

A JOURNEY OF THE SENSES

Embark on an exquisite adventure of sensual delights along Bali's only Sensorial Hydro Trail and a holistic body-and-mind detox at the Acqua Perla Spa, a chic new spa in Seminyak that is taking wellness and beauty standards to new hedonistic heights—Double-Six style.

A day at the spa is something to look forward to, especially when it hints of a little water adventure. Upon arrival at the Acqua Perla Spa, an elegant spa located in the Double-Six Luxury Hotel in Seminyak, I was ushered into a white consultation cocoon and served a refreshing herbal drink and a cold towel.

"Today you will be experiencing the Detox and Soul Body Balance treatment designed to detoxify your body and rebalance your soul," said a charming spa consultant in greeting,

who proceeded to brief me on my 2.5-hour itinerary: a Sensorial Hydro Trail, a foot ritual, a 60-minute Balinese Microcosm Massage and a chakra balancing treatment. I had arrived in spa heaven.

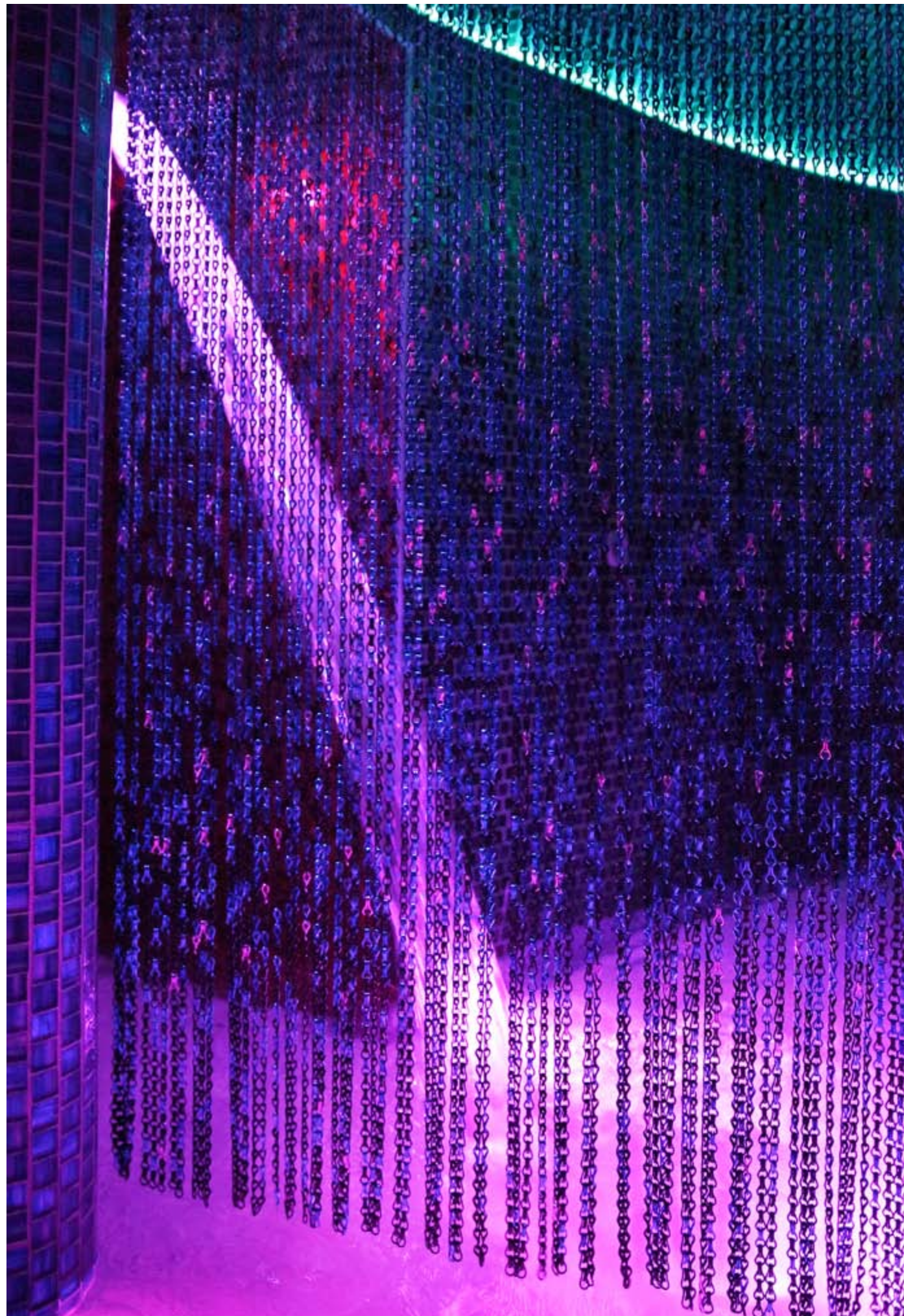
The Acqua Perla Spa is a peaceful sanctuary designed to absolute perfection by Fabrice Garrigues, borrowing inspiration from the tropical beachfront and the therapeutic element of water. "I wanted to share the passion to take visitors through a peaceful journey," he said.

