

# Hot stuff!

RELAXING, REVITALISING AND ECO-FRIENDLY, COULD LAVA SHELLS BE THE PERFECT SPA TREATMENT? JILL CARTWRIGHT FINDS OUT

★ If you love hot stone massage, you will adore the Lava Shell treatment. The very latest in hot therapy, this massage uses a heated tiger-striped clamshell that glides over the contours of the body for a deep, healing and wonderfully sensual massage. The shells come from the Philippines, where their contents make up part of the villagers' daily diet. The shells were merely being discarded until Shared Beauty Secrets founders and experienced therapists Alison Gibbs and Clare Anderson came along.

'The clam's natural shape makes it the perfect tool for massage,' says Clare. 'With a narrow edge along the mouth for targeted deep work and a smooth rounded surface for even pressure and comfort and long strokes.'

The hollow shells are filled and sealed with a self-heating blend of minerals and absorptive ingredients, such as sea kelp and algae, which, when added to sea water, generate their own heat for up to an hour, meaning this treatment ticks all the eco boxes too – no electricity, no batteries and no clunky equipment.

## What a treat!

It feels nothing short of divine. The warm shells, which are silky smooth, pearlescent and just the right size to fit snugly in the palm of the therapist's hands, ease into areas of stress, drawing out tension and encouraging a deep sense of relaxation.

I was lucky enough to have company founder Alison Gibbs doing my massage, and what a treat it was! Using a soothing massage oil, she started working the shell into my arms, neck and shoulders, softening my stiff shoulders with every stroke and inducing a sleep-like comfort within minutes.



Alison then started to work around the stomach and solar plexus – a complex set of nerves in the pit of the stomach. This area is where much of our life energy is stored, Alison explains, and is a crucial part to focus on to achieve a sense of wholeness, balance and harmony in our bodies and minds. It is also an area where we can store a lot of stress and so the work there is deeply effective, drawing your

awareness to what your inner body is telling you and to what your body and soul need (literally what your gut feelings are telling you!).

The massage concludes with work focused on the pressure points of the feet and deep tissue work on the tension areas in the back and shoulders, which was just heavenly. I have experienced many massages, and believe me when I say the Lava Shell treatment is undoubtedly one of the very best! ❧

## [For more information]

The Lava Shell treatment is available at leading spas across the UK. My treatment was at CityPoint Spa in London and other spas include Sequoia Spa at The Grove in Hertfordshire and The Vale Hotel and Spa Resort, Wales. Prices start from £70 for 60 minutes. To find out more visit [www.sharedbeautysecrets.com](http://www.sharedbeautysecrets.com)

## At a glance

- ★ Uses genuine tiger-striped clamshells from the Philippines.
- ★ The shells are filled with self-heating natural minerals and absorptive ingredients, including sea kelp and algae.
- ★ The shell creates a natural massage tool that glides into tense areas.
- ★ A deeply sensual and relaxing treatment that focuses on relieving stress.
- ★ Particular attention is paid to the stomach and solar plexus to rebalance and re-energise mind and body.
- ★ All ingredients are natural, non-toxic and biodegradable, so it's very eco-friendly!



*'The warm shells ease into areas of stress, drawing out tension and encouraging a deep sense of relaxation'*