

## **Mudslides at Solage resort**

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Solage Resorts, the new earth-friendly retreat nestled in a hollow of crisp air and breathtaking views outside of Calistoga, takes lowering your stress level to a high tech, highly pampered peak.

With an offering called the Mudslide, patrons emerge supple and centered from a soothing cocktail of mud, local water and zero-gravity relaxation. Swaddled in a waffle robe, guests are escorted through the low-water landscape grounds to elbow up to the Mud Bar. The atmosphere is friendly and relaxed. Guests chat, blissed out in their robes.

The mudtender is happy to make a fruit-based cocktail or mix up a mud mixture tailored to your whim or your whimper. Treatments are designed to bring on joy and happiness with the mud mojito, relax with the lavender mudtini, Sam Brannan muscle soother or the sensual Mimosa mud cocktail. The mud is made from local and South American dust and an unctuous aromatic liquid of citrus, herbs and aromatics.

With cocktail and mud bucket in hand, the guest enters a tiled, heated room where the mud is applied — by oneself with the help of a Solage Spa employee on the hard to reach back areas if needed, or by a partner for a couples treatment. Fifteen minutes relaxing on the hot tiles lets the mud dry, drawing out toxins and impurities and stimulating circulation.

A cleansing shower and guests are led to the deep baths for a geothermal water soak. The tub area is partitioned by curtains to allow for couples or groups — a great way to make it worth a bridal party's trouble. After 20 minutes melting in the hot bath guests dry off and are led to the peak of the treatment — the Soundchair.

Lined with a down comforter and a fluffy towel, the SO Soundchair tips back to a zero gravity position as the guest slips on Bose headphones and tunes into an iPod selection corresponding to the chosen mud treatment. As the soothing music plays, the chair vibrates along, creating a hypnotic full body cocoon of mellow. The chairs create tactile vibrations that absorb into the body while the chair's position allows the heart to pump more blood and to send it equally to all parts of the body.

There are also more traditional spa offerings at Solage, using all natural Sumbody products and

indigenous Napa Valley ingredients.

The resort is working with one Southern Californian ingredient — Los Angeles skin health expert Kate Somerville who has provided skin care products and training to the Solage estheticians.

Healing is the goal, said spa director Peggy Francis, the skin care is the vehicle.

Facials are customized to guests' needs and Somerville has customized her line and treatments to the Solage Resort to capture the nurturing and serene feel. It's more pampered relaxation at Solage than at my clinic, Somerville said.

The grounds at Solage are beautiful, the splendor of Calistoga enough to take even a local's breath away. The vibe is plush and hip with homey touches like board games in every room and bikes for tooling around the grounds or into town.

At Solbar, the food is nourishing to body and soul. The restaurant has a patio and a fire pit, inviting guests to chat each other up in their friendly bliss. The Calistoga hills and fresh surroundings create the feeling of being around the campfire, but with no roughing it in sight.

Solage offers two kinds of memberships. One is for locals or frequent visitors to the valley. The initiation fee is \$7,500 for singles, \$10,000 for couples and \$15,000 for families with monthly dues of \$150, \$175 and \$225 respectively. There's an annual non-resident membership for those outside the Napa Valley and neighboring counties at \$2,000, \$3,500 and \$5,000. Membership gives you access to the facilities, the pools, and discounts on dining, merchandise, spa treatments and room rates.

The rooms are \$325 to \$875 depending on the size and the time of year. Members get 25 percent off the rate, or 50 percent off if they call to make the arrangements the same day.

The Kate Somerville treatments range from \$95 for a cleansing facial up to \$300 for a combination of all of Somerville's Solage facial offerings. The Mudslide is \$95 per person for guests and includes the mud, the soak and the SO Soundchair. There's an extra fee for those not staying at the resort, and discount for members.