

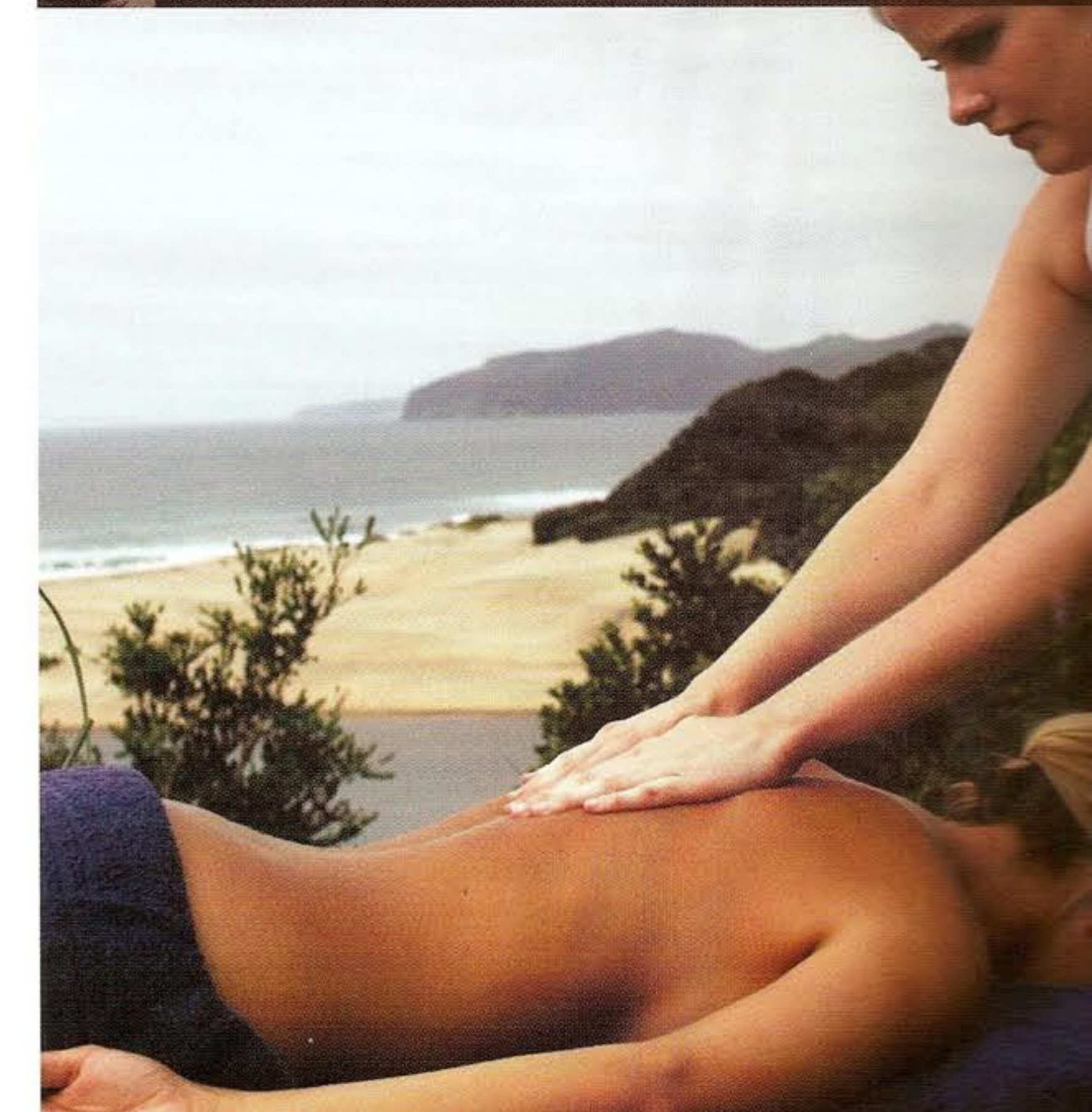
