

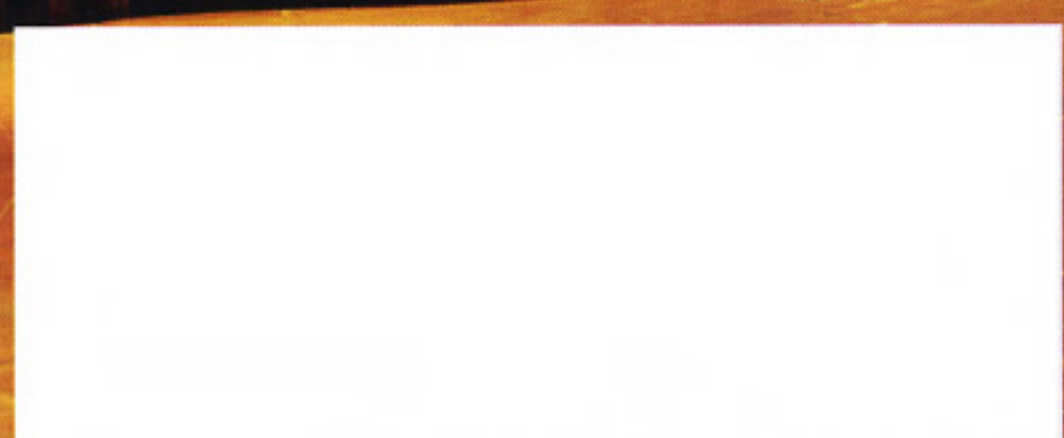
LUXURY SPA FINDER

THE SPA LIFESTYLE AT ITS FINEST



60 Spas We Love

A SPECIAL ISSUE



The 2007 Edition

60 Spas We Love

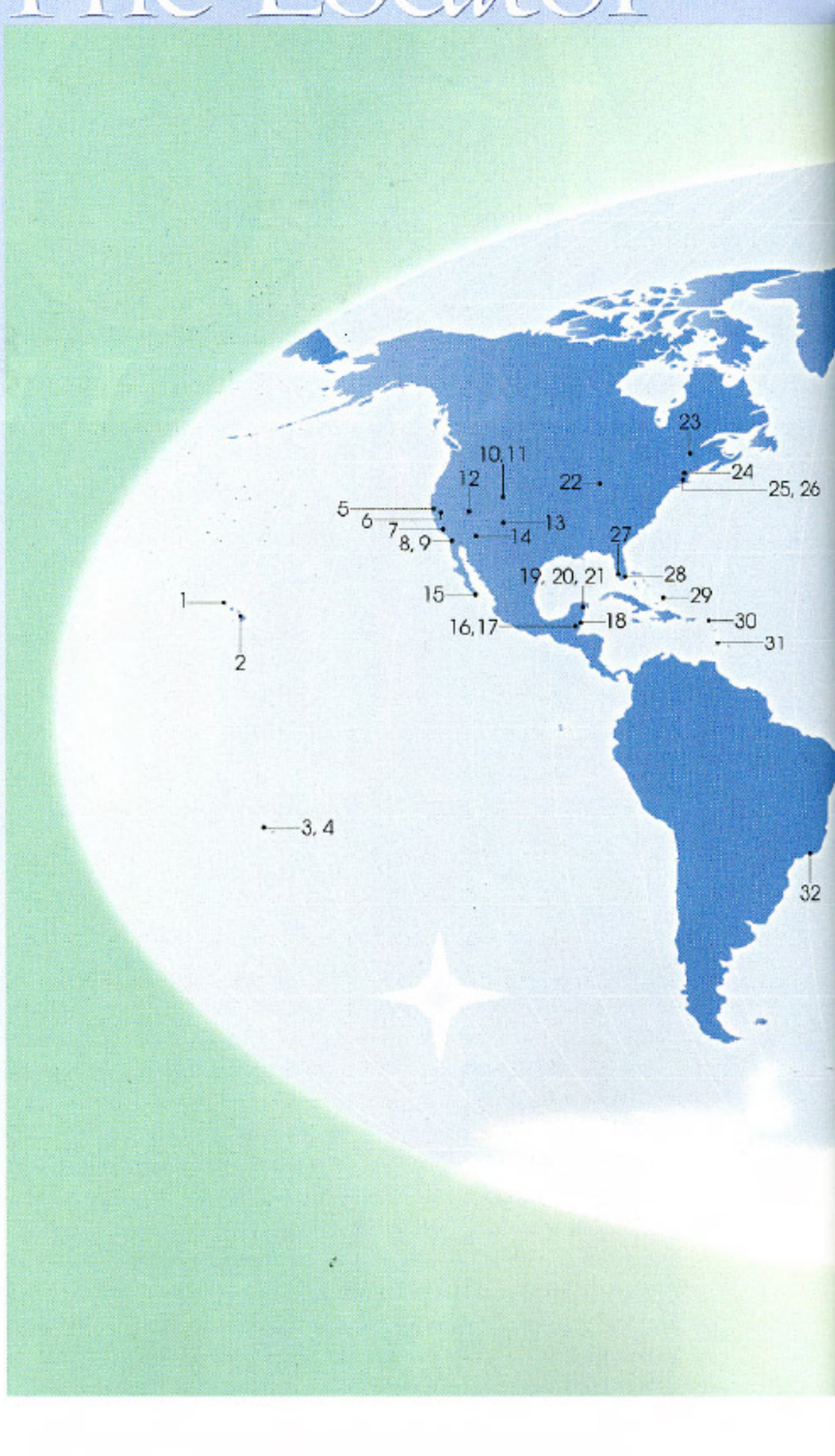
BY ANN ABEL, MELISSE GELULA, AND GARY WALTHER
WITH ALEXIA BRUE, JO DURDEN-SMITH, ALEXANDER LOBRANO, AND EVERETT POTTER

