

HOMESPA

WELLNESS | DESIGN | LIFESTYLE

VOL.2 | NO.2

SERENITY IN SEATTLE



CONNECTING WITH THE SLOW MOVEMENT

- SCOTLAND FOR WELLNESS?
- THE NEW SCHOOL OF FITNESS
- STEPS TO SUPERIOR SLEEP
- HAPPY FOODS

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CREATING THE IDEAL HOMESPA



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Share your design makeover experience!

What we're looking for

Forgive us, but we'd like to peek inside your bathroom...if you've renovated an old bathroom, we want to see the before and after pictures! Whether it's a design or decorating project, we'd like to feature how you've transformed a single room or connecting rooms.

Who is eligible

Anyone may enter their home or vacation home project, but assistance from designers or other professionals should be noted. Professionals are also free to enter their own residential projects.

How to enter

Send us as many pictures as you like and up to 400 words explaining how the transformation took place and what result you were trying to achieve. Send to: beforeafter@homespa-magazine.com.

Type: Jpeg

5" x 7" Minimum dimension
300 dpi Minimum resolution
(high resolution)



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homespa-magazine.com

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COLOR ME HAPPY

Wash negative feelings down the drain with these brightly colored bathroom fixtures.

In the same way that a colorful rainbow trails a cleansing downpour, color therapy is the new way to prolong the feel good effects of your home spa. Research shows that colors can dramatically alter our physical and psychological condition, so it's good news that the soothing principles behind light changing tubs and showers are now being integrated into the fixtures themselves. The water from

your tub or shower may be turned off, but a cornucopia of colors still lingers around you on surfaces everywhere. Nowhere is this trend more obvious than in the Pop series of washbasins by Ellebi, which look like Warholesque paint cans complete with metal handles. The cultural roots of color therapy, or chromatherapy, are grounded in Indian Ayurvedic practices, which seek to balance our constitution using the →

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: TKTKTK

MIRROR, MIRROR...

See yourself in a new light.



1.

2.



3.



4.



If you're not liking what you see when you peer at your early-morning reflection, these mirrors will keep your focus on them instead of the bed-head.

1. FOR THE DREAMER

For those interested in channeling life on the other side of the looking glass, the Alice in Wonderland by Matali Crasset puts the viewer in the heroine's head—literally. \$89; matalicrasset.com

2. FOR THE BOOKWORM

The Innervision mirror by Gavin Coultrip bears witticisms by Oscar Wilde. Choose from *"It is only shallow people who do not judge by appearances"* and *"To love oneself is the beginning of a life-long romance."* Wise words to reflect upon. \$89; thorstenvanelten.com

3. FOR THE NARCISSIST

Who's the fairest of them all? Why you, of course. Mirror Mirror from designer Joop Steenkamer Jr. has

lines such as *"You're charming. You look gorgeous! You are absolutely delectable"* etched across the glass. Oh, stop! \$109-\$216; thorstenvanelten.com

4. FOR THE TRAVELER

Brooklyn-based design prodigy Jason Miller is behind the Daydreams series. Digital printing etched on the mirrors lets you transport yourself into serene natural surroundings without having to leave home. \$400; millerstudio.us

MEREDITH ERICKSON

GET FLOORED

New green flooring options offer rich, distinctive looks underfoot.



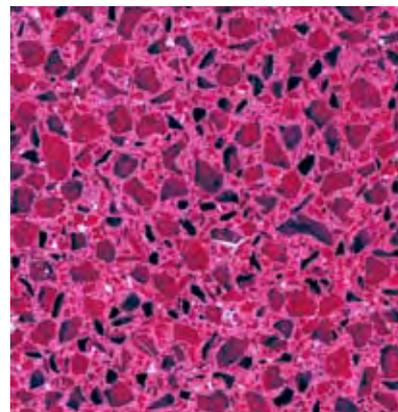
CORK IT

Modwalls Natural Cork Mosaic Tile breaks up the monotony of cork sheet flooring with penny-sized circles. Cork is a renewable, natural material that also happens to be moisture-resistant. Even better, this particular product is made with recycled post-industrial waste from the wine-stopper industry. As with ceramic tile, just install with grout and it becomes completely waterproof when sealed. \$14.95 per sq ft; modwalls.com



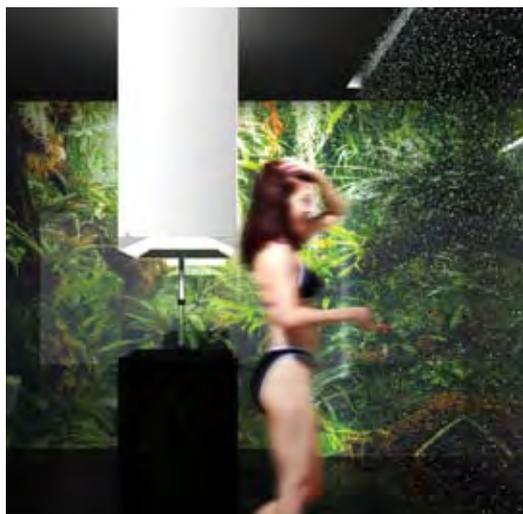
A TOUCH OF GLASS

It's almost as though your recycling bin found a higher calling. Bedrock BlazeStone Tile is handmade from 100% recycled glass, and the color combinations come from the raw source material—no pigments added. BlazeStones are available in a wide range of shapes and styles, including small hexagons, subway tiles and thin breadstick-shaped blocks. \$2-\$35 per tile; bedrockindustries.com



TERRIFIC TERRAZZO

Rarely seen in residential installations, terrazzo is costly and labor-intensive to install. But Trend Q puts forth a convincing case for the polished, jewel-like material with their new collection of terrazzo tiles. Easier and cleaner to work with, the tiles are made with up to 72% recycled glass from wine, liquor and water bottles mixed with resin. The tiles are just 1/4" thick, so they can be laid over existing floors or cut into custom patterns. From \$18 per sq ft; trendgroup-usa.com **TIM MCKEOUGH**



PICTURE-PERFECT CLEAN

Showering in the great outdoors is a photograph away.

Bathing the way nature intended means jumping naked into the nearest stream. But the next best thing just might be zlgdesign's glass wall "shower curtain." Showering in a tropical rain forest, or at least beside a picture of one, is possible with a simple photographic nature scene applied to a glass wall that is then subtly backlit. To complete the effect, the curtain comes with perforated pipes that recreate the sound of a waterfall. For now, it's still in the conceptual stage, but we hope to see it at a store near us soon. Banana leaves not included. zlgdesign.com **SAMANTHA TSE**

THE LAB

We at *HomeSpa* test detox products that work from head to toe.

1. HYDRA-DETOX BIO-DEFENSIS YEUX

WORKS ON: Dark, puffy circles around the eyes

ACTIVE INGREDIENTS:

A derivative of lactobacilli inspired by probiotics (think yogurt)

IMPRESSIONS: "It's a pearly lotion, almost thick to the consistency of gel, that comes in a dainty little bottle. It's thick enough that it leaves a bit of a shine, and I wonder how it's playing with my moisturizer."

