



OFF TO THE

Spa

Pamper Yourself With a Sampling of New Beauty and Health Hot Spots

BY HEATHER KW BROWN, JULIE CLARK AND LISSA POIROT

Something that feels this good should be wrong, shouldn't it? But a trip to the spa for a massage, facial, body wrap or any host of treatments that leave you feeling relaxed and rejuvenated while improving your looks is actually even more beneficial than you may have thought. New studies continuously show the negative effects of stress on our health, increasing memory loss, sleep disorders, diabetes and heart disease while serving as a rapid aging mechanism. However, massage, which has been in use for hundreds of years, can relieve stress and reduce pain. So it's no wonder that spas catering to women and men in need of easing the tension are popping up around the country, even in airports.

While spas of yore were weeklong rejuvenation retreats for the wealthy, day spas now provide a place to be pampered closer to home, because we are, in fact, a time-pressed nation. More holistic treatments can be found as people become open to the best methods of reducing stress and improving health. For example, acupuncture was once considered New Age, but after various studies demonstrated the ancient treatment's positive affects on health, it is a service often found at newer spas. And when traditional spa services can't erase time's effects, new "medi-spas" may offer treatments such as spider vein removal as well as more advanced medical-grade products previously only found at cosmetic surgeon offices.

So go ahead, indulge a little. We've checked out three new spas close to home that will leave you feeling and looking great. And be sure to check out next month's issue for a few more spas sure to relax and rejuvenate the mind, body and soul.

Spa Day

Spa Om Magie

Spa Om Magie

56 East Andrews Drive
Suite 11
Atlanta, GA 30305
404-814-2444
www.ommagie.com

I wouldn't exactly consider myself as an adventurous spa-goer, so when I arrived at the upscale Spa Om Magie in Buckhead for my first Zen Shiatsu massage, I was a bit nervous. But that lasted all of 60 seconds. Maybe it was the welcoming smiles that greeted me as I opened the door or maybe it was the positive energy of Dr. Loui (pronounced Lou) who is not only an expert in Chinese and Oriental medicine,

but also has experience treating Olympic athletes. The only thing I can say for sure is that I climbed on to the spa table knowing I was in very good hands.

This satisfied feeling and positive energy is what owner Magie Jahangard works so diligently to create. "I just want [Spa Om Magie] to be a healing place for everyone. A place where customers can relax, get a service and leave in good, happy spirits. That's my goal," Jahangard said with her trademark smile.

Only open since Jan. 20 of this year, Spa Om Magie is definitely on the right track. In keeping with the current spa trend of combining aspects of both eastern and western health care as well as the philosophy of creating and maintaining balance, Spa Om Magie entices guests with a wide variety of fabulous options. The cozy 2,500-square-foot spa offers nearly every pampering service guests are accustomed to receiving, from couples and pre- or post-natal Swedish massages to hydrating facials and hydrotherapy baths. In addition, the facility boasts an impressive line-up of medi-spa treatments such as LED light therapy, photo face and body rejuvenation, as well as cosmetic injections.

Having had my share of Swedish massages, but not yet brave enough to cosmetically reset the age clock, I opted to take my spa experience in the direction of holistic medicine, which works from the inside out by focusing on chakra points and meridian channels. Rigid thought patterns, negative feelings and toxins are just a few of the factors said to block your body's chakra points — we have seven of them — and if not released, this energy blockage can lead to physical imbalances. For the record, I had no idea if my choice of treatment would be painful or relaxing. As a matter of fact, the only thing I knew, by virtue of a written description, was that it is a traditional oriental technique during which one's energy is unblocked, allowing the body to heal and regenerate itself.

It was an interesting choice considering I didn't arrive with any specific aches or pains and I didn't feel as if my body needed to be healed or regenerated. I even asked Dr. Loui if my energy was a chaotic mess. The good news is that he just laughed and shook his head, adding that I was an easy patient. The better news is that within seconds of leaving the treatment room, Jahangard looked at me and proclaimed, "You are glowing!" Apparently, I looked as good as I felt, which doesn't happen often.

For the skeptics in the crowd, it should be noted that Dr. Loui's version of Shiatsu massage is similar to what you expect from a Swedish, except it involves more of a kneading technique rather than long, smooth strokes. Needless to say, it was a relaxing experience and one I hope to relive again soon.

