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H.M. Epstein

But that's a ways away. For now, we've got some goodies — entertaining and informative articles in this issue—for you to enjoy. Take our cover story, for example. We asked writer H.M. Epstein to visit new day spas, sample their services, and then report back. An onerous assignment? Yeah, right. "Until this assignment," says Helene, who lives in Briarcliff Manor, "I'd only had a masseuse come to my house. So I was surprised to find such a range of services, as well as spa designs and approaches." After numerous massages, facials, Reiki and reflexology sessions, is she a spa convert? "I've been exfoliated within an inch of my life, but yes!"

If you are in need of a massage—and who isn't?—see "What a Difference a Day Spa Makes" on page 54.

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Photo: Michael S. Lewis

Day Spa(ahhh)s

Get ready, get set, get pampered.

BY: H.M. EPSTEIN

What a Difference A Day Spa Makes

Whether brand new or tried-and-true, here are the best places in the county to get scrubbed, rubbed, and leave feeling your blissed-out best

By H. M. Epstein

Photography by Stephen Ang

The most beautiful woman I ever saw sat across a church aisle from me at a wedding. She was aristocratic looking, tall and slender. Her flawless skin glowed with an inner light. Her pageboy bob and French manicure were understated perfection. Oh, one last little detail: She was 81 with silvery gray hair.

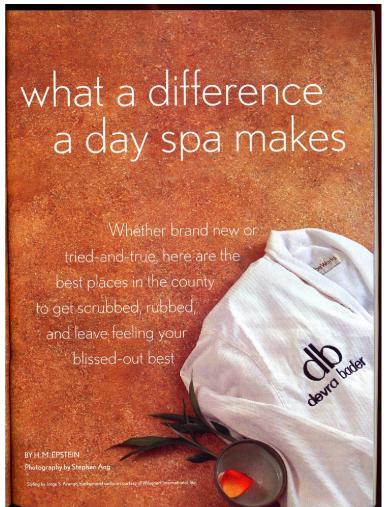
When I asked how she achieved such great beauty, she laughed and said all credit was due to her weekly facials and salon visits. "It's the maintenance that counts," she said, "not the mileage."

So, with a glimmer of hope that it's not too late, I set off to discover the best new day spas in Westchester. To qualify, the day spa had to offer a full range of services; have a separate area for spa services (not just a room or two in the back of a hair or nail salon); and had to have opened in the past couple of years (since January 2002).

Northern Westchester

Facialist Lorraine Hoy, massage therapist Ron Statler and Reiki Master Suzanne Roth—three of the best in the field—have left their previous spas and joined forces to work at a gorgeous new location—**Park Avenue Medical Spa** in Armonk (sister to the medical offices at 40 Park Avenue in Manhattan). Medical services are the latest twist in spa offerings provided for those who want more than the standard facial or wrap, like, maybe some fillers or a little Botox injected here and there, some laser vein therapy or a mesolift—procedures only doctors can perform. Go to the lower level of the spa for medical-grade peels, microdermabrasion, laser hair removal, thread lifts (a non-surgical facelift) and other medical treatments. Go upstairs to be pampered in the delightfully decadent spa done up in upscale bordello decor—crystal chandeliers, velvet couches and a Moroccan steam bath where you can indulge in the Hammam ritual: steam, a black-olive soap exfoliation, a moisturizing clay body wrap and a massage (\$200). Wednesday nights are for men only; Thursdays are for the ladies.

Leon Morano, the imaginative co-owner of Richard **Scott Salon and Day Spa** in Mt. Kisco, created the divine Petals from Heaven treatment for Valentine's Day, and now it's a permanent offering. The experience begins as you enter the Japanese-style spa, either from the high-energy salon or from a new private entrance on Moger Avenue. Your mood is instantly transformed by the soft light of candles and lanterns the hush in the hallway and the soothing sounds of New Age and classical music. After changing into a soft cotton robe and sandals, you're escorted to one of seven treatment rooms.



The heady scent emanating from rose-oil candles fills the air in the room; rose petals are seemingly everywhere, strewn on a padded table and even on the floor. For a full-body exfoliation, head aesthetician Jennifer Lenti applies warm sea salt, rosemary, peppermint oil and crushed rose petals. After I take a brief shower in my room, she rubs in a rose petal body silk to rehydrate my skin. Content and smooth as a baby, I am delighted to learn that the treatment has not ended; massage therapist Sharon Sotomayor enters to provide a healing and soothing massage. Maybe you should go by taxi; I was a very satisfied limp noodle at the end.

