12 Signature Therapy.
- **Timings:** Open Daily (Prior reservations required via lodge front desk).
- **Address:** 171/2, Village Tilari, Tehsil Bichhiya, Kanha National Park, Mandla, Madhya Pradesh - 481768.
- **Contact:** +91-920-224-9129
- **Website:** www.sinali.in/outpost12

