

divine decadence

EVERY GIRLY GIRL'S DREAM IS TO SHOP, HAVE SPA TREATMENTS AND STAY IN LUXURIOUS SURROUNDINGS. WELCOME TO THE SOFITEL LOS ANGELES. WORDS BY RICKY ALLEN

Prepare to be pampered at the Sofitel Los Angeles in Beverly Hills, California. Combining French style with Hollywood glamour, the hotel is oh-so conveniently located just across the road from the Beverley Center which has 100 shops for sheer shopping indulgence. On the other side of the road is the Beverley Connection, which now boasts Marshall's, Ross Dress for Less and Nordstrom Rack – the best of the outlet shopping stores.

The Sofitel has two amazing packages which would thrill any woman. The first is the Girlfriend package, including a suite for four people and one of Hollywood's A-list stylists who can either take you shopping or have a selection of clothes waiting for you after you check in. All you need to do beforehand is email your size, colouring, age and any preferences. Over a chilled glass of champagne you and your girlfriends can try on all the pre-selected clothes.



The second package offers a chauffeur-driven limousine to take you to all the best shopping destinations and – importantly – your own helper to carry all your shopping bags as you go!

If you need to wind down after all that shopping, luxuriate in the surrounds of your hotel room. All the rooms have L'Occitane beauty amenities and are the picture of modern elegance. Otherwise head poolside and watch TV on the big screen in one of the hotel's heated cabanas or indulge in a swim in the outdoor heated pool. Perhaps finish with a sauna session, the perfect antidote for a tired shopper's feet.

Once you're revived and refreshed, head down to the ground floor for some haute cuisine at SIMON LA, run by celebrity chef Kerry Simon. Whether eating indoor or alfresco, you can relax and socialise in style.

For after-dinner cocktails, you can't go past the Sofitel's Stone Rose Lounge which is owned and operated by Rande Gerber, Cindy Crawford's husband. It's definitely the place to see and be seen – and rubbing shoulders with a celeb is always a bonus!

When you feel you need a break from shopping, you will find Le Spa at Sofitel beckoning you. It has over 5,000 square feet of purpose-built space, including eight treatment

rooms, two couples suites and a lounge area designed by the mastermind responsible for all the Westin hotel refurbishments. It's all very zen and relaxing.

There are two Le Spa Suites, which include a personal changing area, steam shower and hydrotherapy tub with chromacolour. There is also an indoor/outdoor manicure and pedicure area.

In the lounge area you can indulge in a cup of tea chosen to meet your immediate needs, whether to combat fatigue or stress, for example. While enjoying your tea you are given a footbath to really help with your relaxation. Declor and Carita are the skincare brands used at Le Spa.

Next up comes your spa treatment of choice, which you can then follow with either the NanoSpa Immersion Therapy or one of the Le Spa special bath services. There is a huge list of treatments for women, including pregnant women, and men for both the face or body.

I had a combination of the Ideal Beauty and the Progressive Beauty facials. The treatment lasted for 90 minutes and included an elixir of sunflower seeds marinated in the essential oils of thyme, lemon and clove to exfoliate, purify, brighten and soften the skin. This was combined with products from Carita, leaving my skin absolutely glowing.

I then had a NanoSpa Immersion bath. A special blend of herbs was added to my bath, which was surrounded by candles, and chromo colour therapy was also activated in the room. I was left feeling so relaxed I could barely climb out of the deep spa bath afterwards!

You can also have full body skin brushing with this treatment. Some of the other treatments available include the eye restoration treatment, which includes use of the Pro-Lift machine to further improve the appearance of the skin around the eyes.

For the pregnant woman there is the Prenatal massage, which improves circulation, reduces swelling in the hands and feet and releases tension along the spine.

Brides swear by the Satin Skin treatment – a full body treatment for resurfacing, hydrating, nourishing and firming the skin using a combination of Carita skincare and hand-mixed essential oils.

Men are lining up for the Fresh Facial, which uses the power of trace elements and plant extracts to freshen, smooth and brighten the skin.

There really is a treatment for everyone – even a special pedicure designed for die-hard stiletto wearers. It consists of a combination of massages and foot scrubs, finished with polish. And, if the extensive menu of treatments isn't enough, Le Spa will design and deliver a treatment especially designed to meet your individual skin needs – the So Luxe bespoke spa treatment.

If your dream is to spa, shop and stay in luxury, the Sofitel LA in Beverley Hills is definitely the place for you. **bella**