(While writing this article, I had a flare-up of sciatica and returned to the Richard Scott Salon and Day Spa for a Swedish massage from Judy Vuozzo, who not only calmed my overwrought muscles but opened up my "chakras" with Reiki and balanced "my polarity," a type of body work that, she says, heals with currents of energy. She made it all better.)



Stone Hedge Day Spa in Millwood is a charming, sunny two-story getaway designed by co-owners Roxanne Colombo, Rose Denaro and JoAnn Vaughan; they have worked together for more than a decade. Stone Hedge has become a popular spot for bridal parties who begin with mimosas in the morning in their robes and get pampered from head to toe, stopping only for lunch: massages, facials, body treatments, waxing, nails, hair cut and colored, updos, makeup, even electrolysis and spray body tanning. I, however, was there for a reflexology treatment from Vaughan.

"All the points in your feet correspond to the organs and body parts in your whole body," she says. "If you have a sinus headache or one ailment, you can work it out through your feet." Work my feet she did. Lying on a heated table while Vaughan manipulated my feet, I felt totally relaxed and serene, all the benefits of a full-body Swedish massage without messing up my hair. Vaughan said that reflexology is her favorite treatment to receive, and it shows in the care that she gives.

I'll wager there's nothing in Westchester quite like **Spa-Tucci's Day Spa** in Mohegan Lake. Despite the Roman name, the spa's decor reflects owner Sandy Santucci's Cherokee heritage. Kokopelli's abound on pillows, wallpaper borders, sconces and sculpture, as well as wall masks of spirit animals like wolves, buffalo and bears. Funky, refreshingly different and painted in bright Southwestern colors, the spa plays relaxing Native American music instead of Enya or Pachelbel. Manicures and pedicures are offered on the main floor of this 19th-century house. Upstairs are three treatment rooms with creaky antique floors and a spa sitting room with a sofa, lockers and refreshments. In addition to a broad menu of massage, facial and body treatments, Spa-Tucci's offers Supportive Touch Therapeutic Massage, which the spa describes as a "healing" treatment for chemotherapy and arthritis patients.

I expected a gentle massage, but what I got was both so much more and so much less. Massage therapist Charlie Hayes, a slight, gray-haired, bearded man in a trucker's cap, asks me to lie down on the table fully clothed. He then proceeds to massage my "aura." Cynic that I am, I expect nothing. What I receive is profound and very soothing. At one point, the density of the air between his hands and my head is so intense, I open one eye and say, "Charlie, you're giving me a headache." Towards the end of the massage, when he runs his hands over my calf muscles (and I mean "over"—he never touches me), I can feel them "pop" and release. I'm a convert.

Dont miss their newest offering: Rain Drop Therapy, a massage that incorporates essential oilsdropped onto the spine and feet in a raindrop fashion, followed by a hot stone massage for \$90.Santucci says it's so relaxing, you should plan to take the rest of the day off.

Daniello Skin Care & Day Spa in Mt. Kisco lays claim to being the first medi-spa, a hybrid of medical care and indulgence, in Westchester County. Owners Dr. Nicholas Daniello, a board-certified facial plastic surgeon, and his wife Kathleen have a scientific approach to skincare featuring Dr. Daniello's own skincare lines. He invented a new form of glycolic acid (patent pending) to improve efficacy and remove potential irritation. His products and spa also treat rosacea, couperose and cellulite, and the spa offers waxing and photoepilation, a virtually pain-free method of hair removal.

Since Dr. Daniello has opened and sold nine spas, he's had ample opportunity to perfect how the first one to carry his name should look and what it should offer. The result is beautiful and professional, without feeling clinical. The lobby sets the mood with a Persian carpet, sofa and upholstered chairs in a living room setup and a Tuscan-themed tile waterfall. In March 2004, Dr. Richard Garvey, a board-certified plastic surgeon, set up office to consult with patients and perform in-office procedures, including Botox, Restylane and collagen treatments. He will also perform surgeries at Lawrence Hospital in Bronxville. Not ready for surgery, I opted for a massage from Susan Kearney, a knowledgeable and affable massage therapist with exceptionally strong hands and pinpoint radar for my "tender points."