(Dominique, Editor)

RESULTS: Soothes the delicate skin under the eyes and makes a difference over time (Biotherm, biotherm.com)

2. ORIGINAL RHASSOUL COMPLEXION POLISH

WORKS ON: Blackheads, oiliness and facial-skin impurities

ACTIVE INGREDIENTS:

Rhassoul—a clay rich in lithium, calcium, magnesium, iron, potassium, copper and zinc

IMPRESSIONS: "It comes in large chunks that need to be cut to be efficient. It's so big, it makes me feel rich. The instructions are rather long-winded. It lathers like crazy and feels great on the skin—I used it after shaving."

(Adam, Editorial Assistant)

RESULTS: Gives facial skin a tight, firm feeling and leaves you glowing (Daybreak Lavender Farm, daybreaklavenderfarm.com)



2.

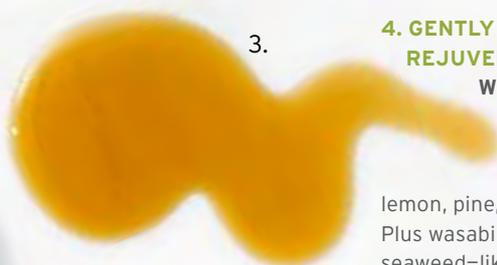
3. PURE DETOX SHAMPOO

WORKS ON: Hair lacking luster from buildup and chlorine

ACTIVE INGREDIENTS: Kitchen staples: molasses and baking soda

IMPRESSIONS: "A pleasant change from over-fruited shampoos. I love to eat molasses, but a dark brown viscous liquid is not so appealing as a hair product." (Amanda, Editor-in-Chief)

RESULTS: Leaves the hair squeaky-clean, literally. Great for swimmers (Abba, pureabba.com)



3.

4. GENTLY PURIFY REJUVENATING BATH SOAK

WORKS ON: Every single part of you

ACTIVE INGREDIENTS:

Essential oils: rosemary, lemon, pine, eucalyptus and orange.

Plus wasabi and two kinds of seaweed-like sushi for your skin

IMPRESSIONS: "The product has a menthol smell, a bit like cough syrup. It tinted the bathwater green and added a few bubbles. It didn't leave a yucky ring in my tub—a bonus since there's nothing like being rejuvenated, then having to clean the bath."

(Valerie, Senior Editor)

RESULTS: Leaves the epidermis soft and is suitable even for sensitive skin (The Body Shop, thebodyshop.com)

4.



5. DETOXOLOGY FOOTPADS

WORKS ON: The foot.

And through reflexology principles, the rest of you too

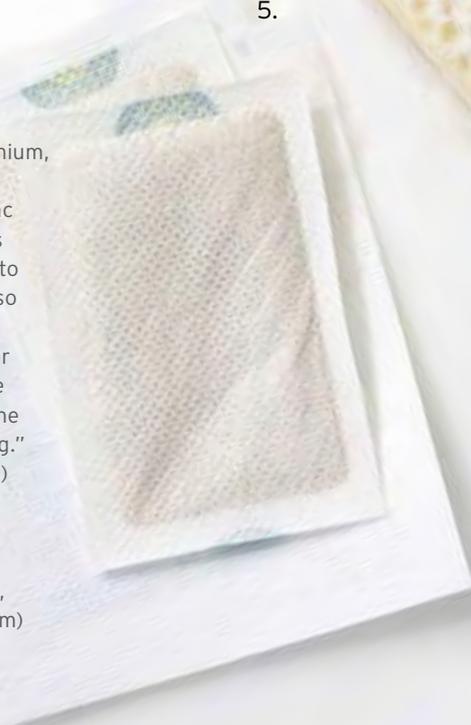
ACTIVE INGREDIENTS: Herbs with a dash of luxury in the form of semi-precious tourmaline crystals

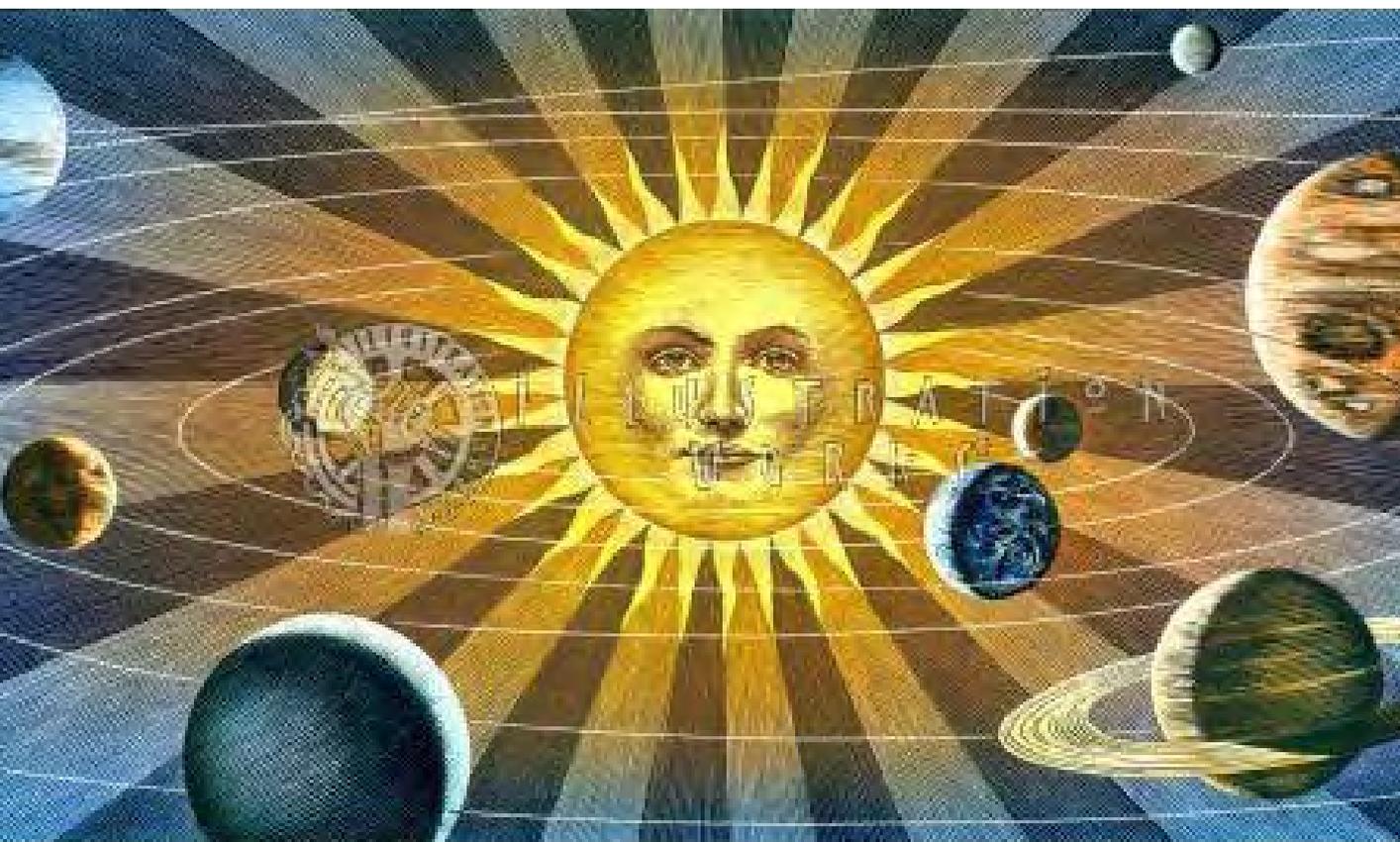
IMPRESSIONS: "I wouldn't stick these pads on my feet before a steamy night, but I love that they're detoxifying me as I sleep."

