

A world of hot springs culture combined on Victoria's Mornington Peninsula

Over the past six years Peninsula Hot Springs has brought to Australia a world of hot springs and spa culture, combining the best of these within the unique natural environment of Victoria's Mornington Peninsula.



The newest addition to the global hot springs experiences at Peninsula Hot Springs is an ornately tiled Turkish steam bath, or hamam.

The hamam is representative of a very long and rich culture of bathing and relaxation by the Romans, Ottomans, Persians and Arabs. Peninsula Hot Springs' research into the hamam bathing experience included trips to Turkey in 1984, Yemen and Egypt in 1998 and Turkey again in 2010. These trips provided valuable knowledge and understanding of the ways of the bath which has helped weave this experience into the broader global cultural hot springs and spa bathing offerings available at Peninsula Hot Springs.

The Peninsula Hot Springs hamam is an underground domed room located in the side of a hill in the centre of the bathing area. Surrounding it are a variety of natural thermal mineral bathing options that can help warm the body in preparation for the hamam. A sauna, many hot springs pools, a steamy cave pool and the massaging thermal showers all provide a means of raising the body temperature. The hamam itself is also a hot room that further encourages sweating, removing toxins and opening up the pores for true cleansing and rejuvenation.

The hamam method of heating, physical scrubbing with a loofah or mit, and relaxing is a thorough and active way to receive a spa treatment. It is as much about the cleansing of the physical body as the relaxation of the mind and muscles. This combination of cleaning, relaxing and massaging makes this one of the ultimate spa treatments. In conversation some people have described the process as a "body facial".

There are several options for the treatment, starting with the choice of a self (or friend) administered scrubbing; a simple



The Eski-Bursali hamam in Turkey, one of the many from which Peninsula Hot Springs' owners took inspiration.

cleansing scrubbing treatment by a hamam assistant; or a scrub followed by a massage. The scrub and massage can be performed either lying down on the centre stone or sitting up on the marble benches that surround the inside of the room. The focus of the treatment is not to inflict pain, which is often associated with the traditional Turkish bath, but to offer relaxation, cleansing, detoxification and pampering.

Following tradition, the hot springs hamam is not a private room for a particular client or clients. Rather, it is a public space shared with other patrons. The scrub and massage happens in the room where others may be receiving the same experience. It is very much a 'social spa-ing' experience. The sound of the running water and the occasional banter of conversation adds to the atmosphere and sense of the cleansing of body and spirit.

Other cultural influences and experiences from the globe available at Peninsula Hot Springs include Swedish saunas, Russian cold plunge pools, a Japanese cave pool and reflexology walk, USA watsu pool, Nepalese massaging thermal shower, and Li'Tya massage and spa treatments using indigenous Australian massage techniques.

▪ Peninsula Hot Springs is just 1.5 hrs from Melbourne.
Accommodation and spa packages are available at:
www.peninsulahotsprings.com



Balneology – the art and science of hot springs bathing

Balneology is the scientific study of the therapeutic benefits of naturally occurring mineral waters. In Australia, this science is not very well known, and is even less seldom practised. However, throughout Europe and Japan, balneology and hot springs therapy is very much a part of routine medical care. Medical prescriptions are given by licensed doctors for the treatment of a wide range of conditions, and bathing in mineral waters as a part of preventative medicine is widely recognised and encouraged. Peninsula Hot Springs outside of Melbourne, Australia, are filtration hot springs. The water that surfaces is estimated to have been deep within the Earth for more than 10,000 years. The water rises from 637 metres and by the time it comes to the surface the temperature is approximately 50°C. The temperature of the pools varies from 42°C to 36°C depending on the pool and the time of the year. Peninsula Hot Springs are classified as 'true mineral springs', with dissolved solids measuring over 3500 parts per million (PPM), based on the assessment conducted by the Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences in New Zealand. Peninsula Hot Springs are sodium chloride bicarbonate hot springs, with a pH level of 6.8. The alkalinity is primarily the result of the potassium, calcium, magnesium and sodium ions.

Getting the most out of hot springs bathing

Peninsula Hot Springs recommends the following procedure to maximise the efficacy of bathing at Peninsula Hot Springs:

1. Before entering pools take a shower. It is important to thoroughly clean yourself before entering the pools in order to fully appreciate the bathing experience of relaxation, contemplation and socialisation.
2. Before taking a hot spring bath, drink plenty of water in order to promote perspiration. Remember to remain hydrated throughout the bathing experience. Water fountains are provided at the pools or bring your bottled water (no glass please).
3. Upon entering bathing pools adjust your body gradually to the hot spring. Pour the hot spring water over extremities such as toes and fingertips and then towards the heart. This step dilates the blood vessels of the surface of your body, which prevents dizziness later on.
4. Taking a long bath in hot water causes a rise in blood pressures and increased heart rate. Bathe at a temperature of around 40C until you feel sweat lightly on your forehead, then sit outside of the bath tub for a break and re-enter once you cool down a little.



Remember to keep drinking water. Bathing for more than 15 minutes without taking a break is not recommended. The key is to listen to your body.

