



Relaxation and elegance take center stage in Current's co-ed hot tub room, which patrons may enjoy at no additional charge.

## SEE WHERE THE CURRENT TAKES YOU CURRENT SPA & SALON

by Paige Turner  
photos courtesy of  
Northern Quest Resort & Casino

I'VE NEVER MET A SPA I DIDN'T LIKE—AND I have put a fair amount of research into the pursuit of the perfect one. Coeur d'Alene. Spokane. Seattle. San Francisco. Los Angeles. Scottsdale. Chicago. Victoria, British Columbia. My passion for spas knows no geographical limits. For my girlfriends and I, no weekend get-together is complete without a trip to the spa. It is not strictly about the rest and relaxation; it is about the experience. So when a new spa popped up on the radar, I knew an inaugural visit was needed.

This time, though, the spa visit didn't require plane tickets, coordinating schedules with friends and packing a bag. The destination was a little closer to home: Airway Heights. Specifically, Current Spa & Salon, located in the freshly finished resort portion of the Northern Quest Resort & Casino.

Airway Heights traditionally hasn't been my go-to spot for rest and relaxation; actually, Airway Heights just hasn't been my go-to spot. I've never met a spa I didn't like, though, so when the doors swung open at Current Spa & Salon, I was willing to rise to the occasion and give it a try.

The massage I had scheduled came in handy to relieve the pulled muscles I received by craning my neck back and forth as I walked through the hotel lobby. My head whipped to the left, to the right and then back to the left. Where was I? The interior of the newly completed hotel looked more like something from New York or a high end Vegas hotel than somewhere in the middle of Airway Heights. I asked the concierge standing in front of the dark and sleek wall where the spa was located. Her arm swept to the right, extending in the direction of a circular staircase which gracefully swept downward to a lower level, wrapping around a crystal-encrusted chandelier that hung in the center of the stairwell.

I took to the stairs and descended to the hotel's lower-level, which houses Current Salon & Spa, as well as a staffed gym and indoor pool facility.

I easily slipped into the role of pamperée, beginning with the immediate attention paid to me by the attentive staff at the front desk. Upon checking in, I was escorted back into the Women's Locker Room. Gone are the locker rooms of old; this one dances a fine line between function and form. The experiential shower, with its smooth pebble floor, multiple showerheads and lights, all of which are choreographed by you with the help of a touch screen computer, ensures the best shower of

your life. For those less adventurous, there are three spacious "regular" showers available – if your definition of regular is something that looks like a five star hotel. The only complaint worth voicing about the locker room is that all of the lockers are half-sizes, meaning that my long wool coat had to fold in half rather than hang comfortably, and came out a bit wrinkled after having been packed into the small space with the rest of my belongings.

A co-ed hot tub sits in a gracious sized room with rock-style surroundings, which is accessible from both the women's and men's locker rooms. This allows couples who visit the spa together a chance to spend some time together, rather than be separated in individual locker room hot tubs as found at most spas. "We really want to have them come together, because people come with their husbands or boyfriends, and want to have that experience together," says Spa Director, Robin Jones, who previously worked at spas on Sanctuary Island in South Carolina, and at Grand Del Mar in San Diego.

Slipping into my robe, I took a few minutes to relax in the lounge before being taken back to my treatment room. An attendant reminded me I could also look at the menu for the upstairs restaurant and order any food, along with wine. Knowing the massage was more likely to relax me than a glass of red, I passed on the drink, but noted it would be well worth it on a return visit with a group of girlfriends.

In designing the spa "time was spent with Kalispel tribal members and to get to know their culture," says Jones. "They are very quiet, proud people." Elements of their culture are reflected in the use of the Camas flower, something of a signature for the tribe, and cultural artwork throughout the spa, including the decorative touches found in each elegant treatment room.

My first stop was the Secret Nature Organic Massage (\$95 for 60 minutes), provided by Denise, who is the Spa Treatment Supervisor. I appreciated the time she took to explain the background of the Secret Nature Organic Massage. "The essence of the sacred nature ritual is one that brings us back to a natural state of being, where the tree is the symbol of our body, that takes nourishment from the earth, brings protection from the outer world, from the air and from the sky," she shared. "It is a purifying ritual to remove the bark that creates a defensive armor, to cleanse away that which holds us back and to break down the barrier to our true selves. It is also a fortifying ritual that gives us strength and stability, encouraging us to keep contact with our roots, and gives nourishment to help us grow. A reassuring ritual that allows us to open up and breathe, enabling us to have wings to fly."

I now knew the theory behind the massage, but I could not anticipate how relaxing it would be. Denise has hands of magic, my friends. After an hour in her care, I felt more relaxed than I had in months. Knots and strained muscles were replaced by a delightfully rubbery, floating sense of being.

No rest for the weary, though. I went directly from the massage



The treatment rooms at Current are top of the line and will leave you feeling pampered.

into the next treatment room for my Sacred Nature Facial (\$105 for 60 minutes).

For those who think facials are a glorified face washing, let me be the first to say I was in that school of thought before Rita got her hands on me. Typically I stick to the massage and mani/pedi treatment itinerary during a day at the spa. I have never been inclined to indulge in facials due to my sensitive skin, which if scratch or touched too much, will leave a red marks. The idea of having my face man-

handled for an hour has, therefore, never been enticing. As soon as the Bio-Milk cleanser first touched my skin, I knew I was in for a treat. It did double duty relaxing and cleansing. A Gommage exfoliant and mask soon encased my face and cradled it with care as it went to work. I appreciated that this mask avoided the tight, cracked feeling that is often common with facial masks. When it was gently removed, there was none of the crumbing and flaki-

ness that often comes with home-spa masks. An application of facial massage cream gave the first hint of quenching my parched skin, but it would take more than one sip. To completely quench the thirst, it took a dose of massage oil on my face.

While I anticipated some burning or irritation on my sensitive skin at some point in the treatment, it never came. That may be due to the very gentle products available in one of the two lines used by Current. "We really chose products that are gentle, organic products," says Jones.

The end result was satiated skin that felt refreshed, renewed and alive. The proof? When my father, a man who wouldn't know face cream from shaving cream, commented two days later that my skin looked especially nice. I was officially sold on facials.

Facials and massages aren't the only treatments available at Current. It is a full service salon that can cater to bridal parties, couples or individuals with four manicure stations, a full color bar, two barber stations, nail services, spray tanning and waxing, as well as Body rituals. "The menu was created for us," says Jones of the services offered at Current. "The treatments are not on any other spa menu. I like to see consistency on the menu." If—when—you come back for repeat visits, you can count on the same services being available.

"We really want people to come in and have a full, complete experience," says Jones. "We pride ourselves in customer service. Every time people think of a gift to give, we want them to think of us and to give an experience."

And what an experience it is. As I said, I've never met a spa I didn't like—and I still haven't. ■

Current Spa & Salon is located in the lower level of the Northern Quest Resort & Casino. For more information, call (509) 242-7000