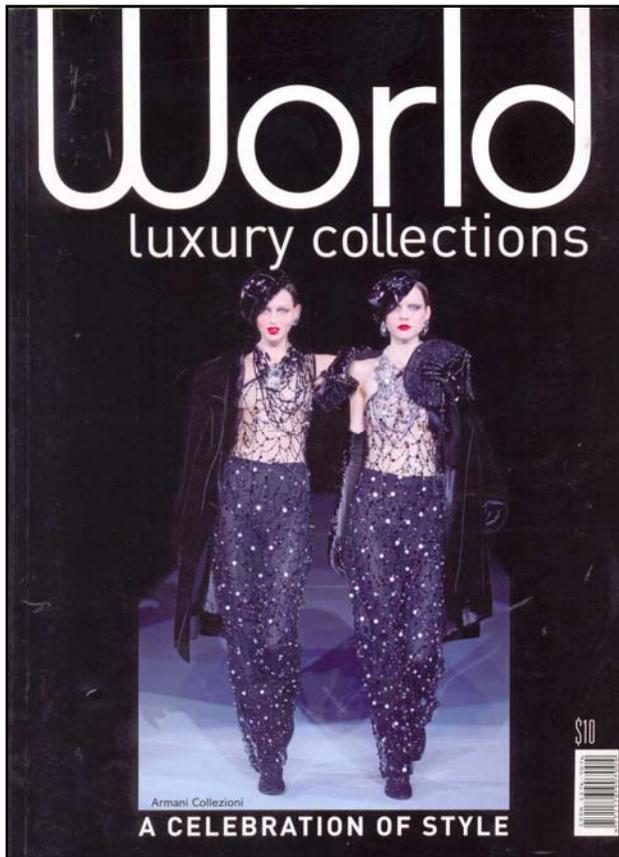


# WORLD LUXURY COLLECTION – EAST RESIDENCE

## Edition 11 – Nov 2010



**Spa Fusion**  
East Day Spa takes the best from East and West

**F**rom Indian restaurant to sophisticated day spa – an unlikely journey but a true one, told to *World* by East Day Spa founder and owner Ina Bajaj.

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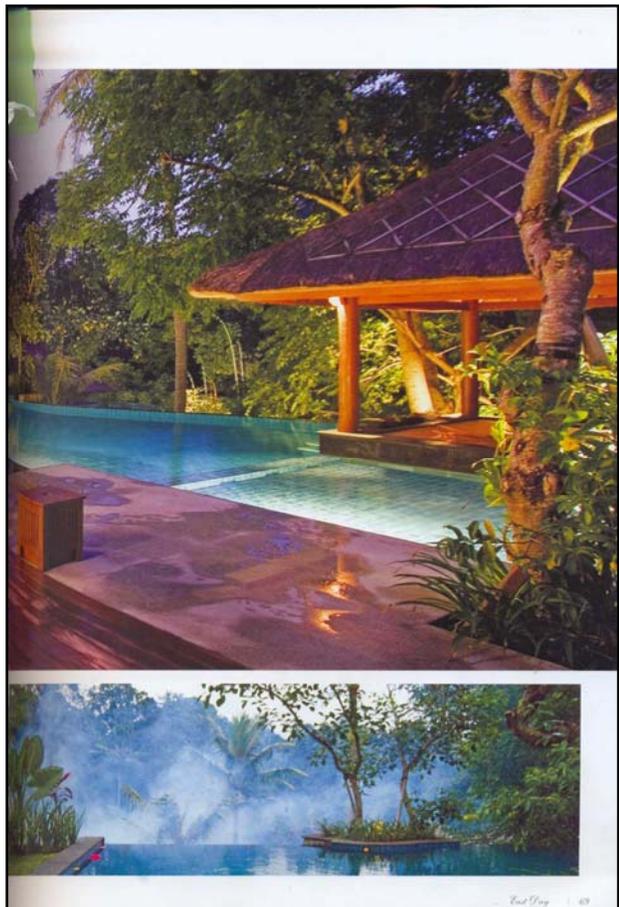
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"About that time I travelled to Bali for the first time and, as people do, I fell in love with it. I learned a lot about Balinese massage techniques and it was then we decided to change our direction slightly."

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The success of the first East Day Spa in Wellington

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## SPA FUSION

*East Day Spa takes the best from East and West.*

From Indian restaurant to sophisticated day spa — an unlikely journey but a true one, told to World by East Day Spa founder and owner Ina Bajaj.

Ina was born in Tanzania and raised in Kenya until her family moved to New Zealand when she was eight. She went to school in Wellington and later found herself managing contemporary Indian restaurant The Curry Club. It was here that she developed her current passion for Balinese spas.

“We recruited restaurant staff from India,” she told us. “One time while I was there I had a beauty treatment and it was absolutely wonderful. Indian spa treatments are among the best. That experience led me to open the first East Day Spa in Wellington in 2002. About that time I travelled to Bali for the first time and, as people do, I fell in love with it. I learned a lot about Balinese massage techniques and it was then we decided to change our direction slightly.

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The success of the first East Day Spa in Wellington led to a call from Auckland’s Sky City Grand Hotel in 2004 and a year later the second East Day Spa opened, with entrances from the hotel and from Albert Street. Ina, who now lives in Auckland, says: “I think spas have become almost a necessity for hotels now and it doesn’t matter what size property you have. So places like Kauri Cliffs have a spa because it’s become an important part of expected services. The nature of a holiday, after all, is relaxation and indulgence, not just staying in a beautiful hotel room.”

East Day Spa is an antidote to the stress of everyday life, Ina notes. “Stress manifests itself in so many ways, affecting all aspects of our lives, from our relationships to how we perform at work to our general health. I wanted to establish an environment of calm and serenity where people could take time out for their physical and mental well-being.’ Meanwhile, Ina had returned to Bali a second time. She stayed in a villa that had all the feel of a private home. As she says, “You didn’t have to get dressed in the morning to go downstairs.” The experience inspired her to buy her own place — somewhere her

extended family could come to to enjoy the beauty of Bali, just as she does. The property Ina settled on was a tie-dying factory that had gone into receivership, It sat on a hectare of terraced gardens overlooking the rice fields of Pererenan on the west coast, about a 45-minute drive from Denpasar International Airport.

After commissioning an internationally acclaimed architect and landscape gardener, Ina built a new five-bedroom home from scratch, deciding to make the new house a vacation residence for discerning guests who wanted a more private experience in Bali. She called it East Residence and Spa and today it keeps 10 full-time staff busy, including a permanent manager, security personnel, gardeners, a housekeeper and a chef. When things get really busy Ina has six part-timers she can call upon. So Ina Bajaj has come a long way from her childhood days in Africa — although she hasn't forgotten them. "I still have a strong affinity with Kenya because it's so beautiful there," she says. "The flora and fauna and the overall beauty of Africa make it one of those must-do places."

Her East Day Spas are popular for their extraordinary range of affordable treatments. And for those who come away dreaming of a holiday in Bali, there is no East Residence and Spa.

Ina has become something of an expert on getting to Bali from Auckland: "I've done every route possible and I believe the best connection now is Virgin Blue through Brisbane. There's only a 45-minute wait in Brisbane and then you are direct to Bali. You leave Auckland in the morning and you're in Bali by 2.30 in the afternoon. You have your massage booked for 4pm and by 6pm you're over jetlag."

[www.eastdayspa.com](http://www.eastdayspa.com)