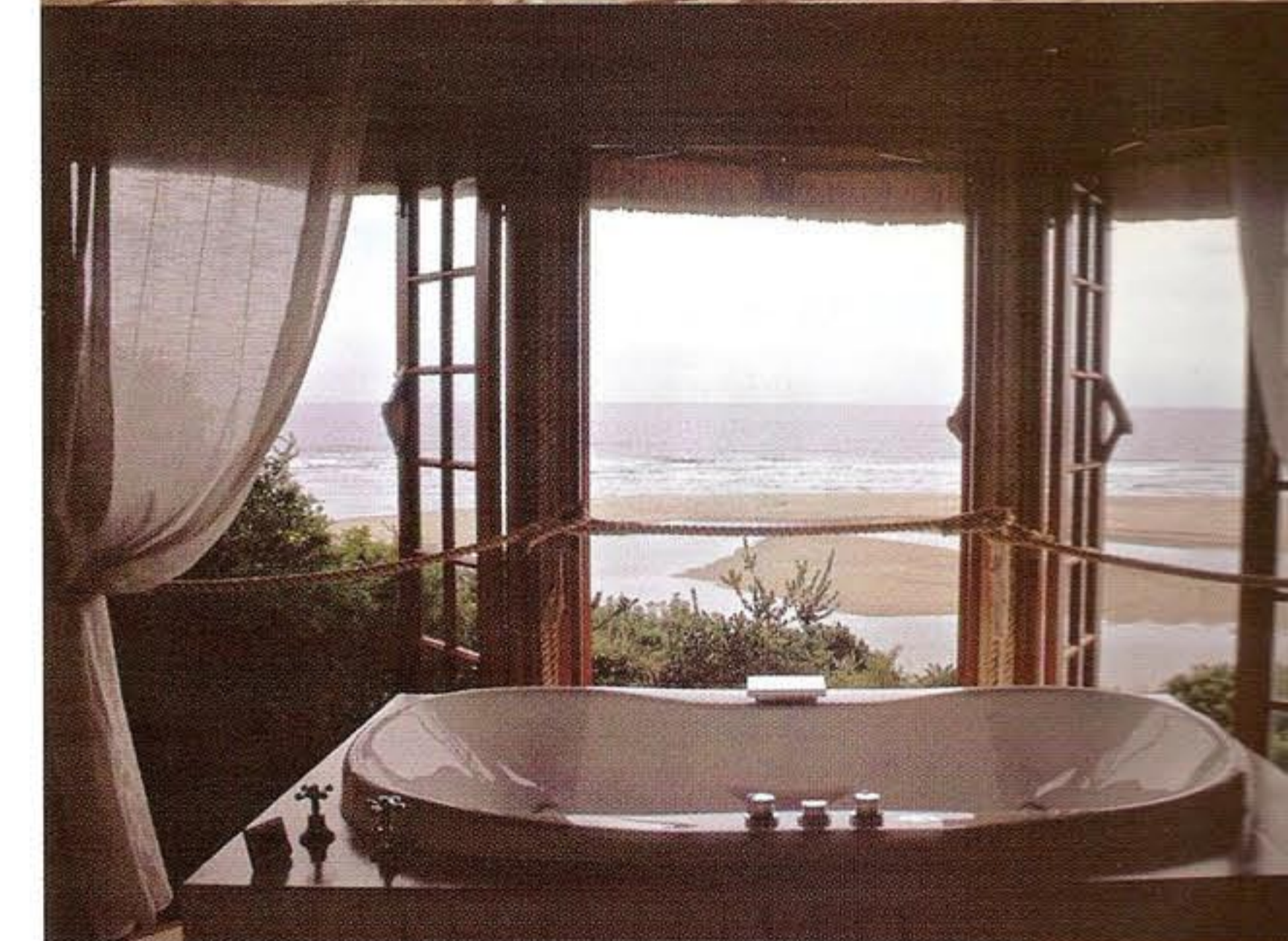