The marine theme is alive and flowing in its minimalistic, fluid interiors with blue and white accents, mosaic walls, bubbling water displays with motion colour mood change and eccentric sea-themed glass art pieces by Ron Seivertson, Bali's long-term resident and hot-blown glass artist. The lighting of the spa is set to change every three hours according to the mood of the day: blue in the morning, yellow in the afternoon, amber at dusk and purple in the evening.

The contemporary wellness space features state-of-the-art equipment, unique facilities and luxurious amenities: his and her changing lounges (with lockers, private changing rooms, showers and vanity corners), an indulgent Turkish Hammam, a nail lounge, two beauty rooms for waxing and facials utilizing premium spa brands boasting 100% natural ingredients (Valmont, Elemis and Babor), an exquisite hair spa lounge with a posh hair spa sofa, four double suites (one with a Vichy shower), two single treatment rooms, a fully fitted fitness studio and a recovery lounge filled with comfy loungers, soon-to-be-revealed resonance chambers and the highlight of the spa—the island's one and only Vitality Hydro Trail—which I was about to experience.

After selecting my preferred massage oil, answering a few general health questions and changing into my swimsuit, a friendly therapist led me to the entrance of the Sensorial Hydro Trail veiled by a frosted glass door. The 30-minute detox journey resembled going on a dark ride in a shamanistic funhouse with components of fairy tales and added health benefits. It consisted of seven different clusters alternating hot and cold hydrotherapy, fully guided by the vocals of my therapist from a dry distance.

I entered a mysterious tunnel, treading lightly on the first cluster on a soft grassy floor with ten mini water fountains bubbling up between my legs. Beyond a metal chain curtain, I walked into a Moroccan-



style “cellulite cave” with a warm, pebbled acupressure riverbed lit in cool blue. I sat on a throne, allowing the strong pressure of the water jets to massage my lower body, (hopefully) melting my cellulite away. I imagined myself as an enchanted Alice in Wonderland and a slightly confused Princess Jasmine as I looked up to admire the (artificial) twinkling starlit sky.

When the water turned blue, I moved on to a volcanic steam cave where I was encouraged to rub my body with crushed ice from a glass bowl—an experience I initially found strange but surprisingly invigorating. In the fourth cluster, I stood under a strong waterfall, letting it pound on my tense neck and shoulders. Next, I strolled back and forth between an alley of water jets blasting hot and cold streams.

The final clusters involved walking through a misty rainforest of vines and lights and surrendering on a stone bed in the glitzy Hammam for a head-to-toe Cendana Scrub Exfoliation Therapy. After a quick rinse, I was led to a small room where a huge wooden bucket labelled “cold water” hung high with a dangling rope. Someone has a wicked sense of humour! I was rewarded for being brave with a soothing 10-minute steam on the purple glass mosaic bench of the Hammam.

Following a fruit-and-chi-water refreshment and a foot cleansing, I was treated to the Balinese Microcosm Massage derived from an ancient technique of cross friction, long strokes, thumb and palm pressures to improve circulation and relieve muscle tensions. The treatment came to a close with my very first chakra balancing: seven discs were strategically placed on the energetic centres of my body from the Kundalini Chakra to the Lotus Crown Chakra for 20 minutes. With each disc, I was asked to imagine a specific colour of the rainbow.

In the recovery lounge, with my physical well-being restored, energy balanced and spirit awakened, a sense of calmness washed over me. As I sipped on my ginger tea, admiring the setting sun on Double Six Beach, I thought to myself, “I could stay here all day.”

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