(Kate, Assistant Art Director)

RESULTS: See toxins visibly diminish daily by the color of the pad in the morning (Crystal Spring, crystalspringltd.co.uk)

5.





THE SATURN-IN-LEO CHALLENGE

Keeping your cool while the planets blow hot and cold.

Have you found yourself getting upset over small things lately: standing in line, sitting in traffic or waiting for a friend who's running late? Those around you may be easily ruffled too, maybe even losing their temper.

In Jyotish astrology, planetary orbits are superimposed on an imaginary circular belt—the zodiac—that divides the heavens into the 12 signs from Aries to Pisces.

The Earth takes around 365 days to circle the Sun; Saturn takes about 29 years. On July 2007, Saturn entered the sign Leo (ruled by the Sun), where it will stay until September 2009.

Problems arise when the contrasting “energies” of two celestial bodies merge, and with the fusion of Saturn and Leo, sparks tend to fly.

Saturn is cold, introspective, slow and strategic, while Leo is hot, dynamic and outgoing. It's a difficult combination, so watch out for fireworks.

MAKING “SATURN IN LEO” WORK FOR YOU

A few simple guidelines will help you navigate turbulent times.

1 Let go of angry thoughts with this simple breathing exercise: Inhale for six seconds, hold your breath for the same count, and exhale slowly again for four seconds. Do this a few times to regain your composure. It might just save you, and others, a lot of aggravation.

2 Spiritual leader Paramahansa Yogananda said: “Do the right thing, at the right time, for the right success.” You can have your Jyotish astrological chart drawn up to find out when the planets are best aligned for you to take important actions.

3 Christianity's Golden Rule—“Do unto others as you would have them do unto you”—exists across the major world religions. Repeat this mantra to yourself silently before acting in the heat of the moment. **GHANSHYAM SINGH BIRLA**

Eastern Lights

The eastern study of astrology is referred to as Jyotish, a Sanskrit term derived from the root jyoti, which means light. It is the study of the effects of the heavenly lights on human life. A Vedic palmist and astrologer, Dr. Ghanshyam Singh Birla runs the Birla Center for Hast Jyotish, a yoga, palmistry and astrology retreat. palmistry.com



SMILE YOUR WAY TO WELLNESS

Yoga guru Evelyn Neaman offers Face Yoga as a way to stay young and healthy.

When most people think about yoga, they picture pretzel-like twists, headstands and other contorted movements. But there's a simpler pose you might not have thought of: smiling. Practicing smiling to yourself on a daily basis not only relieves facial tension and makes you look and feel more relaxed, it also gives you a natural facelift. More importantly, it has serious healing power, both inside and out.

HEALING EFFECTS OF A SMILE

In ancient China, Taoist masters taught that a constant inner smile ensured health, happiness and longevity. Smiling was recommended in times of stress, anger, fear and impatience. Ancient masters knew what scientists are discovering: Smiling promotes the secretion of healing hormones such as "ecstatic" endorphins and immune-boosting T-cells. Smiling can help lower your blood pressure, relax muscles (think nature's Botox), improve respiration, reduce pain, accelerate healing and stabilize your moods. And

if that doesn't convince you to try it, consider that frowning is thought to trigger the secretion of harmful stress hormones that not only contribute to a host of health problems like weight gain and heart attacks but can actually shorten your lifespan too.

GIVE IT A TRY

No one can say they don't have time to smile. Close your eyes, frown and inhale a few breaths. Now bring an inner smile to your face and take a few more breaths. The inner smile is as easy as lifting the outer edges of your lips and your eyes. Notice how much more breath comes in with the smile? Hold this inner smile for one minute. Use the bathroom mirror to check your face. The expressions you unknowingly hold can make that inner smile difficult to maintain. Is your smile too slight like the Mona Lisa's? Adjust the posture and try again. Once you have your smile mastered, take this practice out of your home spa and use it wherever you go.

FAKE IT TILL YOU MAKE IT

But what if you simply don't feel like smiling? Although a heartfelt smile will have a deeper effect, a surface smile is still thought to trick the brain into releasing those "happy hormones."

SMILING IS CONTAGIOUS

Not only does smiling work wonders for your health, it actually boosts the wellbeing of those around you too. British researchers have found that receiving a smile from someone else can give more pleasure than eating chocolate or even having sex. So for your own well-being and the well-being of others, pass a smile forward and spread the good times.

EVELYN NEAMAN is the Director of Tikkun Yoga Centre in Vancouver, British Columbia, where she has been teaching for 13 years. Try her best-selling DVD Restorative Yoga: Healing Through Breath and Stillness (available at banyen.com).

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: TIKKUN YOGA CENTRE; TIKKUN YOGA CENTRE



PET FOOD

An ancient Aztec secret resurfaces in the 21st century.

Since the health benefits of omega-3 became common knowledge, you've been eating salmon once a week and sprinkling ground flax seed over everything in sight. And, just like Grandma knew that seafood was "brain food" long before eating fish became trendy, ancient South Americans enjoyed chia, a type of sage, for centuries. This superfood contains 18% omega-3, those amazingly healthy and nutritious fatty acids. Although this puts chia slightly behind flax seed, it wins out in another department: Unlike the latter, you can get all the health benefits of chia

without grinding it. Hungry for more information? Chia's antioxidants make it a great cancer-preventing food, and it contains a high quantity of soluble fiber which turns into a gel when mixed with liquid. Studies have shown that it can lower cholesterol, stabilize blood sugar and possibly even be used to treat diabetes. Chia is so high in soluble fiber, a mere two tablespoons provide the same amount of fiber as a whole cup of cooked rolled oats. If you've been longing for a healthy alternative to that daily bowl of morning porridge, look to your chia pet! **JUDITH LUSSIER**

Getting Your Chia Dose

Chia is big on nutrition but short on taste. However, because of its texture, it works amazingly well in all kinds of drinks and desserts.

CHIA FRESCA:

Make this typical Mexican drink by stirring two teaspoons of chia into a glass of water, adding a squirt of lime and a sprinkling of sugar to taste.

CHIA CHOCOLATE PUDDING:

Mix one part chia seeds with four parts heated chocolate milk. Stir and refrigerate for one to two hours.



LIVING LA VIDA LOCAL

Eating locally means you'll leave a lighter carbon "foodprint" and enjoy better-tasting meals packed with nutrients. But where to start? Track down local producers, farmers' markets, eco-friendly grocers and organic restaurants at localharvest.org. To navigate the rough waters of seafood choices, go to blueocean.org; easy-to-read charts there list stock and toxin levels for different species, and a printable buying guide helps you make smart choices at the fish counter. Another must-surf site is slowfoodusa.org, whose *raison d'être* is to reacquaint you with "taste, tradition and the honest pleasures of food." **SIGNE LANGFORD**

HAPPY MEALS

Let food shift your mood.

Feeling blue? A bowl of brown rice or mashed potatoes might be the ticket. Because the mind's neurotransmitters are responsive to what we eat (think instant messaging to your moods), happiness can be a mere bite away. **MONA AWAD**

Carbohydrates raise levels of serotonin, a.k.a. the brain's Prozac. Just don't forget to add some turkey or fish to your plate. Protein helps slow the absorption of carbs into the blood, which prevents mood swings and leaves you feeling energetic for hours. And amino acids (found in protein) increase neurochemicals known to motivate and improve mood.

