



Million miles away in heart of the city

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IT had been the week from hell . . . stress levels soared and a serious holiday was needed. But with time and money a scarce commodity, a mini break in the heart of the city was just the remedy.

The 20-year-old Sofitel Hotel underwent a \$10 million refurbishment earlier in the year and offers an ideal weekend getaway destination.

The great thing about the Sofitel is that you can turn your phone off, pretend you're a thousand miles away, and you never have to leave the hotel.

The ideal kick starter for the weekend of luxury was a de-stressing spa treatment at Stephanie's Spa Retreat.

The spa's signature treatment, the Opal Rasul Ritual, takes place in a cave-like steam room reminiscent of a scene out of *Arabian Nights*.

It begins with a deep cleansing body mask, followed by total relaxation in the warm herbal steam. A gentle rain shower from the ceiling rinses the skin clean before you move into a refreshing rhythmical shower. The ritual concludes with a full body moisture rebalance. For true indulgence, upgrade to one of the hotel's Club Sofitel

rooms on the top five floors.

The views are breathtaking, the suites are beautifully fitted-out and you also have access to the Sofitel's Club Lounge on the 30th floor.

There's breakfast every day, plus complimentary evening drinks and canapes from 5.30pm-8pm, plus sweets and coffee on offer till 10pm.

If you're really serious about making the most of your escape, have dinner at the Sofitel's Thyme2 restaurant.

It had a huge refurb at the beginning of the year and the interactive dining experience promises something to please every palate.

Another must-do indulgence is the Lenotre high tea in the Cuvée Lounge Bar, which is available daily from 2.30-5pm and as a hopelessly-addicted sweet tooth, I can personally attest the high tea is the ultimate sugar fix.

The hotel staff can't do enough to make your stay perfect and there's something comforting about the Sofitel . . . maybe it's the familiarity of the place that makes you feel so at home.



STEAMY SITUATION: The signature treatment at Stephanie's Spa Retreat is the Opal Rasul Ritual