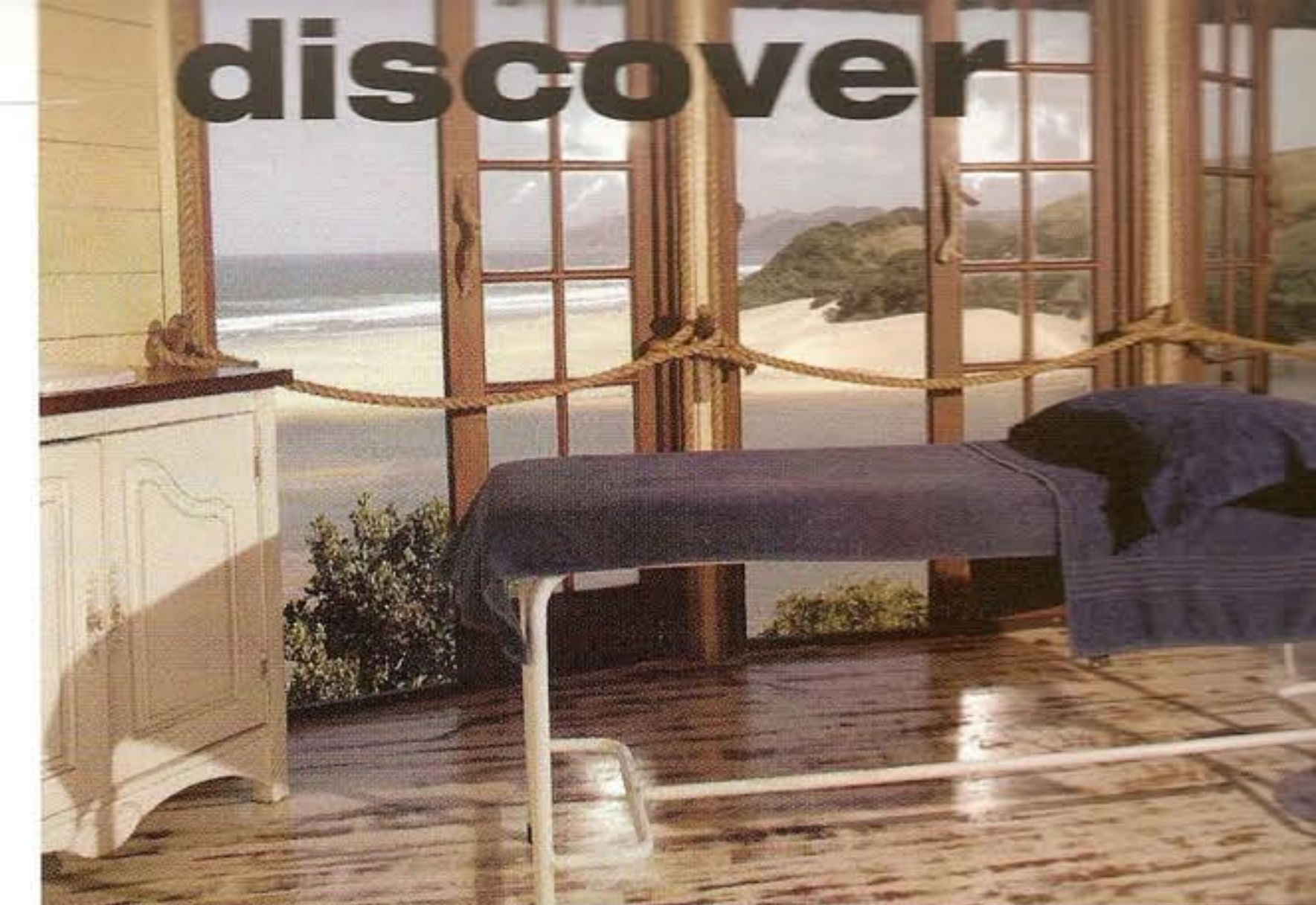