The best news? A little fat releases endorphins, the feel-good neurotransmitters. But stick to the good stuff: Oily fish such as salmon or mackerel adds an omega-3 kick that lifts the spirits, while Brazil nuts offer a selenium boost, which helps alleviate anxiety and depression.

Then there's (sigh) chocolate. A single piece of the delectable dark stuff should get enough endorphins going to make you smile despite yourself. We'll take two.

Foraging through a forest of dark leafy greens may not seem like something to get excited about, but the folate therein not only perks you up, it also reduces cancer and stroke risk and increases mental agility for that Sunday morning crossword.

UP, UP AND AWAY

With over 100 million global spa-goers these days, travel agencies focusing on body and spirit are cropping up everywhere to serve them. One of the world's most venerable travel companies, American Express, has recently begun hooking up its cardholders with spa and wellness packages in both urban and rustic locales in places like Turkey, Capri, Scotland and Antigua (travandleisure.com/spaescapes). New York's Valerie Wilson Travel (vwti.com) is renowned for its ability to pull together individually tailored spa getaways. "Our clients like yoga, meditation, mountain hikes," says another spa-travel expert, Ana Milena Jacinto of Tours of Distinction (toursofdistinction.com). "But most of all, they like the ocean—anything to take the weight of the world off their shoulders." **SIGNE LANGFORD**



TUNE IN, SWITCH OFF

Conflicting advice that makes sense
in a world gone Slow.

BY VALERIE HOWES

THERE WAS A TIME WHEN I multitasked. I got the twitches if wireless reception was down in my favorite café and I couldn't retrieve my sister's phone number from the fog inside my brain. I worked 60-hour weeks, until one Sunday—the first I'd taken off in months—I realized I'd forgotten what I actually liked to do in my spare time.

Attention Deficit Disorder specialist and author Edward M. Hallowell wrote his latest book, *CrazyBusy: Overstretched, Overbooked, and About to Snap!*, after noticing almost everyone was acting like they had ADD. Talking fast, changing subject mid-stream, feeling impatient, forgetting where you're going or what you mean to do when you get there: "Many people who don't have

true ADD could check off several or all of these symptoms," writes Hallowell. "You might say they suffer from a severe case of modern life."

It doesn't have to be this way. Adherents of the Slow Movement—or downshifters, as they're known—apply its philosophy to everything from what they put on their plate to how they raise their kids to how they plan their cities. This trend is about keeping things simple, thinking local and interacting with others, face-to-face. Because it promotes a way of life our grandparents took for granted, the Slow Movement is at once backward-looking and revolutionary. But don't struggle with the paradox, just strive to be more connected—and less plugged in—with these ideas for going Slow.

CONNECT

For the monthly rent, my landlord offers a roof over our heads, great morning chatter and the occasional basket of Brussels sprouts or raspberries on the doorstep, depending on what's in season. Not everybody's so lucky. A 2006 report on social isolation in *American Sociological Review* revealed that two decades ago, a quarter of Americans had only one (if any) confidante with whom to share personal matters, and now almost half the population fall into that category. In other words, we need to start talking to the neighbors.

AT HOME

I've never been a huge fan of the potluck: Spinach dip with your wonton rolls, anyone? But downshifters have plenty of other ideas for building support networks. Carpooling with neighbors and colleagues takes the sting out of traffic jams and gives you a chance to talk. Working a plot at the community gardens allows you to eat healthy, become more attuned to nature's rhythms *and* chat seeds and weeds with the old guy from down the street who lives alone.

We can help our kids connect with others, too. Carl Honoré, author of *In Praise of Slowness: How a Worldwide Movement Is Challenging the Cult of Speed*, is a fan of the British government-endorsed "Safer Strangers" campaign, which teaches children that most people in the neighborhood really can be trusted. "Even when statistics show that our streets are no more dangerous than before, they still *feel* more dangerous to us parents. The upshot is that many children are almost being raised in captivity. And they're missing out on some valuable life lessons," he writes in his blog at carlhonore.com. Talk to your kids about who they should turn to if they need help (people in uniform, doctors, cashiers, police officers) and at which types of buildings (post offices, churches). Children thrive when they get out into the neighborhood and exercise their limbs *and* imaginations.

ON THE JOB

While the time might not be ripe to quit your day job just yet, you might consider adding a more human dimension to your working life by signing up for time banking. Timebankers exchange services at an hour-for-hour value. An acupuncturist treating someone with multiple sclerosis will bank the same credits as a lawyer offering legal aid or a 14-year-old boy walking dogs. With those credits, they can buy services from other members. There are around 150 Timebanks across the US, and the number is growing fast. With Timebanking, you interact with all types of people you might otherwise never have met.

“Slow Work is not about filing your nails while the temp writes up your reports; it’s about giving yourself the time and headspace to focus.”



DISCONNECT

Last year, on Christmas Eve, my son inadvertently spilled hot chocolate on the laptop. Other than the \$600 in repair costs, it was the best gift ever. For two weeks we read books, played Connect Four and ventured out into the snow with our grateful dogs. Being reachable by email, BlackBerry or cell phone 24/7 is *the opposite* of being connected. It takes you away from the people sitting in the room, chops up conversations and kills ideas that, given time to develop, might have had you shouting *Eureka!*

AT HOME

Andrea Peneycad wouldn't describe herself as religious, but she respects the Sabbath along with Rodney, her Jewish partner. "It gives me a huge thing to look forward to," she says. Both have hectic jobs, she as an office manager, he as a teacher of at-risk youth, so they value their downtime. From Friday evening until Saturday evening they take a break from screen time, chores, shopping and work-related activities. Often, they'll invite friends over for long, conversation-filled dinners, and on Saturday mornings the couple goes to a café together to linger over brunch. "It makes a massive difference to our relationship to put the pause button on and be mindful of how we want to live," says Peneycad. Whatever your beliefs, taking a day—or even a few hours—of rest from the phone, computer and TV calms your mind and gives you the chance to get closer to family and friends.

ON THE JOB

What do you think your boss would say if you only answered email at set times, and never took business-related calls on your cell outside of office hours? By refusing to stay plugged into external distractions and protecting his family life from intrusions, media coach and business writer Paul Lima believes he is able to focus and maintain mental energy, making him a better worker. If you're going to go unplugged, at least for most of your working day, it's important to train clients and colleagues so they understand your system. One way is to set up an automatic response on your email or a message on your cell, saying when you're likely to be checking messages. Above all, don't feel guilty. Slow Work is not about filing your nails while the temp writes up your reports; it's about giving yourself the time and the headspace to focus so you can get things done—better—*and* have a life outside of the office.

I have a new favorite café now—a little place with long tables where you usually end up chatting with your neighbor about that day's made-from-scratch *à la carte* lunch. Stacks of art books and home magazines line the walls, inviting me to extend my lunch hour, and there's no wireless. The strange thing about going Slow is that you actually accomplish more and live better than you did when you were checking off the to-do list at 100 mph. Where's *your* Slow place? ■



From left to right: Bathers at the Spa at Turnberry find sanctuary in a pool looking out to the Isle of Arran, across the Irish Sea; In the Spa at Balmoral's candlelit Relaxation Suite, guests can lie back on blanketed loungers, post treatment, and leaf through glossy magazines while sipping green tea.



