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**ALVADORA SPA AT ROYAL PALMS ACKNOWLEDGES
THE THERAPEUTIC POWER OF WATER WITH WATSU MASSAGE**

PHOENIX – One of the most healing forms of body therapy was introduced at the Royal Palms Resort and Spa, managed by Destination Hotels & Resorts, when it opened its Alvadora Spa in January of 2003. **Watsu**, a combination of gentle massages and stretches performed in water, derives its name from its two healing components: WATer and the meridian body work of shiatSU.

At its most basic level, Watsu is a floating massage used to treat the physical aspects of conditions such as stress, chronic back pain, arthritis, sleep disorders, and fibromyalgia. But Watsu has a much deeper potential to heal at emotional, mental and spiritual levels. Those who have experienced it often describe it as a feeling of returning to the womb, nurturing, peaceful, even sacred.

The therapeutic power of Watsu lies in its unique combination of “ingredients.” Warm water softens the tissues and soothes the mind. Floating creates a sense of lightness and an altered perception of gravity and time. The rhythm and movements of the breath create a sense of ease. Massage soothes sore muscles. Stretching opens the tissues. Shiatsu opens the flow of energy throughout the body. Flowing movements give a feeling of freedom, sleekness, and beauty. Being held creates a sense of acceptance.

All spa treatments at Alvadora combine a European emphasis on therapy with the American desire for indulgence and pampering, and Watsu is no exception. Reflective of the European tradition of “taking the waters,” whether in spas, or natural hot springs, Watsu at Alvadora offers the added benefit of a beautiful, luxurious resort setting.

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The Watsu pool is outside in a completely enclosed, private patio with the natural desert vistas, sounds and scents, all of which create a tranquil setting. The massage therapist “water dances” through a series of gentle stretches and acupressure massage in this 60-minute (\$125) or 90-minute (\$185) treatment. With the inherent calming of the water itself, the result of this multi-sensory experience is a feeling of inner stillness, peacefulness and heightened physical well-being.

“Our spa philosophy is solidly grounded in the European focus on spas as places of healing,” said Michelle Kinney, spa director. “In fact, the term SPA comes from the Roman Emperor Nero’s phrase, “Salus Per Aquam,” which means health by water. Water therapy in general and Watsu specifically are not gimmicks. This is an approach to relaxation and well-being that is thousands of years old. We recommend Watsu to guests who are looking for something new, a more powerful way to relax and reduce stress, or even to alleviate physical and emotional pain and fatigue. And, they’re never disappointed.”

For Alvadora information and reservations, please call 602-977-6400 or 800-672-6011.

A member of Historic Hotels of America, Royal Palms Resort and Spa is a AAA Four Diamond resort located at the foot of majestic Camelback Mountain. Combining the graciousness and sophistication of a Mediterranean villa with the intimacy and privacy of a secluded retreat, Royal Palms offers: 117 custom-appointed guest rooms and intimate clusters of casitas and villas; regal Spanish Colonial architecture; over 20,000 square feet of estate-like meeting space; Tuscan-style gardens; exquisite tapestries, antiques and stone fireplaces throughout. Designed around the original historic private mansion, Royal Palms is home to the award-winning T. Cook’s restaurant, Alvadora Spa, a swimming pool with private cabanas, and croquet lawn. Just minutes from Scottsdale’s shopping, galleries, golf, Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport and the Camelback financial corridor, Royal Palms is an ideal retreat for business, pleasure and special occasions, offering luxury, privacy and convenience.

Royal Palms Resort and Spa is one of 32 independent, upscale and luxury hotels, resorts and golf clubs in the United States managed by Destination Hotels & Resorts, the fourth largest independent hospitality management company in the country. The company, based in Englewood, Colo., features a portfolio of more than 8,000 guest rooms, 13 golf courses and nine full-service spas. DH&R properties are located in key metropolitan and resort markets including New York, San Francisco, Washington, D.C., Chicago, Denver, Dallas, Boston, San Diego, Aspen, Phoenix, Palm Springs, Jackson Hole, Maui and Lake Tahoe.

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