After 11 years of running her tiny establishment, More Than Nails, on the second floor of a landmark building on Main Street in Ossining, owner Lorraine Guzman has opened **Shine**, a SoHo art-gallery-style salon and spa located on the building's main floor, complete with exposed brick walls, original tin ceilings and brightly colored abstract art. The front two-thirds of the space are devoted to hair and nail care. In the back of the salon you'll find a private sitting area, a changing room with lockers containing thick, soft robes and sandals, and three treatment rooms, including a wet room. While the salon sells a wide range of products for hair and body, it uses only Éminence, an organic handmade skin-care line from Hungary. I was treated to a fabulous facial from Éminence's regional educator, Sina Von Eisenstein, who had overseen training for the spa. To cleanse, exfoliate, fight wrinkles and rehydrate my skin, she used products made with natural ingredients like parsley, cucumber and paprika ("for circulation," she explained); naseberry, grape and apple ("rich in fruit acids for anti-aging"); stoncrop ("better than aloe for hydration and healing") and rose hips ("anti-oxidant moisturizer"). My face, hands and feet were good enough to eat.

Southern Westchester

At the top of Garth Avenue in Scarsdale Village is a cluster of temptation and pleasure: One flight above the Ultimate Image salon, where owner Gina Fini is reputed to be a genius with scissors, and the incredibly yummy Pâtisserie Lulu, where even sugar-free cakes taste sinful, is a sunlit center for beauty owned by makeup artist **Devra Bader**. Bader says she designed her eponymous salon as a homey hangout so clients can drop by for a cup of tea and a chat, even when they have no appointment. And they do. Since its opening in December 2002, Bader has focused on skincare and beauty, including a full range of facial and body treatments, waxing and nail care. Specialty pedicures include the "SeaCSpa," which combines vitamins with algae and organic mud to boost circulation and production of new cells. The spa added lash and brow tinting, as well as sports, deep tissue and prenatal massages in 2003.

The biggest draw, however, is always Devra Bader herself. Her portfolio includes photographs of and notes from celebrities like Mira Sorvino, Jada Pinkett-Smith, Kathleen Turner and even Jane Goodall. Her services for bridal parties book almost a year in advance, and, unlike some makeup artists, Bader will stay through the formal picture-taking session and the ceremony.

On a quiet street in Eastchester is a hideaway for pampering and beauty called **Adriana Spa**

Timeless Beauty. After 11 years working at the spa, then located in the Tarrytown Marriott, owner Adriana Muntenue opened her dream spa, where all massages begin with an “aromatic” steam shower and all treatment tables are sprinkled with rose petals. Designed to protect the tranquil atmosphere of the spa, there’s a private mini-salon for Day-of-Beauty or Bridal clients off the entrance lobby, where the carved Florentine desk and ceiling-to-floor waterfall set the mood. Within the main spa area, there are private locker rooms, a sitting room with a sofa and low tables for refreshments, and six treatment rooms, including two special two-room suites. One of the suites has adjoining massage rooms for couples. The other suite combines a dry massage room with a spacious tiled wet room that houses a Vichy shower, a large imposing table and overhanging shower arm for body treatments. Typical of Muntenue’s full-service approach is the Sirodhara Ayurvedic Scalp Treatment, which includes hairstyling so you don’t leave the spa looking like a shock-therapy patient.

In the sitting room, I met Virginia Giordano of Dobbs Ferry, who whispered, “Everything in this spa is as good as what you would find in Europe.” She is right. Licensed acupuncturist and herbologist Oleg Fabrikant offers a full range of acupuncture treatments including one for facial rejuvenation. A board-certified plastic surgeon, Dr. Christian Guzman, is also on premises for cosmetic surgery services. Although bridal parties are popular here, Muntenue reports that 30 percent of her clientele are male, perhaps because she offers a Bachelor & Bachelorette package as well as an Aromatherapy Couples Massage, complete with Champagne, to mark those special occasions.

I thought I’d heard everything, but apparently not. Fanny facials? They are now offered in Westchester, so if your behind needs some buffing, head straight to **NY Serenity Spa** in Scarsdale. Just what is a fanny facial? This procedure starts with a microdermabrasion treatment, followed by the slathering of either a firming algae, or “power lifting” or Q10 enzyme treatments. Just the ticket for those derrière-exposing thongs (\$250). Of course, at NY Serenity, you can also get a facial on your actual face, plus massages and a full array of nail treatments. The spa has a board-certified plastic surgeon on board for injections of Botox, Restylane and collagen and a podiatrist to consult on “high-heel feet” or toe tucks.