WE'RE OFTEN ASKED WHAT MAKES A GREAT SPA. THE ANSWER IS COMPLICATED—AND EMOTIONAL. WHEN it came time to compile this, our second annual Spas We Love issue, we didn't employ a checklist of objective criteria. Instead, we relied on what our mothers told us about falling in love: When it hits you, you just know. The spas on the following 42 pages all have that unquantifiable "it." Some made our jaws drop on first sight; others seduced us slowly, earning our affection with their careful attention and coddling service. Like love itself, our list is unabashedly subjective. It's neither a best-of catalog nor a ranking, and these certainly aren't the only spas in the world capable of inspiring love. To make it easily comprehensible, we've sorted these spas into categories with something unique. Exotic Hideaways presents far-flung enclaves, and Creme de la Caribbean near-flung ones, while in Domestic Bliss we tip our hat to spas in the U.S. Design Showstoppers introduces spas that had us at hello. Urban Sanctuaries celebrates spas that sequester us from the world around them, while Cultural Immersion honors those that bring that world right into the treatment room. Along with the 52 spas here, you'll find 8 more spas we love in our Pound Wise (page 31) and Value Spas (page 47) columns. All of them are shown on the map on the next two pages. These are our love letters to those 60 spas.

75

The Locator

1. PURE KAUAI
2. MAUNA LANI
3. BORA BORA LAGOON
4. BORA BORA PEARL BEACH
5. AUBERGE DU SOLEIL
6. CHATEAU DU SUREAU
7. THE OAKS AT CAJAI
8. RANCHO VALENCIA
9. CAL-A-VIE
10. ST. REGIS ASPEN
11. PARK HYATT BEAVER CREEK
12. RED MOUNTAIN SPA
13. TEN THOUSAND WAVES
14. ROYAL PALMS
15. LAS VENTANAS
16. BLANGANEUX LODGE
17. THE LODGE AT CHAA CREEK
18. CAYO ESPANTO
19. TIDES RIVIERA MAYA
20. ESENCIA
21. MAROMA
22. PENINSULA CHICAGO
23. SPA EASTMAN
24. THE EQUINOX
25. WINNIAN
26. MAYFLOWER SPA
27. RITZ-CARLTON NAPLES
28. ACQUALINA
29. PARROT CAY
30. MALLICOUKANA
31. THE BODYHOLIDAY AT LESPORT
32. THE ISLAND EXPERIENCE
33. K CLUB
34. GUERLAIN PARIS
35. CLUNIQUE LA PRAIRIE
36. VICTORIA-JUNGFRAU
37. TSCHUOGEN GRAND
38. MANDARIN ORIENTAL PRAGUE
39. LES FERMIES DE MARIE
40. BULGARIE HOTEL
41. PORTO ELOUNDA
42. FREGATE ISLAND
43. LE PRINCE MAURICE
44. SONEVA GILI
45. FOUR SEASONS LANDAA GIRAAWURU
46. OBEROI UDAVILAS
47. FOUR SEASONS CHIANG MAI
48. SHANGRI-LA BANGKOK
49. RAYAVADEE
50. SULA EVASION HIDEAWAY AT KOH SAMUI
51. MANDARIN ORIENTAL SINGAPORE
52. BULGARIE BALI
53. COMO SHAMBHALA ESTATE AT BEGAWAN GIRI
54. KIRANA
55. HOTEL TUGU
56. EVASION HIDEAWAY AT ANA MANDARA
57. NAM HAI
58. MANDARIN ORIENTAL HONG KONG
59. FOUR SEASONS HONG KONG
60. GORA KADAN



76

60 Spas We Love

DOMESTIC BLISS



CALIFORNIA RANCHO VALENCIA

RANCHO SANTA FE Too often spa relaxation rooms seem like exercises in subtraction—minimal furnishings in a minimalist style that requires a minimum of attention. It's supposed to equal relaxation, but it often makes me restive. The designer of this bijou spa, Hank Milan, knows human nature better: Sensual is soothing, and decor isn't distracting when done wisely. He used the hacienda vocabulary—muscular wood tables, a mirror framed in deadwood segments, metal wagon-wheel chandeliers, and a large fireplace—to create a double-height relaxation room (above) that I settled into at once. Just outside is a courtyard with an ornamental pool capped off by a pyramid of terra-cotta pots that I took pleasure in gazing at. The courtyard walls and changing rooms are decorated with custom handmade tiles from Mexico, and the public areas are larded with pleasant surprises—a Jacuzzi tucked away behind double doors, a Watsu pool under an awning. The treatments are solid—one of the therapists made this year's hall of fame. But honestly, I could just curl up with a book in that relaxation room and call it an afternoon. —GW
800-548-3064, www.ranchovalencia.com