"The holistic side, that's my passion," Jahangard said, adding, "I get excited about it and when people leave feeling and looking better, it makes me happy."

With that in mind, Jahangard who is already a delightful and hospitable person is preparing the debut of Spa Om Magie's laughing yoga classes. "At the beginning and end of each class, we're just going to laugh a lot. Even if you pretend to laugh, it has so many benefits on the body. It's the best healing technique for anything," she said.

Laughter really is the best medicine, after all. If that doesn't give you enough to smile about, Spa Om Magie currently offers belly-dancing classes on Tuesday mornings and evenings with perhaps the addition of another class on Thursday, and sunrise meditation services are in development.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SPA OM MAGIE

To top off the experience, a spa associate will pour rose water from a beautiful, ornate decanter over your hands as you make a wish. One thing you don't have to wish for anymore is a non-pretentious place where you can rejuvenate your body and mind. Make a day out of your visit to Spa Om Magie by grabbing a bite to eat at the very popular Souper Jenny right next door before shopping your heart out at the many boutique shops within walking distance.



When the island of Hawaii comes to mind, words such as fragrant beauty and complete serenity float into the subconscious. That's why owner Grace Choung chose the Hawaiian word "Kai" for her medical spa. It means "body of water" and in other Asian languages "to make a change" or "to be healthy," all of which sum up her hopes for her spas in Sandy Springs, Alpharetta and Duluth.

The island may inspire the spa but it's true Southern hospitality that greets you at the door. Smiles from the staff are as warm as the chocolate-colored walls that dress the elegantly designed treatment rooms. While the spa offers a variety of relaxation and beauty treatments, from Swedish massages to its very popular microdermabrasion services, it's the overall, long-term health of their clients that drives their business.

"I've tried to find massage therapists who've worked in chiropractors' offices because we focus a bit more on the medical well-being versus just feeling good," Choung said. For example, the Myofascial Release massage (\$100 an hour) is a more intense massage aimed to release tight muscle build-

KAI THE MEDICAL SPA THREE LOCATIONS:

227 Sandy Springs Place
Suite 388
Atlanta, GA 30328
404-250-0882
www.kaimedspa.com

5215 Windward Pkwy.
Suite D
Alpharetta, GA 30004
678-240-0884

11600 Medlock Bridge Road
Suite 170
Duluth, GA 30097
770-418-2118

up often caused by sitting in front of a computer all day. It doesn't massage your muscles, nor ligaments, but the fascial area — the connective tissue binding muscles together. "The Myofascial Release is great for people with chronic pain," Choung said.

Kai also offers Jane Iredale products, a leader in the mineral makeup industry. Iredale, whose background has been in film, theater and television, is credited with being the first to create a mineral makeup collection. If you haven't tried mineral makeup before or heard of its many benefits, come inside for a free consultation. The benefits from the all-natural ingredients are plentiful. The makeup won't clog pores, includes UVA and UVB protection of up to 20 SPF, and works as an anti-inflammatory to soothe irritated skin. It's even gentle enough to be worn after chemical peels and laser resurfacing treatments.

Kai focuses on fusing medical grade products with signature spa services and thanks to their two dedicated medical directors, Dr. Marc E. Yune, facial plastic and cosmetic surgery, and Dr. Stephanie S. Gardner, dermatology and dermatologic surgery, the spa offers a variety of procedures such as laser vein therapy, laser hair removal and injectables such as Restylane and BOTOX.

Popular with both men and women, Kai's Body Enhancer treatment is by far its most original offering. In fact, it is the only spa in Georgia to offer it. This state-of-the-art, non-surgical procedure is touted to increase muscle tone, lose inches, break up fat and cellulite and reduce stress. The FDA-approved technology was first developed for multiple sclerosis patients as a way to reverse the effects of muscle atrophy and has since been used to help build and strengthen muscles. Today, it can help strengthen and tone every part of the body, except for the face.



Kai's body enhancer treatment

Basically, it builds muscle and burns fat," said medical aesthetician Cari Griffin. "It typically takes 15 to 30 minutes to burn fat working out naturally, but this machine goes straight to the fat burning stage. It gives a full contraction of the muscle so it will build muscle up and tighten and tone skin."

