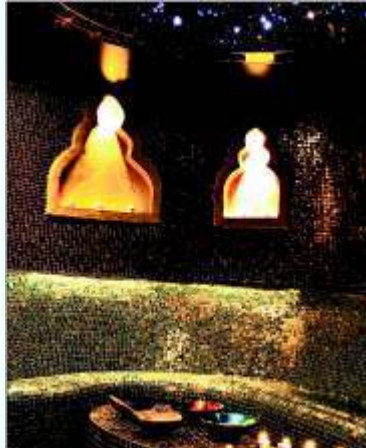




Deals



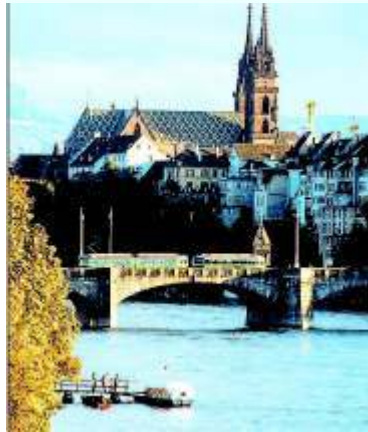
> UNDER \$1000

RELAX with mineralised mud therapy and a herbal steam plus five-star accommodation with Sofitel Brisbane's Signature Spa package, from \$790. Couples booking the package will also enjoy an evening in one of the hotel's luxurious corner suites, a bottle of wine and chocolate-dipped strawberries on arrival, room service breakfast, valet parking and a late checkout. However, the focus of the package is the Opal Rasul Steam Temple treatment, an oriental cleansing ritual that employs mineralised body masks to purify and detox, herbal steam to cleanse, rainwater showers to refresh and a soothing massage to relax. Other spa packages available include the Sofitel Spa Escape, from \$325 per night and the Sofitel Spa Revival, from \$395. Phone (07) 3835 3535 or see www.sofitelbrisbane.com.au.



> UNDER \$2000

WING it to Turkey and the Black Sea with Escape Travel's 11-night cruise on board the MSC Armonia. The company has released an early-bird special starting from \$1550 per person twin share that includes the cruise, all meals and entertainment on board the ship and port taxes. As a bonus, children under 18 pay only \$280 (for port taxes) when travelling with two adults in the same cabin. The round trip from Genoa, Italy, takes in the Mediterranean delights of Naples, Salerno, Athens and Taormina in Sicily, then cruises on through the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus to Yalta and Odessa in Ukraine and on to Istanbul, Turkey. Departures in 2008: April 1 and 12, September 26 and October 7 and 29. Phone 1300 799 783 or see www.escapetravel.com.au.



> UNDER \$5000

ROUND up four friends to travel to Europe this November and sail along the famous Rhine and Danube rivers for free with Avalon Waterways. In the Fantastic Five deal a fifth person travels free in their own cabin, worth \$5183 (including the single supplement), with every four adults who book the 15-day Magnificent Europe cruise from Amsterdam to Budapest. Passengers can also take advantage of Avalon's offer of a free three-night stay in Paris or London, saving up to \$859 per person. Departing Amsterdam on the Avalon Poetry on November 4, 2007, the cruise includes specially designed events to showcase the best of Europe's musical heritage. Prices start from \$4212 per person twin share. See travel agents or www.avalonwaterways.com.au.



> BLOW THE BUDGET

AUSTRALIAN fashion designer Mariana Hardwick will host a 21-day tour to Yemen in 2008. Departing Melbourne on January 3, the trip, the Journey Behind the Veil tour, will delve into Yemeni culture, in particular the lives of Yemeni women. Highlights include the World Heritage-listed Old City of Sana'a, where guests will learn about Yemeni dress codes, customs and styles, local cooking and religion; Wadi Dhahr, home to people whose ancestors are named in Genesis and the Book of Numbers (the first and fourth books of the Torah or Hebrew Bible); tea with a Bedouin family; a desert camp; and a visit to a traditional Hamman (public bathhouse). The all-inclusive tour costs \$8750. Places are limited. Phone 0412 565 734 or email marianahardwick@bigpond.com.