

TIME TO BE WELL



IN THE PAST travellers often had to choose between a resort with great golf or with a great spa –often pitting husband against wife, not a great way to start a holiday! Now all that has changed... *By: Dena Roché, photos*



Want some fantastic golf and a bit of pampering? No problem, just jump the pond to Turnberry Isle, Miami. It's home to arguably the best courses in South Florida and a nearly £2 million new spa, offering complete wellness immersion.

Located north of the city, Turnberry offers 122 tropical hectares for guests to enjoy a golf and wellness retreat in a Mediterranean-style setting. The Autograph Collection hotel is celebrating 50 years of being one of the area's top resorts and favourite celebrity haunt, attracting sports stars like Muhammad Ali and Arnold Palmer, artists like Andy Warhol and even world leaders like President Bill

Clinton and Prime Minister Tony Blair. And this past May, I joined the ranks of those who have stayed at the iconic property.

There are nearly 400 rooms and 27 suites. I selected a deluxe king golf room with a balcony overlooking the courses and 65 sq. metres of living space. The rooms were renovated in 2015 with modern furniture and a neutral colour palette, and feature Frette linens as well as Molton Brown amenities.

CHAMPIONSHIP COURSES. Golf has always been the standout feature at Turnberry and I meet with Augie Natale, who calls himself the Maître D' of Golf to explore the two championship courses on property; the Soffer and Miller.

In the mid 2000s, Raymond Floyd gave both courses, originally designed by Robert Trent Jones Sr, a £35 million renovation and redesign. In 2012, Turnberry was named Golf Resort of the Year by the International Association of Golf Tour Operators and holds a 4.5 star rating from Golf Digest. It has hosted both PGA and LPGA tour stops. Like the hotel itself, the golf club attracts high profile members like Michael Jordan, Martina Navratilova and James Caan.

Golf carts are equipped with GPS with hole diagrams and accurate measurements from tee to pin. The facility includes a golf academy, two driving ranges, two putting areas and a chipping area. And thanks to a partnership with Ship Sticks you

can send your own clubs or rent Callaway XR clubs.

Both courses have a lush tropical feel and offer the challenge of elevation shifts, countered bunkers, sharp changes within holes and water features that can throw a twist into nearly every hole played. With five sets of tees on the par-71 Soffer course, and six on the par-70 Miller, the courses are adaptable for all levels of play.

According to Natale the front of the Miller and the back of the Soffer are the most challenging. The signatures are the 18th hole on Soffer, a par-five, 571-yarder from the back tee, and the 5th hole, a par-5 that covers 566 yards from the back on Miller.

While you might be cussing your play throughout, the beauty of the course will bring a level of needed Zen. Over £77,000 in



landscaping was spent on each hole, and the courses are a veritable wildlife sanctuary with hundreds of tropical birds. Several nesting areas are situated on the courses, including 'Flamingo Island' built to allow these symbolic birds of Florida a safe place to nest. I see several of the graceful pink birds while I'm on the course, as well as many large iguanas roaming the grounds.

WELCOME TO WELLNESS. While the courses are gorgeous, the beauty isn't enough to overcome my frustration of being a newbie golfer. For me to really find my personal Zen I was going to have

to check out Turnberry's newest claim to fame; the Ame Spa & Wellness Collective.

The three-floor, 1900 sq. metre spa is one of the most comprehensive I have seen outside a destination spa. While they offer all the standard spa services (and more), they've created partnerships with other local healthcare providers to offer quite a comprehensive approach to health.

The board-certified doctors of Rezilir Health offer integrative and functional medicine services, including the Mechanical Golf Assessment or Office Ergonomic Assessment. Onsite cosmetic

surgery is even provided by the Physician's Institute of Cosmetic and Reconstructive Surgery, the same docs that performed Angelina Jolie's reconstruction. Spa director Tammy Pahal tells me that the "Mommy Makeover" (tummy tuck and breast lift) is insanely popular. I get it, I'd rather recoup at Turnberry than a hospital or my home too.