BRAVEHEART, SOFT FEET

New spas have been springing up in Scotland, helping to soften the rugged land.

AMANDA ROSS

Clockwise from top: Exfoliating at One Spa—an urban retreat housed inside a blue glass cube above Edinburgh’s Grand Sheraton Hotel; Even when the Scottish weather plays up, the warm waters of One’s rooftop hydropool make open-air soaking an indulgent treat; View over the golf course at Spa at the Carrick, where the mantra is “outer beauty, inner health.”

AS I DOZE OFF IN MY SPA TREATMENT ROOM

overlooking picturesque Loch Lomond outside Glasgow, I begin to think heretical thoughts: “Maybe these Scots have a soft touch after all.” The mere mention of Scotland conjures up images of blue face paint and clan warfare—it’s a country where hot-oil treatment is reserved for invading hordes, not damaged hair. Lately, though, Scotland has been in the middle of a gentler revolution, one where spas are setting up camp beside ancient golf tracks and castle ruins and offering a new pastime to add to the old-world traditions.

Scottish history is palpable at Cameron House: Views of the dramatic peaks of the Highlands frame the 18th-century baronial manor house that’s been fully retrofitted by England’s upscale De Vere Group. Sweeping changes have kept the Horse & Hound facade intact while turning the interior, with its grey and black plaids, into a dark-hued modern riff on all things Highland. Nowhere are the changes more apparent than at the new Spa at the Carrick, which is an almost too-quiet boat ride away on Loch Lomond from the main property. The architecture’s modern take on Scotland’s great outdoors features a glass and natural-wood structure overlooking both the water and the attached Carrick golf course, one of the country’s best new Scottish heathland-style tracks. My husband Neal heads to the course while I follow my massage therapist, Morag, down a sleek backlit hall to a room for my Highland “Kur.” I imagine myself a bonnie wee lassie while she begins with an Alpine foot exfoliation using menthol, eucalyptus and lavender oils, followed by a chamomile body scrub and then—with long, deep, kneading strokes—a heavenly massage. Post-treatment, I swaddle myself in a thick Turkish robe, order the honey-and-sage baked figs in the Café Spa and, thanks to the expansive view, take turns gazing at the serene calm of the lake and the not-so-serene travails of my husband who’s trying to get out of a strategically placed pot bunker on the 18th hole.

In the car the next morning, we experience our own kind of epic Scottish battle as we argue over how to master the right and left side of the roads. He surrenders—I take the wheel and we head down the western Ayrshire coastline, thankfully getting the hang of it within the hour before turning onto the driveway of the iconic white expanse that is Turnberry. Since its opening in 1906, the 800-acre seaside resort has been synonymous with golf, with its famed Ailsa



course serving as a regular venue for the British Open (which it will host again in 2009). The place is so commonly associated with the Great Game that some might argue that opening a spa there is sacrilege. But from the indoor almost 66-ft pool, I spy the shore’s rocky crags and dunes, the volcanic Ailsa Craig jutting from the Irish Sea and Ireland itself in the distance, and decide to baptize myself here in the spa’s hydrotherapy waters. And I stand converted: A spa setting this gorgeous must have had a little help from above.

Once just a summer retreat for Scottish gentry, Turnberry, with its new spa, now offers respite from the famed Scottish weather anytime of year—it’s *July* and I spot golfers out the window wearing thick knit caps in defiance of the wind whipping off the sea. I’m happy to ensconce myself downstairs in a treatment room. From the Ayurvedic-influenced menu that draws on ancient Indian healing traditions, Louise chooses a massage oil based on my Doshha, or temperament, and tells me that Pittas, like me, prefer their rubdowns “not too hard and not too soft.” My body agrees before my words do, and suddenly I’m asleep under her deft hands.

Fearing that this bucolic lord-and-lady experience might make it hard for us to return to our busy urban lives, we leave the west coast and head east to Edinburgh, the country’s capital that manages to seem quaint and bustling at the same time. However, the One Spa at the Sheraton Grand Hotel is far from quaint. One Spa sits juxtaposed against the nearby Edinburgh Castle, which famously looms over the city high on Castle Rock. The castle’s history as a noted stronghold contrasts wildly with the peace and serenity of the hotel’s glass-cubed spa. To add to the contrast, One Spa has a modern design so sleek, you’d be forgiven for mistaking it from the street for a contemporary art gallery. We drop our bags, and as I make my way down the glass walkway from the hotel, I note that if the lights were dimmed and a makeshift bar set up, this room could earn pin money as a hip evening lounge.

Once I’m in my private room, my Time treatment really feels like it’s stopping time—if only for a few hours this afternoon. Karen begins an initial assessment to tailor a program based on what she thinks would benefit me most. Targeting the kink in my neck from shoulder-checking over my *right* shoulder, she promptly prescribes a hot stone massage and body wrap, which involves a foot

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: TKT KT KT KT KT KT KT KT KT KT KT



From left to right: The ultimate luxury experience at the Spa at Stobo Castle includes an overnight stay in the Cashmere Suite with its decadent his and hers four-poster beds and oval limestone bath; Stobo Castle's ozone-heated swimming pool offers panoramic views of the Peeblesshire countryside; Golfing or hot-stone therapy at The Westin Turnberry Resort? You decide.

“One Spa has a modern design so sleek, you’d be forgiven for mistaking it from the street for a contemporary art gallery.”

cleansing and a salt-and-oil body exfoliation to kick-start my circulation. Facedown on the table, I hear the clinking of glass jars as Karen mixes individually warmed oils with Ayurvedic herbal concentrates before I surrender to the smell of sea water and cloves. She then slathers warm marine algae over my body and wraps me, baby bunting-like, in warmed linens so the fragrant herbs and oils can penetrate.

Come morning, we head outside Edinburgh to nearby Stobo Castle in Peeblesshire. The winding, circular drive up the hill to the property seems straight out of a Sir Walter Scott novel, but inside the spa, which is attached to the 200-year-old castle, the medieval romance gives way to modern efficiency. The sheer size of the massive castle and its proximity to Edinburgh mean it can easily accommodate day-trippers and hen parties. Stobo’s genius is that it seamlessly handles numbers that would cripple a smaller spa—and once my basic massage begins, I drift off feeling like I am the spa’s only patron.

Back in Edinburgh, on the other side of Castle Rock, respite from our jaunt in the country awaits at the regal Balmoral Hotel. Its Scottish baronial style suggests a gothic castle, while its strategic location makes it appear somehow related to Edinburgh Castle. But a smart, contemporary boutique-hotel interior awaits inside, and I reach the spa by descending an elevator to a subterranean floor. The pool is so ethereally blue that I half wonder if they’ve added food coloring, though I’m assured it’s the mosaic tile and lights. Down here, I’ve left the busy streets behind, and as shoppers and businesspeople traipse 20 feet above me, I ease onto a treatment table for the house specialty—the Kamala, an exhilarating hot herbal face and body treatment using the organic Thai Ytsara line of products. After positioning heated herbal cushions around my body, Nicole applies a warm, deep lemongrass poultice, then

follows it with a Royal Thai massage using a mix of acupressure, reflexology and gentle stretching before finishing with a facial using creams redolent of green tea and jasmine.

