

Experience Healing Hands at the Dorado Beach, A Ritz-Carlton Reserve in Puerto Rico

by **Kari Molvar** 4:30 PM, JANUARY 18, 2013

[Like](#) 0 [Tweet](#) 0 [COMMENT \(0\)](#) [EMAIL](#)



The infinity pool at the Dorado Beach resort.

Long before eco-tourism and “glamping” became chic pastimes, Laurance Rockefeller built his **Dorado Beach resort** in Puerto Rico—a back-to-nature, beachy enclave that drew the tanned socials of the day. This winter, the 50s-era estate was reopened as a **Ritz-Carlton Reserve** with a careful eye to Rockefeller’s wildness-loving spirit.





This is especially felt in the Spa Botánica—a sybaritic playground spread across five acres which includes a Vichy garden, a lily pond, a pineapple garden, soaking pools, and perhaps the most eco-fab feature of all: two lofty tree-houses. Perched high above the ground, the Ipe-wood platforms serve as treatment “rooms” for hammock massages and Thai massages, given on mats, while the salty breezes waft across your skin (if only the Swiss Family Robinson had thought of this).

But before you even climb the 20-step staircases to the treehouses, you’re first escorted through the Apothecary Portal, an entryway marked with an 80-year-old ficus tree and hanging baskets filled with local lemongrass, lavender, and marigold which perfume the air. To ensure you’re fully put under the spell of this natural

beauty, the spa offers private consults with the “Mantos Santos” (healing hands) who whip up custom concoctions of dried and fresh herbs, salts, natural oils, and potent botanicals to restore your mind and body. Prayers and affirmations might also be given—you might find yourself praying to never leave!—while you’re rubbed and massaged from head to toe.

While the menu ranges from apothecary facials infused with rainforest plants to honey-and-rose-hip pedicures, the massages are a house specialty. The Bamboo & Stone Muscle Melt Massage is a unique two-hour tension-ridding respite in which warmed bamboo reeds are rolled over your body and polished stones glide over your limbs to ward off stiffness and jet lag. This off-the-beaten-path treatment can’t be found at any other Ritz spa, or most likely any other spa in the world, period. Surely, Rockefeller would approve.

The Spa Botánica at Dorado Beach, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve (787-626-1100; doradobeach.com) is located at 100 Dorado Beach Drive, Dorado,

Puerto Rico.