But with nothing to nip, tuck or assess (remember I have no golf game to speak of), I was here for the traditional spa services and Ame didn't disappoint. There are over 70 treatments on the menu blending Eastern, Western and Hydrotherapy modalities.

CHARIENI TREATMENT. I arrive at the spa early to take advantage of their Wellness Circuit that includes 20 minutes in the Aroma steam room, 20 minutes in the Himalayan Salt room and five minutes enjoying the powerful Swiss shower.

One thing that really sets Ame apart from other spas is the innovative Gharieni treatments. According to Pahal, Sammy Gharieni, an engineer by trade, created special massage beds and services for his wife who suffered from Fibromyalgia.

The first service I sample is the Alisselle Amethyst Himalayan Massage. It's performed on a table with a bed of heated quartz



WHILE THERE IS PLENTY OF WELLNESS AND GOLF AT THE RESORT TO KEEP YOU BUSY FOR DAYS, YOU MAY WANT TO EXPERIENCE THE CITY OF MIAMI AS WELL. MOST ATTRACTIONS, LIKE FAMED SOUTH BEACH, ARE ABOUT 32KM

and salt, which produces ionized air that is ideal for detoxing the respiratory system. The therapist cocoons me within the quartz, sort of like creating a snow angel, to ground me to the table and allow the heat to work its magic as she uses both Quartz poultices and her hands in a full-body massage.

With my body like jelly from the soothing massage, it's time to get my brain in balance and my skin glowing with the Hypnotic Facial. What makes this European facial unique is that it is performed on the Spa Wave table, which combines a water-filled pillow-top bed with vibrational sound and colour therapy. I get situated on the table and have flashbacks to a childhood sleepover in a 1980s waterbed. The Natura Bissé facial is customised to my skin type and when it is finished the therapist gives me noise cancelling headphones to enjoy 30-minutes of Quantum Harmonic sounds.

The audio frequencies are designed to match the chakras of the body and are deeply relaxing. Clinical studies found that one treatment can reduce stress and depression by 40 to 60 per cent, improve sleep and reduce pain. During the service, coloured lights, which correspond to the chakras, are also displayed.

I'm not a huge fan of body scrubs, but if you are you must book one here to experience the new Libra table. This bed also has a heated water mattress and the Vichy shower has a built in sound system and chromotherapy that choreographs to the treatment.

FITNESS AND FOOD. The Ame Spa isn't all about pampering, it also has some serious fitness chops with over 96 fitness classes per

week, and most are complimentary for resort guests. Check out the yoga, Pilates and spin studios at the well-appointed fitness centre.

Figuring my yoga class and time in the gym pre-burned calories, I feel no guilt heading to the resort's main restaurant, Bourbon Steak, from James Beard Award-winning chef, Michael Mina. As with any steakhouse, you can make it as healthy or unhealthy as you like. This being a wellness trip, I stick to clean eating, sharing the epic chilled seafood tour of shrimp, lobster, oysters and crab with my boyfriend before we split the signature Miso-glazed Sea Bass. My one indulgence is a bottle of Heitz Cellars cabernet, one of my favourite labels.

While there is plenty of wellness and golf at the resort to keep you busy for days, you may want to experience the city of Miami as well. Most attractions, like famed South Beach, are about 32km away. Miami has a strong car-sharing network so you can get around using Uber if you choose not to rent a car. The Aventura Mall across the street from Turnberry is the third largest mall in the country and is a favourite with Brits.

Turnberry Isle Miami is proof positive that you can keep the household peace and enjoy a tropical golf and spa getaway in one.

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GOOD TO KNOW

Getting here: Direct flights are available on a wide variety of airlines from London to Miami. The Miami airport is 29km away.

Turnberry Isle Miami: <http://www.turnberryisle.com/>

