

HEMP AND healing



BELOW: MARTINA CRKONOVA AT WORK



PIONEERING TREATMENTS AT THE BUDOCK VEAN HOTEL

Words by **Kirstie Newton**

Martina CrkonoVA is introducing organic CBD treatments into her Natural Health Spa menu at the Budock Vean Hotel.

Mention cannabis, and you might think of the 1960s, hippies and psychedelic festivals. But you can't have failed to notice the number of beauty and relaxation treatments making full use of the naturally therapeutic - and completely legal - effects of CBD oils derived from organically grown cannabis.

Since May, these have formed the basis of pioneering spa treatments - some of the first in the UK and new to the Cornwall market - at the Budock Vean Hotel's Natural Health Spa, under the tutelage of manager Martina CrkonoVA - a qualified expert in both Chinese and herbal medicine. "Our decision to add CBD to our spa menu is beyond being 'on trend'," she says. "It's based on the vast therapeutic potential of cannabinoids, and is part of our continuous efforts to source the best in beauty and wellness solutions for our guests and clients."

CBD - the non-toxic, non-psycho-active component of the hemp plant - has an incredible healing range and helps with some of the biggest national health concerns, including pain, sleep, mood and stress. "CBD is such an effective and natural way to target chronic pain, arthritis, skin conditions and stress and it can tackle feelings of depression and anxiety while enhancing feelings of wellbeing, relaxation and calmness," says Martina.

Spa clients can choose their treatment from the menu, then build and enhance the experience with add-ons and technologies of Martina's CBD therapy range - all lab-tested and certificated to the highest UK standards.

The new CBD enhanced treatments aim to provide benefits including increased mineralization, collagen production, moisturisation, anti-inflammation, pain

reduction, relaxation, and overall improved skin health. Guests can choose to add CBD oil into massages, manicures and pedicures, and to existing treatments such as Hot Stones, Himalayan Salt Stones and wraps or Deep Tissue Massage, among other options.

In an effort to promote prolonged CBD use and aftercare, Martina has devised her own CBD Therapy products - all of which are lab-tested and certificated to the highest UK standards - such as hero salve, body balm, massage oil, bath salts and lip balm, all available for purchase in the spa.

Martina's interest in the healing properties of natural substances dates back to her childhood in Communist-era Slovakia. "My amazing grandmother was deeply into healing and herbalism. I know that's where my interest and passion started in helping people and understanding how to heal," she explains. "We'd be sent out into the fields to pick the herbs, and I wanted to understand how she knew how this plant would stop bleeding if you cut yourself, or this one would boost the immune system if we had a cold. We were so lucky to grow up in a family where this was more important - to go out into nature and say this is what you can use."

Martina trained as a sports physiotherapist and worked with athletes in Slovakia, but the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 brought opportunities to travel more widely and explore new professional avenues. While working as a massage therapist on cruise liners, she met a colleague who was a Chinese medicine doctor, meditation guru and teacher. The encounter awakened a fascination with alternative therapies; she's now an acupuncturist and reflexologist with more than 20 years' experience in the global spa industry, from treatment rooms in top spas to spa company board rooms and consultancy.

Since arriving in Cornwall two years ago to head up the Natural Health Spa at the Budock Vean, she concentrated on aspects which fascinate her, including the effects of the changing seasons, the female ageing journey and, now, the healing potential of CBD.

I visited the spa on a rare free Saturday afternoon, for a 30-minute taster of what Martina had to offer. What followed was an oasis of calm in a busy schedule. Martina immediately noted that my skin was dry - something I hadn't noticed at all - and recommended that I drink more water. She then worked expertly on my neck, back and shoulders before flipping me over to work on my feet with a spot of reflexology. I floated out of the spa, feeling all the benefits of CBD oil without, I'm pleased to say, the dubious side-effects of cannabis.

The Budock Vean is working on a new Wellbeing Spa Break to target mental health, stress, anxiety, loss and depression. It will include a two-night stay with dinner, bed and breakfast; an hour-long CBD treatment of your choice; a riverside yoga class; and use of all leisure facilities, including nine-hole golf course, indoor swimming pool, sauna and outdoor hot tub and tennis courts.

The Budock Vean Hotel is a family-run four-star country house hotel with award-winning restaurant and 65 acres of sub-tropical gardens running down to a private foreshore on the Helford River. Tel 01326 252101, www.budockvean.co.uk