

TEAM NEWS

Q+A WITH THE BEAUTY OPERATIONS MANAGER AT THE RUNNYMEDE ON THAMES SPA

SHARE:

Michelle Philp gives an insider look at working in The Spa at The Runnymede on Thames.

Tell us about your job.

I'm a Senior Therapist and the Beauty Operations Manager, working in The Spa at The Runnymede on Thames. I've worked here since 2004, although I've worked in the industry as a whole since 1996. I oversee beauty reservations, the diary management and updating the rotas. I train new therapists, manage stock control, place orders and work on the product displays. When we create new seasonal treatments and products of the month, I work with the marketing team to help with the wording and photography. Having worked here for a long time, I have some regular clientele too, so one day a week look after all my regular clients in, which is lovely.

How did you get into this line of work?

I studied hair and beauty at college after I left school, then I did the trainee management scheme at Marks & Spencer. When I first came to The Runnymede on Thames, I had a great opportunity to set up some of the hotel's spa offering and design some treatments. This helped my career progress, so I eventually became the Beauty Operations Manager. The Runnymede on Thames Spa has been very successful for 25 years and it's wonderful to be part of that.

What makes The Runnymede on Thames different from other employers?

Since it's a family run hotel, it's a really personable place to work. You're not just on a conveyor belt going in and out. Our motto is Friendly-on-Thames and people genuinely say that it's a great place to work. When you join, you feel part of a big family and everyone is rewarded for their loyalty.

Tell us about some of the employee benefits.

We're very lucky to have free parking, as well as free lunches and dinners. When you've come from a job where you need to pay for parking every day, and you've got to pay to feed yourself, it's a great surprise to come to The Runnymede on Thames. It helps you save quite a lot of money too.

Have you received any memorable feedback from spa guests?

We get so much amazing feedback. People have told us they had their best treatment of all time. They say

...which they've experienced. We're very grateful for the fabulous comments we receive.

What kind of training can employees at the spa expect to receive?

When you first start as a therapist at The Runnymede on Thames, you are sent to all the product houses for training. The products and treatments we offer in The Spa are therefore delivered by therapists who have been trained by the product houses themselves. This is a fantastic opportunity for the therapists and keeps our standards high in The Spa. Back at The Runnymede on Thames, training is ongoing. We run courses in-house in The Spa and there are more general courses employees can go on depending on which skills they'd like to develop, from customer service to managing a team.

Have you ever had any funny situations at work?

A number of years ago, some of our members thought it would be funny to push the Duty Manager in the pool. He'd gone to do a pool check, and they crept up behind him and pushed him into the pool in his suit! I think our Duty Managers are a bit more vigilant these days...

What spa treatment would you choose for yourself?

It would have to be our hot stone massage, or the signature treatment we've designed called the Top to Toe Massage. All our products for this are warmed in the hot stone tanks. The treatment involves a full body massage, a face treatment, scalp massage and a hot hair mask wrapped up in a hot towel. It really is a top to toe experience and it's a truly indulgent treat.

If you could give a spa treatment to anyone, who would it be?

Definitely my mum. She works very hard, looks after my 93-year-old grandad and she's very supportive of me and my daughter. She definitely deserves it.

How have you seen your colleagues' careers progress over the years?

A lot of people come in and really want to take their careers to the next level. They're truly enthusiastic to learn. We've had people who have stayed at The Runnymede on Thames for so long that they can't really learn anymore. They've gone on to start and manage their own businesses. It's very rewarding to know that we can train employees to a level where they can take their career wherever they want to when they eventually leave The Runnymede on Thames.

Inspire us – where's the next holiday on your bucket list?

I'm saving to take my daughter to Disneyland Florida, so she can appreciate it while she's still young enough to love Disney. I'd love to travel more, so after Disneyland I'll be planning a trip to visit family in Australia.

[SEARCH CURRENT OPPORTUNITIES](#)

PERKS OF THE JOB

WHAT EXCELLENT BENEFITS YOU CAN EXPECT