



Emmanuelle with a client

Feel the heat and melt the stress away

Tamasin Coates tries out a new form of massage using hot air

They say journalists tend to be sceptical and I am no exception. So when I heard of a new form of massage using hot air, I was dubious as to how it could be better than the traditional hands-on method which I have tried in the past.

Then beauty therapist Emmanuelle Picard, who has opened a massage suite at Fitness First in Purley, invited me to try the treatment.

Emmanuelle first heard of the technique about 15 years ago.

"It was developed by another beauty therapist in Croatia. She had studied how the Romans first used hot air treatment as a way of promoting deep relaxation.

"My aunt has been using this for treatments for 15 years and swears by it, saying it has removed her cellulite and left her feeling fabulous."

About a year ago, Emmanuelle, who is also Croatian, hit on the idea of bringing the aeroline to the UK. She is now the main distributor for it in this country.

So it was, that I found myself trying out the treatment on Monday at the Brighton Road gym.

I was asked to strip down to my

bra and pants and lie on the treatment bed. Next came the ear defenders – yes, ear defenders – and yes, that's for both the therapist and the client as the aeroline does generate a lot of noise. Fortunately, turns out they were light and easy to wear.

I laid back and relaxed as my eyes were covered, the lights dimmed and Emmanuelle set to work using the tube of what looks like a small vacuum cleaner to apply hot air to my body. Although the hot air is applied under pressure, it still feels comfortable and relaxing – even though you are aware your muscles are coming under quite a lot of pressure, equivalent to that of a sports massage.

I was also concerned that I might have a hot flush or break out in a sweat, but I need not have worried. The hot air does not stay in one place long enough to make you uncomfortable – just warm and relaxed. Halfway through, I was

asked to turn over and lie face down while Emmanuelle hot-air massaged my back, shoulders and legs.

At the end of 25 minutes, she gently covered me with a sheet and told me to relax for five minutes before getting dressed again.

So how did I feel? I have had other massage treatments before but this left me feeling incredibly light – literally as if I were floating on air – and very relaxed.

Not only that, but my right hip which is a bit stiff, if not arthritic, felt far more flexible.

And the advantages? Well as no oils or creams are used, it is possible to have this treatment in your lunch hour and then return to work.

The aeroline can be used on anyone – the only exception being pregnant women. It is also affordable at £35 for a 25-minute session.

Would I recommend it? Yes, I will certainly be back for more.