Metal plates covered in a moist sponge are placed on the skin to send micro currents to your muscles. It has a bit of a Frankenstein look and feel, but according to Choung the results speak for themselves. I sampled the experience myself and discovered it caused my muscles to tingle and contract involuntarily. The intensity of the currents range from one to 10, and the staff ensures you do not surpass your comfort level. (I made it comfortably to three, since my muscles haven't been worked hard since my 12th grade gym class.) The procedure was not painful, mind you, but I would call the vibrations in your muscles "intense" for those who rarely hit the weight room. "As you get higher, it becomes more intense," Griffin said. "Some people sweat like they are working out."

Before you think it's a lazy person's exercise, Griffin points out the treatments work best if you combine them with a regular workout. "When you go to the gym you'll be able to lift more and have a higher endurance," she said. "It's best to use when you have an exercise regimen. It's a great way to speed up results." The procedure has been popular with women who have trouble strengthening their stomach muscles, especially after pregnancy. It can also help diminish cellulite. A single treatment costs \$120; clients can purchase six treatments for \$500 or 12 treatments for \$1,000.

facelogic™
essential skincare • spa

Upon entering facelogic in Roswell, you wouldn't know you've entered a brave new world. Friendly smiles and beautiful faces greet you with a warm and welcoming hello. Soft colors, rich woods and curved walls display lines of makeup, cleansers, scrubs and other beauty products. Changing into a comfortable terry wrap for your treatment, including facials, waxing, peels or makeup, you wouldn't

Spa Day




realize facelagic was different from the plethora of day spas, salons and medi-spas popping up across the Northside until you stepped through the doors to find an open and dimly lit room with six partitioned treatment areas. You see, facelagic is treating facials like manicures – keeping overhead costs down to provide everyone an opportunity to be pampered.

“I want to make women happy by making them happy with themselves. When a woman looks good, she feels better about herself and is more confident,” said facelagic’s owner Judy van Heiningen.

Van Heiningen’s youthful glow obviously comes from years of treating her skin well, as her brother and staff member John van Heiningen will attest. Still, van Heiningen understands that treating ourselves to a facial has become a special occasion luxury or gift from loved ones around Valentine’s or Mother’s Day, and wants women to take better care of their skin. Facelagic’s membership program aims to get women to baby their faces at least once a month. For \$39 per month and no sign-up fees, members get a 50-minute monthly facial and discounts on other services, such as \$10 eyebrow waxing or facial peels, as well as all products sold. (Non-members still benefit from van Heiningen’s low overhead with \$55 50-minute facials, still considerably less expensive than most area spas.)

“My clients are women who are concerned with aging but do not want to go under the knife to correct the damage. They could go and have microdermabrasion treatments that are very expensive and require a number of visits, or they can come here once a month and we’ll rejuvenate their faces,” van Heiningen said. “By visiting monthly, aestheticians get to know a woman’s face, what products she is using, what works and what doesn’t. Within months, she’ll have a smoother complexion without a facelift.”



Although price is a big selling point for facelogic, the salon doesn't skimp on services. NASA-designed zero gravity chairs will have you feeling like you are floating on air as you recline all the way back under the soothing lights and soft hands of holistic-based pros using aromatherapy and natural products to wake up, exfoliate and moisturize tired, aging skin. Neighbors are just a stone's throw away, yet not a peep is heard except instrumental music and an occasional soft whisper – it is a whisper-only zone, after all – so you'll still feel as if you are in a private room. Facials include hand, arm and neck massages that feel so good, you may find yourself being roused awake at the end of the treatment.

Facelogic is a West Coast-based franchise started by the same women entrepreneurs that launched Curves International fitness centers. Van Heiningen herself owns three Curves studios, and her Village Festival facelogic is the first of its kind on the East Coast. Since launching 18 months ago, facelogic has spread to 59 locations, and van Heiningen will expand as well with another five locations in the Northside. "The women of Roswell have really been excited by our spa. Everyone is in need of pampering – facelogic's affordability will allow a wider group of people to experience quality facials more often," van Heiningen said. ❖

FACELOGIC

10930 Crabapple Road

Roswell, GA

678-822-0228

www.facelogicspa.com