



The bedrooms have been refurbished



Just one meal from the mouthwatering menu

# Peach Perfect

Sam Giltrow samples The Embankment – a place to be pampered before a lazy riverside lunch.

**Take** a run-down pub in a beautiful riverside setting, add a complete makeover, a competent hospitality team, and lashings of style, and what do you get? Another successful inn for the award-winning Peach Pubs company.

The Embankment, which sits on the bank of the River Great Ouse in Bedford, has been transformed since being taken over by Peach last year.

The official relaunch at the end of March has heralded a new era for the late Victorian mock Tudor building which was once a run-down pub/hotel. Now it is buzzing with life, instilling great pride in licensee Andrew Coath, who also runs the company's two other pubs in the area – The Swan at Salford and The Black Horse in Woburn.

The fabulous bar has huge bay windows overlooking the new terrace and river beyond, and the old back bar has been turned into a large restaurant. There is also a new private dining room seating up to 24, perfect for celebrations, and upstairs there are 20 completely refurbished

en-suite bedrooms, which give a nod to the Arts and Crafts style in shades of lilac, chocolate and cream. There are sumptuous furnishings, all the mod cons, and a few have the added bonus of a stunning view over the river – as we discovered when we sampled beauty treatments by therapyclub, who have been brought in to offer pampering to hotel guests and local residents.

Therapist and therapyclub co-founder Zeta Rankin, who sets up twice a week in one of the river view rooms, gave me a wonderfully relaxing facial using top-quality Collen products from France. The sun poured through the big bay window as she soothed my skin and all I could do was enjoy it and think about what I would like for my lunch. Refreshed, I sat in the bar and relaxed over a cappuccino while my colleague, Alex, headed for a back, neck and shoulder massage, which she declared the best she had ever had.

We could get used to being pampered 'ladies who lunch', we decided, as we perused the

lunchtime menu while sitting on the terrace soaking up the sunshine, chilled drinks in hand.

I eyed up the wooden boards laden with huge beefy burgers, fat chips and salad heading to neighbouring tables and was tempted away from the roast leg of Cornish lamb I had decided to order. And I was glad I did. The burger, made from ground Aberdeenshire beef, was the tastiest, and juiciest, I had ever had, and was served with bacon, cheese, coleslaw and tomato chutney. The chips were perfection – crispy on the outside and fluffy in the middle. Alex was also pleased with her goat's cheese and red onion panini and chips, and we were both left feeling pleasantly full.

The Embankment is a neat little package. Where else can you get pop in for a lazy riverside lunch, and enjoy a pedicure and a panini?

■ *The Embankment, Bedford, MK40 3PD, Telephone 01234 261332 or visit [www.therapyclub.com](http://www.therapyclub.com) and [www.embankmentbedford.co.uk](http://www.embankmentbedford.co.uk)*