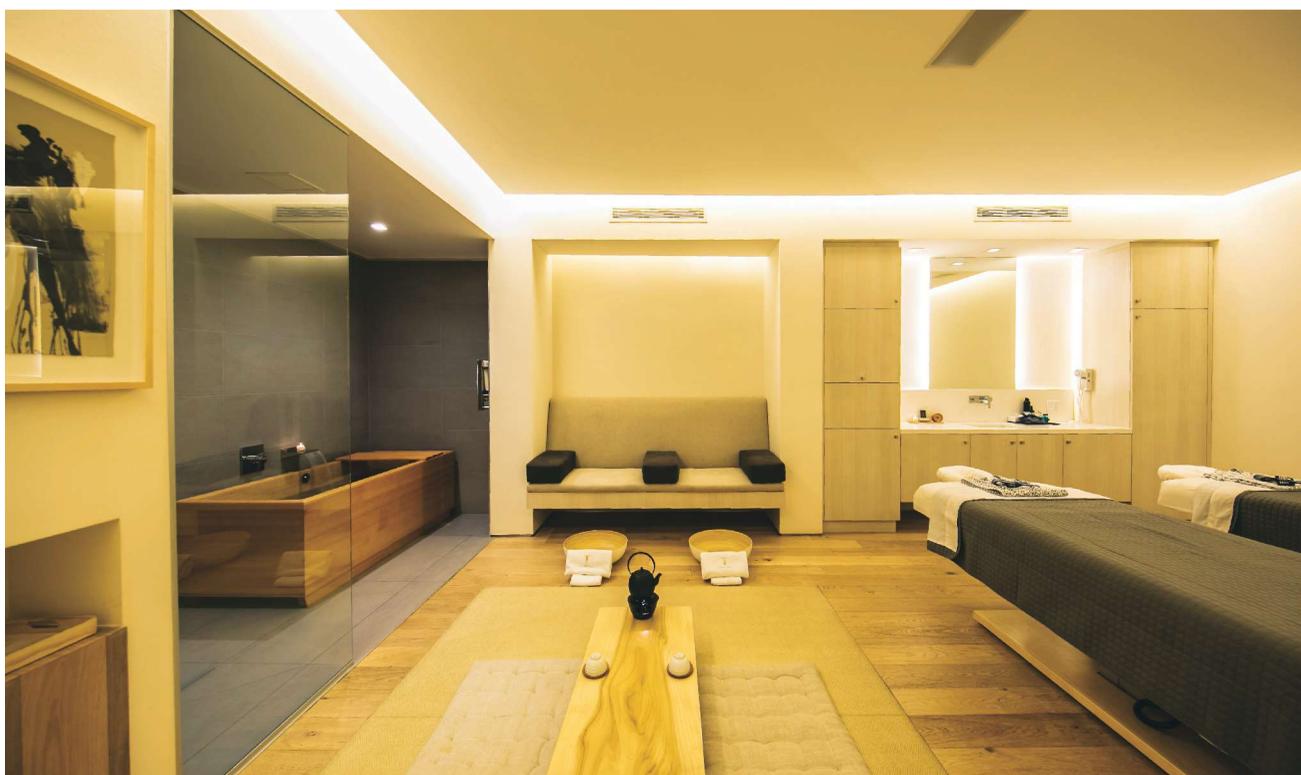


Japanese Bliss

A unique Los Angeles massage studio sets the scene for an authentic Asian experience.