Fairfield County

You don’t have to get on a plane to enjoy a Parisian spa experience. Above the bustle of New Canaan’s Main Street is a mini-European vacation named **Le Spa of New Canaan**. Cozy and furnished like the lobby of an upper-class Parisian bed and breakfast, owner/aesthetician Jennifer Yates was inspired by more than just French lodgings. She employs primarily skincare products from the Guinot Institute of Paris where, Yates assures me, “13 full-time scientists in Bordeaux and Paris combine the best botanicals with the best allopathic research to care for your skin and body.”

I was fascinated by, and admittedly a bit wary of, the sleek European skin and body machines that line the walls of the three treatment rooms. Yates explained each one’s purpose: lymphatic drainage, microdermabrasion, microcurrent therapy and the awe-inspiring Swiss laser cellulite machine! I received a customized multi-step and multi-product face protocol of



cleansing, exfoliation and hydration using brushes, high-frequency electric current, lymphatic drainage and microcurrent for lifting, all of which were surprisingly relaxing.

However, the best part was Yates herself. She had the gentlest touch, her fingers tapping like little butterfly wings as she applied the cleansers, masques, serums and moisturizers. She gave me a non-surgical facelift that left my skin clean and gleaming. Le Spa also employs a board-certified plastic surgeon, a master shiatsu massage therapist, a physical therapist (who also performs cranial sacral therapy and pregnancy massage); and an acupuncturist (who is also a homeopathic herbalist and a naturopath). Yates highly recommends the Fall Rejuvenation package: hydradermie facial and hand reflexology with paraffin for sun-damaged skin plus cranial sacral therapy for “balancing your energy and finding your bliss” for \$350.

One cold, snowy morning Pia Lauren was late for her first appointment at **Pia Lauren Spa Di Bellezza** in Fairfield. The reason is revealing. While on her way to work, she spotted a car with a man and three young children stuck on the side of the road, so she stopped and offered to get them fuel. “No,” she remembers the man saying, “I’ll go get the gas”—and left Lauren with the children, sensing he could entrust her with them. It’s not surprising. Lauren has the gift of inspiring trust, making those who meet her feel at ease—a good asset, considering her work is all about relaxation. Her easy manner is reflected in the overall ambience of this homey, full-service spa, a longtime dream of hers. The main-floor lobby, where I sat sipping tea and listening to Andrea Bocelli, feels like an outdoor Tuscan garden. Hidden from view are two pedicure stations. Upstairs, there’s a sitting room with velvet-covered dining chairs, where clients can relax in their robes or have lunch, and five treatment rooms, including a full bathroom with shower, and a waxing room.

“I believe in therapeutic touch,” Lauren told me after my facial as we relaxed upstairs. “Wherever I touch,” she said, “it always turns into Reiki.” She uses only all-natural ingredients in the Pia Lauren line of skincare products; even the heating pads are filled with herbs. The salt exfoliation uses Dead Sea salt; the enzyme peel is made of pineapple and papaya with grapefruit and lavender oils; and the massage cream is made from olive, almond and avocado oils, vitamins B12 and B6, teas and ginger extract. The moisturizers soak deeply into the skin and last for more than a day; they survived a hot shower and didn’t come off on my clothing.

Stonewater is part of the collection of 21 spas under the Stonewater umbrella. With corporate spas, clients can expect a consistency in products, services and experience at each branch. On Greenwich Avenue, directly across from Tiffany’s, Stonewater provides a comprehensive spa experience that begins in the building’s lobby with soothing piped-in music and the same “earth elements” decor that is found in the spa, one elevator flight up. There is a main waiting room for both spa and nail services and no jarring elements or competing services to disturb the atmosphere of pampering relaxation.

Massage therapist Alyce Garfman performed Stonewater’s signature hot-stone massage; she laid heated black rocks on my “chakra points” to open my “chi” which, according to Garfman, “makes you more relaxed, clearheaded, increases circulation and lets the toxins out.” Stonewater is one of the area’s largest spas, with a staff of 28 and a seven-day schedule. One note: Unlike most spas, treatment of the décolleté area and foot massages are extras.

Exfoliated within an inch of her life and Reiki-ed to perfection, H.M. Epstein is happy to sign up for more tough assignments like this one.

