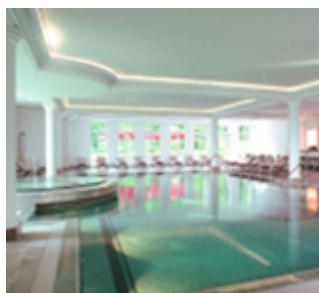


Created by: Debra C. Argen and Edward F. Nesta

Heiligendamm Spa

The 3,000-square meter **Heiligendamm Spa** at the **Grand Hotel Heiligendamm** in **Germany** won a Spa Diamond Award in 2007, and after experiencing it for ourselves we knew why they had won this prestigious award.



We arrived early to the Spa before our scheduled treatment times to experience as much of the Spa as possible. We began by swimming laps in the pool kept at a comfortable temperature of 30° C (86 ° F), followed by a soak in the whirlpool kept at 35° C (95 ° F). One of the nice things about the pool area is it is surrounded by windows offering guests natural light.

Debra: The Spa has Finnish saunas (90° C/194° F with 10% relative humidity), steam baths (45° C/113° F with 100% relative humidity), and Caldariums (40° C/104° F with 100% relative humidity), kept at various temperatures and levels of humidity, and we moved from one to another in search of the one that was just right. We emerged with skin aglow and pink, and while Edward declined, I walked up the steps to the outdoor relaxation area, and took a very quick dunk in the plunge pool, feeling like I had just had a swim in the Baltic Sea since it was early March 2008. Returning to the warmth of the sauna area, I discovered an ice room and stepped inside for a few moments to savor the exquisite cold and feel the snow on my hands, and loved experiencing the extremes in climate adding yet another sensory experience to my Spa visit.

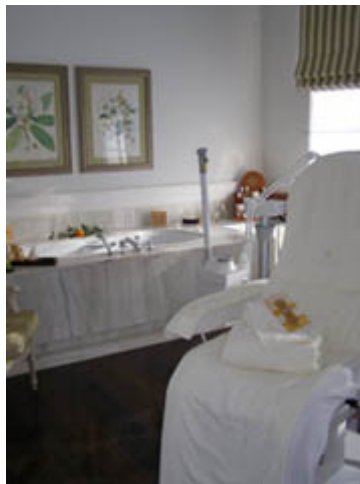
Edward: While I awaited for Debra to return from making the rounds of the plunge pool and the ice room, I was eagerly looking forward to my massage treatment. I met with my therapist Ulrike, and after a consultation, I decided on the Nuad Thai Ceremony "In the Kingdom of Siam." I was very pleased that I could select the Thai treatment as I find that there is nothing better for my body after a long day of travel than to have my muscles stretched and massaged; this is an energizing, rigorous, and revitalizing treatment. Ulrike asked me if I would like a soothing milk bath to relax me before the massage and I eagerly said yes. Past experience has told me that a nice relaxing bath will set my body in the right frame of 'mind' to achieve the full affect from a Thai treatment. So, relaxed after a 10 minute soak in the milk bath, I was ready.

For me a good Thai massage opens up my body by stretching individual muscles in my arms, legs, feet, hands, and back. They say that a Thai massage is like doing Yoga except that the therapist does all the work and you gain all the benefits. This treatment does not use oils and I wore loose fitting clothes while lying on a mat. My muscles were compressed, joints loosened, and acupressure was applied to key points of my body. This is one of my favorite treatments as my muscles feel great, my blood flow is better, and I always feel energized and ready to go. The Thai massage is a classic and ancient treatment dating back more than 2,500 years, and when well performed, as it was at the Heiligendamm Spa, it is a treatment to remember.



Debra: The Spa treatment menu offers a delicious variety of decadent facials and body treatments, and although the Baltic Diamonds, which uses diamonds and freshwater pearls, and the Caviar Firming Treatment sounded divine, it was the La Prairie Cellular Pure Gold Radiance Facial, that I decided I had to experience. Talk about the ultimate in luxury; imagine having 24-kt gold flakes incorporated into a serum for a facial treatment.

For the next 90 minutes, my therapist Jessica did a complete 12-step treatment that had me feeling like a million dollar baby. The treatment room was spacious and light-filled with a comfortable reclining chair where the treatment took place. The treatment began with a back massage while I sat in my spa robe, and instantly I felt the tension in my shoulders, neck, and upper back relax under her expert massage.

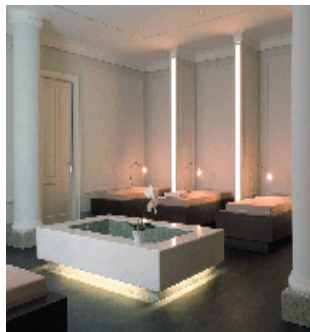


Next on the program was a gently facial cleaning, followed by a peeling mask which she applied to my face, and while it was working its magic, she also applied a peeling mask to my arms. After the cleaning and the peeling was complete, it was time for a thorough deep cleansing of the pores with steam, and an eyebrow shaping while I reclined in the chair, and I do not think that she missed a single, solitary pore in her examination of my skin seeking out any errant imperfection. By the time she was done, there was not one eyebrow hair out of line, and no pore had escaped her expert scrutiny.

Although my face had been cleansed, peeled, steamed, and shaped, I still had more treatments to follow. Continuing with her many steps, Jessica next applied a firming lotion, topped that with a fiber mask, and then applied a very warm jelly mask on top of everything to let my skin soak up all the benefits.

While I "baked" under my mask, Jessica applied cream to my arms to hydrate the skin and massaged them to increase the circulation, and although I could not see a thing, I felt safe, secure, and absolutely fabulous.

Mask removed, I was still not done with my treatments. Next came a facial and eye massage, followed by an energizing mask with La Prairie 24-kt lotion, and a foot massage. This was truly the ultimate in luxurious facial treatments from head to toe.



The Spa offers a complete line of La Prairie -The Art of Beauty treatments; Ligne St BARTH treatments; exotic massage treatments a few of which include La Stone Therapy, Pantai Luar, Traditional Nuad Thai Massage and Nuad Thai Ceremony, Tui Na Massage Therapy, Lomi-Lomi Nui "Hawaiian Dreams," Ayurvedic Massage, Shiatsu, Reiki, and Tibetan Singing Bowls Massage; Thalasso treatments; Wraps; and much more. They also have a state-of-the-art Fitness Center, and yoga classes with a Yoga Master from Himalayan, which leaves us with more to experience on our next visit.

Read other articles on the in **Grand Hotel Heiligendamm** the **Destinations, Hotels and Resorts, Restaurants, Chefs' Recipes** and **Adventures** sections.



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For information on **Heiligendamm and Bad Doberan**, please visit the website, www.Bad-Doberan-Heiligendamm.de.

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