



# HEALING Waters

Story | HALEY SHAPLEY

**W**ater has an undeniable magnetism, which makes it the perfect centerpiece for a bucket-list. As Chinese philosopher Laozi said, “Nothing is softer or more flexible than water, yet nothing can resist it.”

## BATHE IN THE BLUE LAGOON

Known for its otherworldly landscape, the Blue Lagoon is one of Iceland’s most popular destinations. You’ll want to jump in, too, once you catch sight of the milky-blue hue of the water, which seems more likely to exist in Photoshop than it does in nature. It sits against a backdrop of rugged lava rock, with rising steam that lends an ethereal quality to the scene.

The seawater, which comes from 6,500 feet belowground before passing through a nearby geothermal plant, is chock-full of minerals, silica and algae, imbuing it with a variety of benefits—clearing up psoriasis and eczema among them. You can indulge in a spa treatment while floating, visit the new Silica Mud Bar to slather on skin-softening silica, take a break from the water in the Relaxation Area, stand beneath a man-made waterfall for a massage courtesy of

the water, or sweat it out in one of the saunas or steam rooms carved into the surrounding rock. It’s easiest to visit on your way to or from Keflavík International Airport, as the Blue Lagoon is much closer to the airport than to the city of Reykjavík—plus it’s a great way to say hello or goodbye to this fascinating country.

### PRO TIP

Liberally apply conditioner to your hair before going into the Blue Lagoon, even if you don’t plan to dip your hair into the water—it’ll be much easier to brush afterward.





### TAKE A DIP IN THE DEAD SEA

The lowest point in the world, the Dead Sea has been beckoning visitors to its waters for eons, from King David of biblical times to modern-day visitors in search of a novel experience. Because the Dead Sea is nearly 10 times saltier than the ocean, sea life doesn't flourish here, but minerals do—the magnesium, sodium, potassium and bromine are hailed for easing a host of ailments, from dry skin and arthritis to allergies and stress. The rich, black mud along the shoreline also has its benefits, including increasing circulation and revitalizing skin.

The Dead Sea isn't like other bodies of water. When you think of a sea (although it's actually a lake), you probably think of swimming, but don't break out your breaststroke here—due to the buoyancy in the water, swimming is difficult, but floating on your back is completely effortless.

The experience is similar on both sides of the sea in Israel and Jordan, although you'll find more luxury hotels in Jordan, along with the famed Hammamat Ma'in hot springs. Nearby attractions in Israel include Qumran, an archaeological site where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found; Ein Gedi, a nature reserve with a beautiful botanical garden; and Masada, an ancient fortress that dates back to B.C. times.

#### PRO TIP

Skip shaving for a couple of days before heading into the Dead Sea, and avoid getting water in your eyes—the salt does sting, as any minor cuts you have will attest to.



### TREAT YOURSELF AT TABACÓN HOT SPRINGS

Boasting what it calls “the perfect combination of volume, temperature and mineral content,” Tabacon Hot Springs is a completely natural phenomenon near Arenal, a volcano in Costa Rica. Ninety-seven percent rain-based and 3 percent magma-based, the springs are located within Tabacon Grand Spa Thermal Resort, one of the most luxurious properties in the country. The lush setting among tropical gardens might just be as therapeutic as the mineral-laden water flowing through the five main pools, which vary from about 77 F to 122 F and run the gamut in size and privacy levels.

In addition to the pools, spa services are available in open-air bungalows, each with a Jacuzzi. Try a treatment with local flair, such as the Rainforest Caress, which comes with a volcanic mud wrap and mask, or Coffee Passion, an energizing body treatment that will leave your skin soft and your mind relaxed.

You can visit the eco-conscious Tabacón via a day pass, but if you want a more immersive experience, book a couple of nights at the resort, which includes entrance into the springs. It's worth taking the time to stroll the walking trails through the rainforest, where you'll stumble across more pools, both hot and cold. ♡

#### PRO TIP

Tabacón has a limited capacity. Be sure to book ahead, particularly if you're going in high season. Fortunately, there are other hot springs in the Arenal area if Tabacón is full.

VISIT JORDAN