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where to call it a day

WESTCHESTER

Name, Address, Telephone & Web site

	What Makes It Special	Free Parking	Price: F (Facial), M (Massage), S (Signature Treatment)
Adriana Spa Timeless Beauty 212 Main Street, Eastchester (914) 395-1555	The wet room features a Vichy Shower (multi-headed "rain bar") and an aromatic steam shower. Acupuncture and ear candling (to cleanse ear canals) are offered, and there's a suite for couples' massage. Rose petals are on every table.	■	F: \$85-\$150 M: \$100-\$115 S: (Adriana's Signature Facial) \$130
Daniello Skin Care & Day Spa 145 Kisco Avenue, Mt. Kisco (914) 242-3800	A board-certified cosmetic surgeon is on-site at the spa, which carries Dr. Daniello's line of skincare products and offers Botox and collagen treatments, as well as Endermologie for cellulite.	■	F: \$45-\$115 M: \$40-\$125 S: (Daniello Glycolic Anti-Aging Facial) \$115
Devra Bader Skin Care & Beauty Spa 38 Garth Road, Scarsdale (914) 725-1158	Celeb makeup artist/owner Devra Bader offers makeup application and instruction. The spa provides lash and brow tinting. They specialize in pedicures as well.		F: Teen: \$65, Adult: \$85-\$130 M: \$100-\$110 S: (Collagen Facial Treatment) \$585 for a series of five
NY Serenity Spa 747 White Plains/Post Road, Scarsdale (914) 472-5655; www.nyserenity.com	It has a very homey atmosphere which includes a big-screen TV and a kitchen that offers juice, coffee, wine and snacks.	■	F: \$90-\$150 M: \$80-\$130 S: (Foot Fetish) \$100-\$150
Park Avenue Medical Spa 495 Main Street, Armonk (914) 730-3333 www.parkavenuemedicalspa.com	Park Avenue combines the luxury of a resort spa with medical-grade technology. It's also one of the only area spas with a physician on site.	■	F: \$100+ M: \$90-\$160 S: (Hamman Ritual Treatment) \$200
Richard Scott Salon & Day Spa 15-17 South Moger Avenue, Mt. Kisco (914) 242-1700; www.richardscottsalon.com	In addition to acupuncture and Botox treatments, full salon services are available, as well as makeup application and hair replacement and extensions.		F: \$60-\$300, M: \$80-\$135 S: (R.S. Quick Pick-Me-Up Package) \$125
Shine Salon & Spa 161 Main Street, Ossining (914) 762-6675	This SoHo art gallery-style salon offers a full range of salon services as well as Eminence organic skincare products from Hungary.	■	F: \$85-\$145, M: \$85-\$130 S: (Organic Oxygenating Facial) \$45
Spa-Tucci's 1722 East Main Street, Mohegan Lake (914) 528-1140; www.spatuscii.com	Supportive Touch Therapeutic Massage is offered, as well as electrolysis, personal training, permanent makeup application, ear piercing and nutritional counseling.	■	F: \$55-\$90 M: \$40-\$65 S: (Signature Facial) \$80
Stone Hedge Day Spa 70 Millwood Road, Millwood (914) 923-4065	Full salon services are offered, including electrolysis, makeup application and ear piercing.	■	F: \$80-\$120, M: \$75-\$100 S: (Reflexology Treatment) \$45-\$70

FAIRFIELD COUNTY

Le Spa 64 Main Street, New Canaan (203) 966-6771	Le Spa uses Guinot products from Paris and organic beauty care products from Milan. Cosmetic fillers are available as are treatments for cellulite and hair removal. There are two facial lifting machines at the spa.		F: \$80-\$160 M: \$70-\$145 S: (LeSpa's Signature Facial) \$98
Pia Lauren Spa Di Bellezza 1828 Post Road, Fairfield (203) 254-8308; www.pialauren.com	Pia Lauren's skin-care and makeup application lines are offered, as are lash and brow tints.	■	F: Teen: \$45, Adult: \$75-\$80 M: \$80-\$150, S: (Deep Cleansing Facial with Collagen Treatment) \$125
Stonewater 151 Greenwich Avenue, Greenwich (203) 622-7424 www.stonewater.com/greenwich	Stonewater offers a complete spa experience including skin-care, massage, body treatments, microdermabrasion and makeup application.		F: \$82-\$150, M: \$82-\$125 S: (Signature Hot Stone Massage) \$125