Tomoko Spa

LOCATION

Beverly Hills, California

OWNER

Tomoko Kurono Akerman

OPENED

2014

THE SPACE

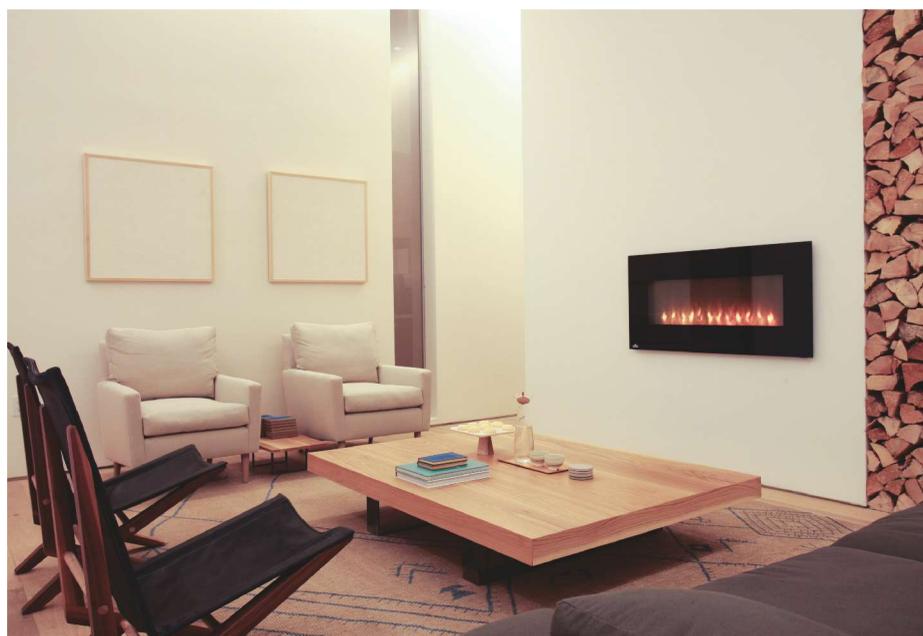
3,000 square feet, including 4 treatment rooms (2 couples' and 2 single rooms) and a lounge area

STAFF

Receptionist, office manager, therapist manager and 13 massage therapists

WEBSITE

tomokospa.com



COURTESY TOMOKO SPA

THE DISTINCTION

Despite its location on bustling Beverly Drive in the heart of Beverly Hills, Tomoko Spa is nestled behind an unassuming set of double glass doors. A petite front desk and waiting area conceal a much grander lounge, complete with a floor-to-ceiling, wooden log statement wall, cozy fireplace and low, plush chairs and couches. The spa embodies Japanese aesthetics to a T: an understated, clean and simple design that results in a calm, comforting space ideal for relaxation. Aside from its traditional Japanese roots, Tomoko Spa's main draw is its stand-alone suites, each of which contains a shower, bamboo soaking tub, cozy seating, and one or two treatment tables, allowing guests to enjoy total privacy. "I wanted our spa to be this little secret spot hidden among one of the world's biggest and busiest cities," explains owner Tomoko Kurono Akerman. "Our solitary rooms create an immediate oasis to transport guests."

CAPTURING CLIENTELE

Aside from a Google Adwords campaign, the spa runs minimal advertising, but the staff encourages visitors to post about their experiences on social media and web-based review sites. "Online feedback is critical to the success of any business," explains Kurono, "but especially for those of us in the wellness space."

MANAGEMENT M.O.

Tomoko finds its therapists through recommendations and referrals from current employees, but also employs a therapist manager, who works with all 13 MTs to continually improve their skills. Kurono says her management technique is all about maintaining a healthy energy within her spa. "I believe that positive thinking and appreciation toward everything make great energy flow," she says. "Also, always smile!"

IN-DEMAND SERVICE

Tomoko's standout offering—the Japanese Experience for Couples (3.5 hours/\$630)—begins with the twosome being escorted to their treatment haven to change into printed Japanese robes. After settling their feet into wooden tubs of water, the pair is treated to foot rubs, then given some alone time to relax. Once they've slipped onto their respective treatment tables, they push a small call button near the headrest to summon the therapists—a subtle detail that guests greatly appreciate. After a 60-minute kneading that combines Swedish and Japanese massage modalities, the couple enjoys the soaking tub and Vichy shower. The service ends with a platter of fresh sushi, which they savor in the traditional Japanese style: sitting cross-legged on the floor.

THE GOODS

Although Kurono is a licensed MT and esthetician, she deliberately chose to offer only massage services, which therapists perform using Certified Organic doTERRA oils and creams. "We always wanted to focus on providing a service that both sexes could partake in, together," she explains. 🌿

