

LADIES' DAY

Ariana Dunne booked a spa getaway with her best friend and discovered a perfect balance of rest, relaxation and fun



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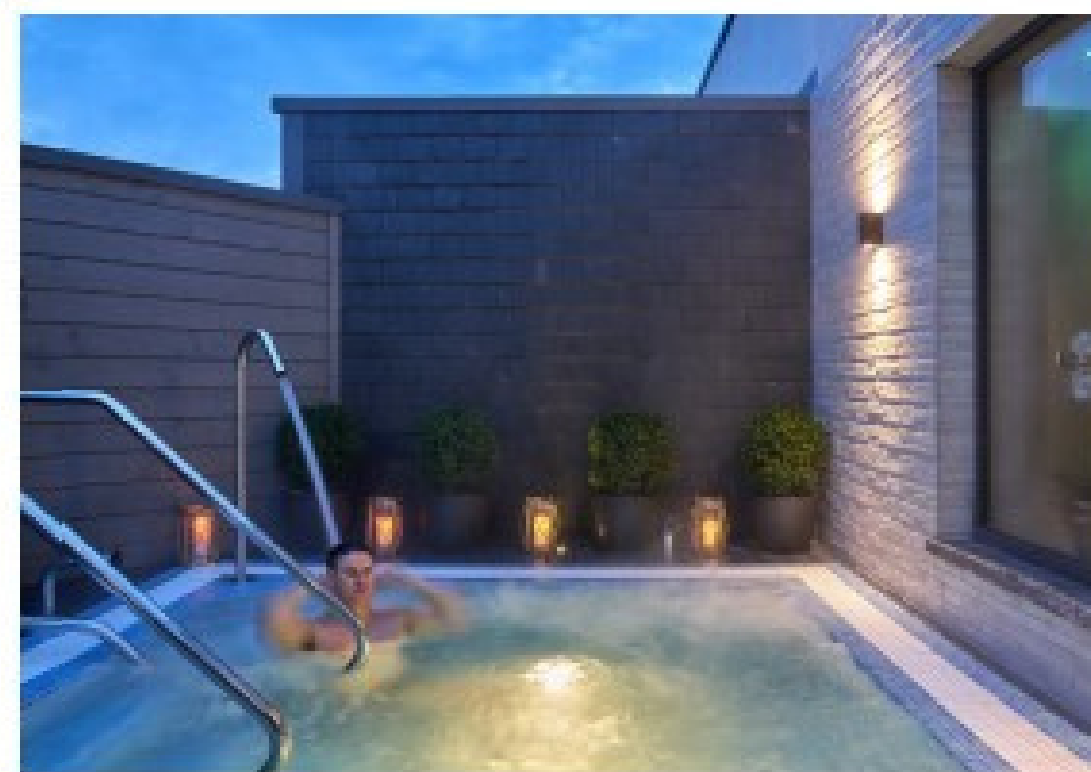
Is there any greater pleasure than slipping your feet into cushioned slippers, wrapping yourself in a soft white robe and hearing your name called for a blissful massage, whilst your best gal pal tells you she'll meet you in the jacuzzi when you're done? Personally, I don't think there is.

Throwing my head back with laughter, my best friend squeals with delight as we step into the hotel lobby of the fabulous four-star Johnstown Estate Hotel and revel at the fact that we are on a long-awaited spa break together. Nestled in stunning landscaped grounds in Enfield, Co Meath this hotel is the perfect place to get away from it all for a short break with friends.

The hotel has recently unveiled their rooftop experience and thermal suite which is the epitome of luxury and relaxation. The overall look and feel of the space nods to Scandinavian influence, with warm wood, cool tones, soft lighting and curved smooth lounge chairs mix to create a chilled out relaxation area. The Elemis and Gharieni flagship spa boasts a healing hub where their skilled and experienced therapists use the latest wellness technology to turbo-charge experiences.

My friend and I both experienced blissful full body massages where the power of minerals, plants and active natural aromatics soothed our weary bodies and allowed us to properly switch off from the noise of work, life, stress and totally relax. Afterwards we felt the chill of Irish air as we removed our robes to slip into the steaming thermal pool on a rooftop overlooking the grounds of the estate.

The thermal suite is a treasure trove of delights including rainforest showers, rasul mud chambers, salt vapour rooms and reflexology pathways that we made full use of before we found ourselves retreating to the in-



spa restaurant for something to eat and a cocktail or two.

The hotel offers its 'Girlie Getaway' package, which includes an overnight stay, breakfast and a four-course evening meal in their sophisticated contemporary Fire & Salt restaurant along with all the aforementioned spa experiences. So after our light but lovely lunch we retreated to our spacious room and sipped on bubbly while planning our outfits for our evening meal. We should have planned better though, perhaps choosing more comfortable attire, as we definitely needed comfort after enjoying every bite of the delicious meal.

The restaurant's signature dish includes hand-picked beef, dry-aged for up to 36 days in Himalayan sea salt

– cooked to perfection and accompanied by delectable sauces and sides. The desserts were creatively constructed and beautifully decorated works of art, which we enjoyed with our eyes before devouring – a wonderful end to a memorable meal.

With everyone living such busy lives juggling work, family and everything else, it can be hard to get away for a night of pure bliss with a friend. But take my word for it, when you do it is a tonic for the soul. And The Johnstown Estate provides everything you need and more to relax, unwind and indulge. ☺

Package includes 1 night B&B, afternoon tea, a four-course meal & a 30-min spa treatment (€285pps) | thejohnstownestate.com