

## Solé Spa

Contributed by Traci O'Dea  
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Colour Me Relaxed - I push open the door to Solé Day Spa's new location in Nanny Cay, opposite B dock, and the sounds of the marina disappear behind me.

Not that I mind the sounds of the marina. I love to hear the clanging of the stays, the linens-on-a-clothesline ripple of the sails and the cave-like groan of the wind, but those are invigorating sounds to me, and I don't want to be invigorated, I want to be relaxed. My first impressions of the reception area—low lighting, calm hues and a wall of Stephanie Clayton's abstract artwork—begin to accomplish this mission.

My masseuse Debbie, in a uniform the colour of the sand at Lava Flow, greets me by name and asks what type of massage I'd like.

"Deep tissue," I say, "and don't be afraid to dig in." She isn't. But first, she sweeps over my skin with a natural-bristle brush, and I understand why my cat loves it when I brush her. Purr. The bristles awaken all my nerve endings, so when Debbie digs in with her elbows, I feel it on my epidermis as well as deep in my tissue. My muscle pain seems to flow out of my body, drip onto the table and evaporate into the air. I am relaxed. So relaxed that I actually appreciate the minor interruptions during the massage—technical difficulties with the CD player and my mobile phone vibrating—because they keep me from dozing off.

After the massage, I thank Debbie and leave the soothing tones of the spa for the invigorating sounds of Nanny Cay Marina and head off to Ladies Night Windsurfing, feeling completely in tune with my body.

The next day, I contact Julia Hingston, owner of Solé, and compliment her on creating such a relaxing atmosphere. "My passion in life is colours," she says. In fact, she worked as a colour consultant for the former owners of Solé before she bought the spa five years ago. Everything from the walls, tables, towels, robes and counters to the technicians' uniforms were handpicked by Julia to facilitate serenity. Julia asserts how colours can make a huge difference in someone's life: "Even something as simple as the right shade of lipstick can improve a woman's self-esteem." I remark how Stephanie Clayton's artwork doesn't adhere to the muted palette that Julia has created but instead adds a welcome splash of primary colour to the otherwise neutral atmosphere. Julia tells me how Stephanie uses Solé as a local studio. "In return, I get to view some inspiring art."

The new location in Nanny Cay mostly serves sailors visiting the marina. "The clientele at Nanny Cay is different than the clientele of the Road Town location. We get a passing trade from charter boat companies and the Nanny Cay hotel while our customers in Road Town are pretty much 100% people who live here. I'd like to let residents in West End know that we're here at Nanny Cay, so they don't have to come all the way into town for a quick eyebrow wax."

Julia assures me that at both locations she only hires therapists with the best training. "And our treatments are the most up-to-date." She cites Minx nail forms, the latest in manicures and pedicures which are only available at the most exclusive spas in the US. "It's nail art that lasts about ten days. Beyoncé is wearing them. Last week I had on fishnets," she laughs. "We want our clients to know they are getting the same treatments they can get in London, New York and Paris right here in Tortola—with the best service possible."

Julia mentions that Solé offers call-out services to yachts docked at the marina, as well as in-office massages with a portable massage chair to boost morale at local firms. While I'm tempted to suggest the idea to my boss, my office's relaxation factor cannot compare to what Julia has created at Solé. And I don't think purring is appropriate at work.

Solé Day Spa hours: Nanny Cay Summer Hours: Thursday to Saturday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Sunday to Wednesday by appointment. Mill Mall, Road Town Monday to Friday 9 a.m. – 6 p.m. Saturday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. Closed on Sunday.