

[HOME](#) | [BLOGS](#)

An Unparalleled Respite: Cupping Therapy at the Four Seasons Las Vegas

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While in Las Vegas to attend the ISPA Conference & Expo, we had the chance to check out the newly revamped Spa at the Four Seasons Las Vegas.

I've always thought of the [Four Seasons Las Vegas](#) as an off-strip gem in the City of Sin—the non-gaming hotel lacks the cigarette smoke, gambling tables and constantly chiming slot machines that I loathe at all of the other Vegas hotels. So when I was invited to experience the iconic hotel's newly renovated spa—unveiled just a few weeks before the ISPA Convention & Expo—I was beyond eager to accept while I was in town for the aforementioned conference.

After a lovely (but very long) day at the Sands Expo Convention Center at the Venetian, I practically ran to the cab line the moment my phone displayed 6 PM—after all, I needed plenty of time to check out the new space before my appointment an hour later.



Four Seasons Las Vegas Spa Lounge Area

With every step down the hotel's quiet, serene hallway and into the spa, I was gradually transported into a blissful state. By the time I was slipping on my robe and tucking myself into a lounge in the relaxation room I could already feel my shoulders—usually tensed and shrugged practically to my earlobes—melting down my back.

First Impressions: The space has been tastefully redone to exude a quintessential Zen spa space. In the reception area, a stunning wood accent wall with gold trim complements a slatted wooden reception desk; black wrought iron and clear glass displays and shelving exhibit a wide array of skincare, clothing and accessories. In the locker room, floor-to-ceiling cubbies with light wood faces reside in equilibrium with sage-colored walls and lavender-colored benches and throw pillows. A similar color palette extends to the relaxation areas, where gray, subtly patterned carpets meld with wood and marble furnishings, the same sage walls and a range of purple-hued furnishings. Silver accents—a cage lamp, a set of vases, a tray-style end table—pull everything together.

Soon my therapist Maureen was greeting me warmly, placing a gentle hand on my shoulders that were aching in anticipation of my rubdown. I'd opted for the spa's Cupping Therapy (50-100 min./\$185-\$355), partly as "research" for the Alternative Health column I'm writing, but mostly because I've been dying to try this ancient muscle relief method. A combination of scoliosis, horrible posture, an intense yoga habit and consistently carrying heavy bags and purses practically guarantee that my back is constantly in pain.

The Service: As we walked down the maze-like hallways toward the treatment room, Maureen and I chatted about cupping—she's been practicing the therapy for 15 years—and once inside, she talked me through how she was going to use the cups and what I could expect during the treatment. She warned me that I'd be left with "cup kisses" if she "parked" the cups on my back, but I had come prepared: a shift dress for Day 3 of the conference meant my back would be fully covered, and I told her to have the cups kiss away!

Cupping therapy may seem like a foreign or confusing notion to some, but the concept behind the technique is actually quite simple. Across our entire body, a fibrous layer of connective tissue (fascia) exists as a layer between our skin and muscles. When the fascia grips onto our muscles, it can prevent them from being able to relax and release. Cupping pulls up on the skin and the fascia, allowing the muscle underneath to release. Fresh blood and fluids can then flow throughout the muscle fibers and in between the interstitial tissues.

Armed with the knowledge of exactly what to expect, I eagerly tucked myself underneath my treatment table sheets to await Maureen's soft knock on the door. Within moments I had become one with the table as she used a firm and deliberate yet gentle touch to knead my neck and shoulders.

The sensation of the cups suctioning on my back can only be described as a tingling, not unlike a pins-and-needle feeling, but not nearly as painful or uncomfortable. After just a few minutes, I could feel the circulation in my back increasing dramatically, my muscles flooding with fresh blood and oxygen—and relief.

The next hour passed by in what I can only recall as a blip—I was in a state of true ecstasy. Typically, deep tissue massages are excruciatingly painful, something I know I need to suffer through for some sort of relief, but painful nonetheless. However, the relief I felt at the end of this service relief was like no other, and I felt its effects for days following my treatment—despite another full day on a trade show floor, a delayed flight home and many long work days.

Relaxed and quite zoned, I lounged in the steam room and took a quick rinse before finally forcing myself back into my clothes and toward the reception area. I barely remember my taxi ride back to my hotel, but I do remember I slept incredibly well—and pain free—that night.

Noteworthy: Needless to say, I'll certainly be opting for another cupping service, and soon. I can only hope I'll find a Los Angeles-based therapist as talented as Maureen.

—Rachel Kossman



The recently redone locker rooms at the renovated Spa at the Four Seasons Las Vegas Spa Lounge Area
Seasons Las Vegas

The recently redone locker rooms at the renovated Spa at the Four Seasons Las Vegas

Four Seasons Las Vegas Spa Lounge Area



Four Seasons Las Vegas retail area

Four Seasons Las Vegas reception desk

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Four Seasons Las Vegas reception desk



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