We’re flying out of Glasgow and at the last minute we decide to add one last stop to our itinerary: Mar Hall Hotel, a scant 10 minutes from the city’s international airport. Our spontaneity is rewarded as our car edges up a grand driveway: We’re met with a gothic monolith straight out of the movies—old, imposing and oozing nobility. Fittingly, the building is the former residence of the Earl of Mar, whose title is one of the oldest in all of Great Britain. Replete with thick limestone walls and 175-year-old Quebec oak, it doesn’t immediately conjure up images of modern anything, but a short stroll from the main building sits Scotland’s first Aveda Concept spa. I decide to embrace its contemporary ethos with a Vichy shower. The body elixir starts with a marine salt and flower- and plant-based exfoliation followed by a hydrotherapy massage beneath seven showerheads that washes away any of the remaining tension I harbor over my husband’s driving habits.

Now we’re off to the airport, and as we pass the windswept Lowlands I can’t help but note that Scotland has always been about hardy adventure, mostly in the guise of pitting oneself against the harsh elements of the country. However, my adventure has revealed a gentler, tamer side of the country, discovered without the crutch of a golf club. I’ve been to both coasts, in city and countryside, and I’ve felt firsthand the soft side of the Scots. The best of these new Scottish spas harness the elements and the country’s rich history, distilling both and turning them into a whole new national pastime. I have no doubt these spas will count as traditions in this rugged country, soon to be as venerated as the cask, the club and the caber. ■

Featured Spas

Cameron House,
Loch Lomond,
Dunbartonshire, (44)
138-975-5565, devere-hotels.com/our-hotels/cameron-house

The Westin Turnberry
Resort, Turnberry,
Ayrshire, (44)
165-533-1000,
turnberry.co.uk

One Spa, Edinburgh, (44)
131-221-7777, onespa.com

Stobo Castle Health Spa,
Stobo, Peeblesshire,
(44) 172-172-5300,
stobocastle.co.uk

Balmoral Hotel,
Edinburgh, (44)
131-556-2414,
thebalmoralhotel.com

Mar Hall Hotel,
Bishopton, Nr. Glasgow,
(44) 0141 812 9999,
marhall.com

THE DAIRY KING

A quaint cheesemaker's cottage is reborn as a sumptuous homespa hideaway.

CHRISTINE MURRAY



The seamless integration of the homespa (below) is an elegant celebration of water; the Dairy House (right) was shortlisted for the 2008 Bombay Sapphire Prize for glass design.



beams. In support of this structural experiment, glass manufacturer Pilkington provided the glass for free, while the oak was actually dark pieces of cordwood cut from mature trees and dried on the estate. The wood, stacks of which formed the inspiration for Catling's design, was being stored immediately opposite the Dairy House.

The alternating oak-and-glass facade creates remarkable lighting effects within the Dairy House. Shifting shafts of light bathe the two bathrooms in an aquamarine glow—a submarine effect redoubled in the early morning when the sun's rays bounce off the outdoor pool, reflecting ripples of light onto the bathroom ceilings and into the hallway.

"The light that comes through the laminated glass is much more watery and green than I expected it to be," says Hobhouse. "I thought it was going to be chilly, but fortuitously, it's actually moody."

Bathed in underwater light, the bathrooms elevate the Dairy House to an ideal place for respite and retreat. The aquamarine light has a soothing and calming effect—a spectrum of blue instantly comforts and subdues. Meanwhile, the meditative ebb and flow of the reflected light on the walls, a constant visual cue, functions almost as a kind of light therapy, easing stress away in therapeutic waves. "The Dairy House has essentially become a spa," Hobhouse says. The two upstairs bathrooms, located across the hall from each other, are both fitted with bathtubs and an ingenious shower that opens directly onto the outdoor hot tub. "The idea is that you can literally open the door of the shower and seamlessly step right into the pool, or more likely the other way around."

To ensure that the Dairy House's two showers would never run cold, Hobhouse needed an innovative solution

"Shifting shafts of light bathe the two bathrooms in an aquamarine glow—a submarine effect redoubled in the early morning when the sun's rays bounce off the outdoor pool."

for his water-heating system. In the end, a secret room was built into a hill and concealed behind a long stone wall. "It's a rather wonderful space in there," adds Hobhouse with obvious admiration, "because it's lit by this skylight. It looks a bit like the engine room of the Titanic."

An outdoor heated hot tub is admittedly not the most environmentally friendly feature, but it has some redeeming qualities. It's connected to a biomass power source, which heats the water by burning wood and waste material from the estate and serves as a heat exchange to cool air in the house in the summertime. To ensure that construction of the Dairy House made the smallest carbon footprint possible, Catling hired regional workers, including a local cabinetmaker, glass laminator and stonemason who all lived within 20 miles of the estate, which reduced fuel consumption. The slate and oak used in the renovations were from the estate. Well water is pumped out of the ground for daily use.

Hobhouse retreats to the Dairy House from London on most weekends, "arriving at five o'clock on a Friday evening, making dinner and then sitting in the therapeutic hot waters for half an hour while looking at the moon." But he acknowledges that on occasion, the house serves a less serene purpose. "My children arrive with their friends when I'm not there, and it becomes inhabited in a completely different way," says Hobhouse. "Six teenagers arrive at two in the morning and plunge into the pool."

Partying teenagers aside, for its owner, the Dairy House remains a tranquil, spa-like getaway in the country. "What I'm most proud of is how discreet it all is," says Hobhouse fondly. "We really made the private spaces the most luxurious ones." ■



Julia Sandetskaya and Valeria (9) share cozy mother-daughter moments in the warm setting of their Arabian Nights-inspired master bathroom.

MIDDLE EASTERN MUSE

A Seattle bathroom stokes the senses through its use of light, texture and playfulness.

PETER SACKETT
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALEX HAYDEN

JUST FIVE YEARS HAVE PASSED SINCE THEY

launched their small Seattle design studio, MusaDesign, but sibling interior designers Julia Sandetskaya and Polina Zaika are doing a crisp business. When a rare spare moment arises for personal projects, they focus where it yields the greatest rewards: the bathroom.

“My sister and I begin every project with the senses, by determining what feeling a healthy space should evoke,” Sandetskaya says, “and to me, a bathroom design should be very sensual. We have always felt Eastern cultures express sensuality much more clearly than others. I’m not sure why, exactly—perhaps the passions of religion or the warmer weather.”

The sisters from St. Petersburg, Russia, transformed Sandetskaya’s master bathroom into a suite of languorous exoticism and wellness, reminiscent of traditional spas in the balmy latitudes of North Africa and the Middle East. Radiant in exotic jewel-toned hues of blue and green, and counterpointed with warm dusky browns, the space opens to a hillside prospect over Lake Washington and the misty fringe of the Cascade mountain range.

“Polina and I grew up with *One Thousand and One Nights* as one of our favorite stories,” recalls Sandetskaya.

“I wanted to evoke that feeling again—of traveling to an exotic place. I’m fascinated with Moroccan culture.” Her goal was to keep the bathroom uncomplicated, warming the room with a few simple tactile elements. “I admire the way nomadic cultures can transform an interior, in a couple of hours, with exquisite textiles and a few basic items that travel with them everywhere they go.”

