

DestinAsian

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UPSTATE SECRETS

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⊕ SHANGHAI, SINGAPORE, INDIA, TOKYO

RIVERSIDE WELLNESS

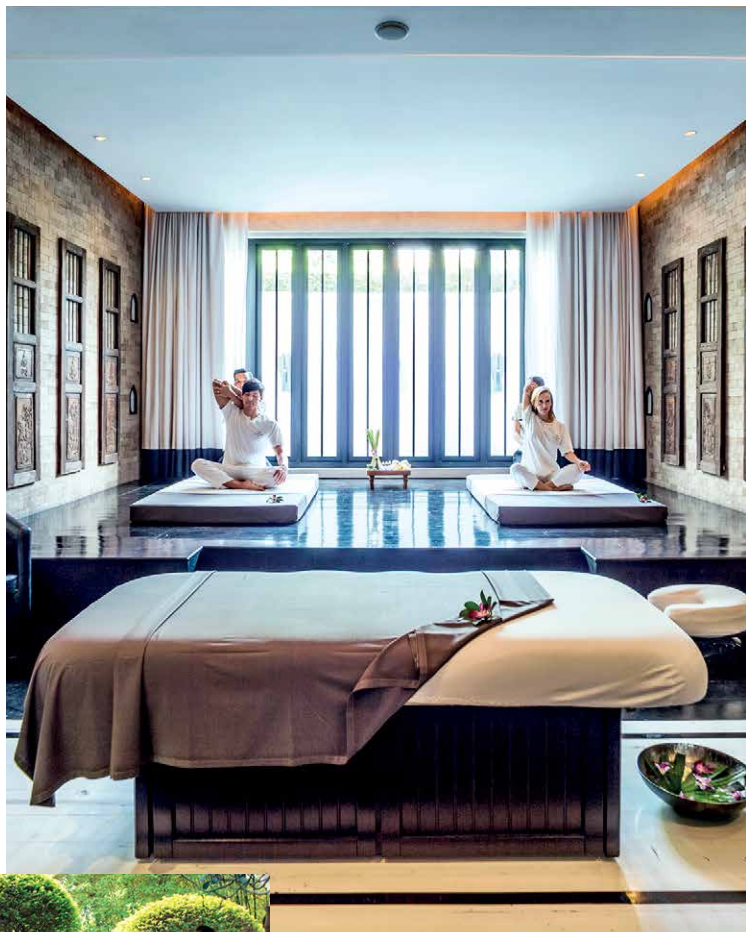
All accessible by boat, these five hotel spas along the Chao Phraya make for a rejuvenating experience on Bangkok's River of Kings.

BY ANGELA GOH

● **RICE AND SHINE** Set amid lush gardens near the Rama III Bridge, the Anantara Riverside Bangkok Resort's **Anantara Spa** champions local produce in its rice-based treatments. Try the Purifying Sri Nin Rice Scrub, which harnesses the antioxidants and vitamins B and E found in a special strain of black rice, or the 90-minute Oriental Rice Compress Massage for the rejuvenating benefits of rice bran oil (bangkok-riverside.anantara.com).

● **MIND MATTERS** Some three kilometers upriver is **The Peninsula Spa**, which occupies a three-story colonial-style Thai house on the grounds of its namesake hotel. The facility's latest offering, The Essential Mind by acclaimed Thai wellness practitioner Dr. Buathon Thien-arom, is a 90-minute mind-soothing treatment using both touch and sound therapy. This involves a gentle massage with healing oils made from jasmine, clove, and basil extracts, followed by vibrations from seven Tibetan singing bowls. Other treatments include signature massages designed in collaboration with the Wat Pho massage school and innovative facials by French skincare brand Biologique Recherche (bangkok.peninsula.com).

● **CROSS-POLLINATION** An experience that blends Thai and Balinese techniques has recently been launched at **Mandara Spa**, situated on the third floor of the Royal Orchid Sheraton Bangkok Hotel & Towers. The 2.5-hour Signature Asian Healing Journey includes insights into Thai herbs and the preparation of a traditional herbal compress, followed by a full-body Balinese massage interspersed with hot compression from the aforementioned herbal poultice. The session, in a river-facing treatment suite, rounds off with a warm mini facial compress containing ground antioxidant-rich black sesame seeds (royalorchidsheraton.com).



Above, from top: A traditional Thai massage at The Siam's Opium Spa; The Oriental Spa is centered on a greenery-lined courtyard pool.

● **QUICK FIX** The **Oriental Spa** is reached via shuttle boat from the Mandarin Oriental Bangkok across the river. Time-deprived go-getters will appreciate its 45-minute quick fixes: Beat The Stress eases tensed shoulders, heads, and arms with massages, and a hot pack is deployed to accelerate muscle relaxation. Micro Nap induces a brief slumber with essential oils and massage targeted at pressure points on the head, face, and feet, while Smiling Joints reinvigorates overworked ankles, knees, wrists, and shoulders (mandarinoriental.com).

● **TIME OUT** The farthest upriver of the five is The Siam's exquisite Art Deco-themed **Opium Spa**, which delivers multi-day wellness programs that encompass everything from body contouring to weeklong forays into fitness therapy and detoxification. Ayurvedic consultant and lifestyle coach Dr. Adrish Brahmadata is on hand to lead guests in reiki, chakra, pranic healing, and meditation (thesiamhotel.com). ●