# Escape to Umngazi Spa with Elemis

By Dr Nadine de Freitas, Managing Editor - Les Nouvelles Esthetiques SA



discover



I was posed with a challenging question in an interview for an international travel publication, which has intrigued me for a while. "With so many spas opening more conveniently in the city, is there still value in travelling to the destination spa?"

Absolutely! And if I had debated this issue in my mind, then the visit to Umngazi Spa in conjunction with Elemis Cosmetics, in the heart of the Wild Coast certainly confirmed my opinion, as there is no replacing the wellness experience of the complete escape, the quiet space and the effect of the complete change of scenery, quite independent of your spa visit.

We left early in the morning on the Umngazi plane for our short flight down to Port St John. The trip was spectacular as you fly down the coast with magnificent views of the beaches and ocean, even the occasional dolphin, although the landing on the mountain plateau is not for the nervous flyer. Then following a welcome champagne, we continued on a short drive through Port St John to the Umngazi River Bungalows and Spa.

Umngazi's history stretches back over hundreds of years, to the time when, according to ancient Pondo history, the legendary King Faku would execute his enemies at nearby Mlengana Rock. In the 19th century, troops from the British garrison in Grahamstown established a fresh water supply point at Umngazi - which still supplies the hotel today. British soldiers actually camped on the present hotel site, finally raising the Union Jack at Port St. Johns in 1871. It was this small outpost that formed the nucleus of the present day resort, owned by the Goss family, who has dedicated a significant amount of time and effort to make Umngazi River Bungalows the success it is today.

Umngazi River Bungalows is a family resort, with activities abound for the children (and adults) from kayaking, fishing, swimming, tennis to art classes. The focus is to allow families to re-connect and create timeless moments together, out of the hustle and bustle of daily life.

But re-connecting is not only limited to the family, as Umngazi Spa offers an opportunity to re-connect with yourself and your partner.

The Umngazi Spa is set high on the hillside, with breathtaking views of the ocean from each room and decorated in a nautical theme, with the sound of the ocean as your background music. A team of professional therapists are on hand with a full range of spa treatments and therapies, using the Elemis range of face and bodycare product. Each treatment room is complimented by a private spa bath, which enjoys the same spectacular views of the beach and ocean.

My indulgence for the day was the anticipated Elemis Cooling Hot Stone Body Facial. A fantastic combination of both body indulgence with an exceptional anti-ageing facial in an hour, so allowing the best of both worlds. The 'ice-cool thermal muscle massage' relieves all stress with massage movements using the hot stones, thereafter, the stones are strategically placed, so continuing their action during your intensive anti-ageing booster facial, ensuring I returned home not only relaxed, but with a fewer fine lines and a youthful radiance.

Elemis is the leading British spa and skincare brand favoured by over 5.7 million spa-goers every year. The successful combination of natural active ingredients with cutting-edge technology and clinical trials has enabled Elemis to bring to market some of the most influential Anti-Ageing products and professional spa-therapies. Elemis spa-therapies and products are available through an elite network of over 1200 spas in 45 countries, 130 cruise ships, and selected department stores globally

After my spa indulgence, we headed to the main hotel for a wonderful lunch. Food is a key element of Umngazi's hospitality, with 3 meals being served a day to guests. Thereafter, a quick walking tour around the balance of the resort and facilities, so ensuring I also got some exercise, before the flight back.

What a day! This spa visit will remain as one of my most memorable, and I truly underestimated the spa from the information provided, possibly because there is no true way to describe the captivating beauty of this area of South Africa, which has been incorporated into your spa experience and secondly the tranquillity and "happiness" carried by each member of the hotel and spa staff, is quite contagious. On arrival, I was sceptical of the tagline on the bus, "Arrive as a guest, and leave as family", but after one brief day, I can see how Umngazi Spa could easily hold a place in your heart forever.

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