The bathroom suite encloses two bathing areas at opposite ends of the room, whose walls are clad in hand-troweled clay the color of moondust. At one end, in a private, eddy-like nook, tiny glass tiles in a saturated range of sky-blue turquoise and sea green encrust surfaces surrounding a deep, oversized BainUltra soaking tub, equipped with pulsing air jets that soothe away stress. Chinese antique wooden shutters conceal an adjacent gas fireplace, and dappled light from the orb-shaped chandelier above the tub heightens the effect of an equatorial

From left to right: In the evenings, this antique Moroccan chandelier disperses light in interesting patterns across the walls; an African textile hanging keeps the look of the bathroom eclectic and offers privacy in the shower; from the Bain Ultra tub, the bather can enjoy a view of the expansive Brazilian teak deck; When the wooden slatted blinds are open, natural light floods the space.

Bathroom Dos and Don'ts

Helpful tips to create your perfect bathroom space.

DO...

Minimize bathroom accessories to avoid clutter. Beyond quality hardware, choose just a handful of simple items to create a space for wellness and tranquility—a candle, a wooden bench and a good book may be all you need.

Consider your climate before selecting a color scheme. In northern latitudes, blues, greens and grays are as nurturing as reds, yellows and purples in southern climates.

Use pattern and texture to add warmth. Unusual textiles and organic materials help avoid an institutional look and will make the bathroom a place you love to spend time.

DON'T...

Assume that white is your only option. Dark, saturated colors introduce soft shadows that make a small bathroom feel larger and soothingly intimate.

Be afraid of a wooden floor in the bathroom—it feels wonderful under your feet. Sandetskaya recommends protecting it with a natural hard-wax oil sealer.

Hesitate to consult an interior designer. Paint can't hide architectural shortcomings. Expertise can transform even the dourest room without the need for radical surgery.



From left to right: Purple hydrangea from the garden lend a burst of color; on the reclaimed Brazilian cherrywood floorboards lie richly patterned rugs from Indonesia.



“Polina and I grew up with *One Thousand and One Nights* as one of our favorite stories... I wanted to evoke that feeling again.”

tide pool, creating a flickering constellation of watery facets.

Tropically rustic but geometrically refined, a twin-basined vanity of coconut plywood is smooth and elegantly simple. It hovers over hidden plinth lights that spill across oil-rubbed floors of reclaimed Brazilian cherry with a ribboned pattern of dark, syrupy browns.

In the far corner of the suite, shadowy walls of smoked glass enclose the emerald-tiled shower, outfitted with peg-like, minimalist fixtures. A boldly patterned African textile drapes from an antique Japanese kimono hanger suspended from the ceiling—a light-handed gesture towards privacy in the shower.

Sandetskaya was deliberate in her use of cool dark colors—a technique that often surprises her clients in the Pacific Northwest, where homeowners typically reach for saturated reds, oranges and yellows to balance the effects of inclement weather. “Some of my clients say, ‘Julia, I don’t know what’s happening. I’ve colored my space bright yellow, but it looks sad,’” Sandetskaya says. “In Seattle, our atmosphere has a lot of blue in it, so those reds and yellows become muddy. But blues and greens become brighter. To get that healthy energy, you need to use lighting and texture, and that’s why the wood and tile elements work so well here. We made certain the bathroom had a lot of daylight. In the mornings, you don’t have to turn on the overhead fixtures, even during a Seattle winter.”

Unlike other parts of the home, the bathroom, Sandetskaya believes, should ask *nothing* of you. “It’s there to serve—preparing for the day, bringing it to a close in the evening or just melting away aches and pains,” she says. “It’s the most private space in any home—you have permission to leave your daily routine behind.”

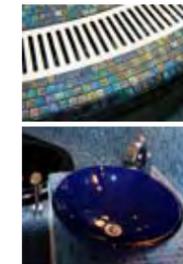
Get the Look

Here’s how to recreate the sensuous space featured in these pages.



FIXTURES

Sleek, minimal fixtures like the Axor Starck Showerhead and Handshower create atmosphere without distracting from it—delivering the soothing, hot-water goods while practically vanishing into thin air. From Hansgrohe, www.hansgrohe-usa.com



TILE

Create the sensation of water even out of the tub and shower. Translucent glass tiles in ocean colors lower your shoulders into an immersive experience. Aquamarine (b-75, shower) and Emerald Blend (ub302m, tub surround) from Hakatai Enterprises, 701 Mistletoe Rd., Ashland, OR, 541-552-0855, www.hakatai.com



BATHTUB

Rubber duckies aren’t always the right company for slipping into a Mediterranean spa. The BainUltra Ellipse 7842 jet tub offers room for two bathers, a heated backrest and therapeutic options such as chromatherapy and sound therapy for striking just the right meditative balance. From bainultra.com



WALL SURFACE MATERIAL

Buff away the hard edges of your bathroom retreat by coating your walls with luxurious-looking natural earth plaster. Sandetskaya selected American Clay in Wild Horse Smoke from Ecohaus (formerly Environmental Home Center), 4121 1st Ave. S, Seattle, WA, 206-682-7332, www.ecohaus.com



TOILET

Toilets don’t have to be mundane: the Toto Neorest 600 features a heated seat, warm-air dryer and countless other functions fit for an Arabian king. Bonus: a lid that opens when you approach it, then flushes and closes automatically when you walk away. From Chown, 12001 12th St. NE, Bellevue, WA, 1-800-574-4312, www.chown.com



SHUTTERS

Emerging clean and refreshed doesn’t mean your bathroom has to be polished and antiseptic. Sandetskaya found that antique Chinese shutters, with their handsome patina, offered a wonderful solution for filtering the light of her fireplace—and an extra measure of intimacy. From Dragon Traders, 5930 6th Ave. S, Seattle, WA, 206-763-4642



SOUND THERAPY

From whale pod to iPod: Relaxation music branches out.

ELIZABETH RORKE

WHALE MUSIC, BREEZES, LAPPING

waves—nature’s sounds are said to bring biorhythms into cycle and reduce stress. For years they’ve been the spa soundtrack of choice, but recently industry leaders have been dabbling in new relaxation sounds to cater to the idiosyncratic sensibilities of their clientele. *Vive la difference!*

Taking its cue from the urban swagger of its New York patrons, Bliss spa is a revolving door of city stresses pent up in local go-getters. The lounge percolates with eucalyptus-infused airflow; the buffet is loaded with fudge brownies, cheese, olives and cucumbers; there’s not a Birkenstock in sight.

Bliss’ musical challenge was to create a contrapuntal atmosphere in downtown Manhattan. The result was Ella instead of Enya. Add Frank Sinatra, Aretha Franklin, Etta James and Nat “King” Cole and you get something close to cocktail hour, hold the cocktails. The Bliss brand is a reaction to the spiritual journeying that many spas encourage. Its cheeky social style is best played out to soul, jazz and rhythm and blues.

John Brennan, managing director of the five-star destination spa SÁMAS, at the Park Hotel Kenmare, has a different approach to relaxation music. Located at the foot of moody Irish hills just off Kenmare Bay, County Kerry, SÁMAS offers iPod docking stations throughout the premises. The personal

music players are preloaded and provided by the hotel—Brennan reasons that allowing customers to import their own playlist would prevent them from exiting the everyday.

The owners of the 1897 countryside estate made a progressive move when they commissioned musicians from the iconic English glam rock band Roxy Music to compose works specifically for the spa. Guests are treated to eight channels of programmed music, one of which is the SÁMAS in-house soundtrack—lightly psychedelic jazz with intermittent exchanges between guitar, violins and saxophone. “Music in a spa should be very focused,” says Brennan. “It should be beatless, fluent and poetic.”