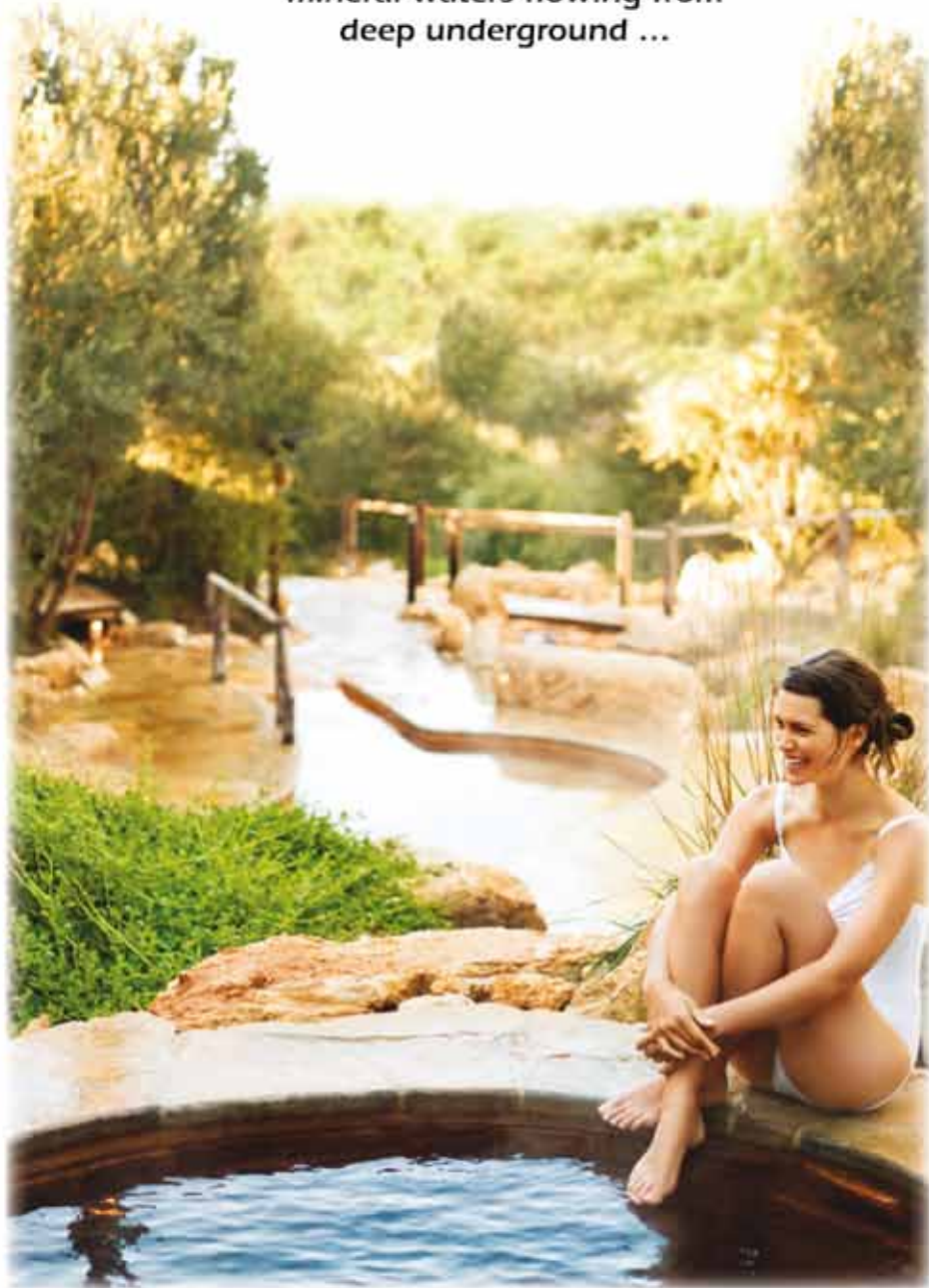
5. As the beneficial mineral adsorption of the hot spring water can go on for three hours after leaving the pools, it is recommended you do not rinse your body after taking a bath.
6. After taking the bath your body gets tired even though you feel refreshed. It requires two to three hours until blood pressure stabilises, therefore take some time to rest, ideally for at least 30 minutes. Allow a cool down period of 20 to 30 minutes wrapped in your bath sheet – recline in the pool-side lounges and soak up the unique atmospherics of our coastal dune surrounds. Be careful not to cool your body down completely. Don't forget to drink plenty of water again to avoid dehydration.



Peninsula Hot Springs

Australia's global bathing wonderland

Experience the magic of natural thermal mineral waters flowing from deep underground ...



- Natural hot mineral spring pools
- Private massage day spa retreat
- Just 1.5 hrs from Melbourne
- Accommodation packages available
- Breakfast & lunch daily, dinner Tue, Fri, Sat
- Turkish steam bath, sauna, watsu pool...

Open 7 Days
7.30am to 10pm
Springs Lane, Rye (Fingal)
Victoria, Australia
Ph: +61 3 5950 8777

ABOVE: New Hamam (Turkish steam bath)