Further south, where Latin sounds are infused into the culture, client tastes call for a different approach. “Don’t close the door to rhythm in spas,” says spa and hotel music programmer Gianpaolo Maddaluna. His Italian company, Soundsolutions, counts the Sol Meliá Hotels, the Bulgari Hotels in Milan and Tokyo and the Ritz-Carlton Hotel Arts in Barcelona among its clients.

Studies have shown how slow, gentle music can affect brainwave activity by promoting theta wave production, associated with sleep and meditative states. Changes in music frequency and volume can be a disturbance during a treatment, and some frequency ranges are commonly irritating. Maddaluna

Bliss – Your Way

Bain Ultra’s new Euphonia wireless headset and wall-mounted MP3 player will set the mood for your relaxation on the massage table or even in the tub. Slip it on to listen to your favorite tracks or an inbuilt selection of ambient, nature-inspired and classical sounds.



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: TKTIKTIKTIKTIKTIK



From left to right: Customize your relaxation soundtrack for a truly therapeutic soak; Sámás is Gaelic for indulgence of the senses. At spa SÁMAS in Ireland, guests feast their eyes on the natural beauty of Kenmare while taking in the music of their choice from a special in-house menu.

may define a spa’s sound by the frequency range alone—creating an overtly bassy and low tonal ambiance, or a more vibrant mid-range electronic feel, depending on the vibe a treatment center wants to project and the clientele it attracts. He knows that music is a big factor in establishing a spa’s identity.

The Japanese market, for example, is quite different from the European market. Japan has a strong musical tradition in relaxation music that is difficult to superimpose elsewhere. Medieval Zen Buddhist monks of the Fuke sect introduced koto and shakuhachi music—it’s integral to their meditation practice. This bamboo flute music became especially important to Japanese people because it was outlawed by the Meiji government in 1868 and not legalized again until well into the 20th century. Maddaluna relies on his ears, picking up subtle cultural vibes from local clubs and DJs and discovering the inherent music of a place before suggesting a customized program of nearly 2,000 pieces of music.

Some spas, particularly out-of-town retreats, are comfortable exploring organic sound—but with a markedly minimalist take on the New Age genre. The Mii amo spa in Sedona, Arizona (voted the number-one destination spa by *Travel + Leisure* readers in 2007), is tucked away in the heart of red rock country. R.J. Joseph, the Native American Program Director at the resort, commissioned Grammy-nominated Navajo flutist K. Mockingbird to create music inspired by his own meditation practice in Boynton Canyon, where Mii amo is located. The Native American flute is traditionally connected to Navajo ceremonies honoring the Earth. Its clear and simple voice is reputed to bring our minds into focus, “which feeds our spirit and strengthens us,” says Mockingbird.

Whether you’re ensconced in the lounge of a five-star destination spa or in your own bathtub, relaxation music supports the holistic experience. Taking care of your unique aural needs is an essential step on that ladder to pure relaxation. ■

Sound Suggestions

Set the mood in your homespa with these inspired playlists and products.



BLISS, NEW YORK CITY

“Trust in Me,” Etta James
 “Ain’t No Sunshine,” Eva Cassidy
 “All at Once,” Jack Johnson
 “Oh My Love,” John Lennon
 “These Arms of Mine,” Otis Redding

SPA SÁMAS AT THE PARK HOTEL KENMARE, IRELAND

SÁMAS—Music for the Senses
 Featuring Andy Mackay, Chris Spedding, Julia Thornton and Lucy Wilkins of Roxy Music
 Available exclusively to SÁMAS guests

MII AMO SPA, SEDONA, ARIZONA

Moons of Meditation, K. Mockingbird
 CD for use by Mii amo guests in their rooms; also on sale directly from the artist at CD Baby. cdbaby.com

SLEEP SENSATION

According to this bedtime guru, the secret to getting a good night's sleep doesn't come in a bottle—it's in your head.

TIM MCKEOUGH
PHOTOGRAPHY BY MACKENZIE STROH



Enter Sandman: Robert deStefano offers sleeping tips at the Mayflower Inn and Spa.

STRETCH YOUR NECK AND SHOULDERS, massage aromatherapy oils along your temples and jaw, breathe deep and focus on the calming music. These are just a few of the instructions sleep guru Robert deStefano offers me as a “z-scription” for restless nights. Straightforward, *and* they work. I quickly sink into a long slumber, tuning out the worries of the daytime world.

For insomniacs across North America, deStefano's all-natural approach to helping stressed-out, anxious and harried people get some shut-eye is just what our over-prescribed, over-caffeinated and over-stretched culture needs. And deStefano knows this firsthand. He once ran a highly successful advertising company, where pulling all-nighters fueled on coffee and Red Bull instead of getting a solid seven to nine hours of sleep was simply par for the course. “Everything was very good, but I didn't sleep,” says deStefano. “I was really dosing myself with caffeine and adrenaline.” Although business was booming, his 24-hour workday eventually led to health complications—it started with a twitch in his eye and grew to include heart palpitations. “I got into this vortex of anxiety,” he explains. “I was being stress-tested, and my blood pressure was too high.”

Looking to protect his health, deStefano retired from advertising, and for the first time in his life concentrated on relaxation. The only problem was that he still couldn't let go. “With no more scripts to write, no more deadlines, meetings or pitches, I was still up at 2:30 in the morning,” he says, noting that he assumed insomnia was simply a bad habit that would eventually disappear. It didn't.

Looking for a healthy answer to the problem rather than piling on prescription drugs, he embarked on two very different streams of education, immersing himself

in ancient arts of relaxation like yoga and studying western theories on sleep disorders and psychotherapy. He found valuable ideas in both places, and realized that no one else was combining both schools of thought. “The sleep expert thing didn't really exist,” says deStefano, who, now rested and revitalized, knew it was a role he could fill. “There are medical doctors who are focused on very tough things like sleep apnea, but my specialty became the big bucket of insomniacs—the ones who happen to be under the thumb of our cultural obsession to raise the bar and get things done.”

Today, deStefano runs sleep workshops at spas across the US such as Utah's Red Mountain Spa, Arizona's Spa Avania at the Hyatt Regency Scottsdale and Connecticut's Mayflower Inn and Spa. He also runs Sleep Garden, a company that produces slumber-inducing zMusic CDs and zMovie DVDs (think restful images of nature). A book is in the works and he has developed sleep aid kits for numerous hotels including the Marriott group and the Hyatt Regency in Scottsdale—projects deStefano takes on while being careful to retain his balanced lifestyle.

For those who attend his workshops, deStefano's chief goal is to demystify insomnia. “It's an illusion,” he says, noting that he considers himself more of a coach than a therapist. “I try to shatter the illusion of insomnia, not with empty affirmations but with practice.” By having people engage in specific actions like stretching, aromatherapy and mind-clearing exercises itemized in his own z-scription, deStefano aims to help us experience a change in state—from alert readiness to graceful relaxation—and prove that one of the modern world's growing problems is easy to beat. “If we can put ourselves at the front door of sleep, our bodies will know what to do with it from there,” he says. “It's not a magic trick, it's a biological function we're all born with.” ■

Robert deStefano's Tips for Insomniacs

1. First and foremost, remember this: Insomnia is not a disease or illness. Don't think medicate, think recalibrate! It's easier than you might think.
2. Make a to-do list before you fall asleep so you don't wake up at 2 a.m. and start stressing.
3. Practice a ritual: Take a warm bath, play relaxing music, use soothing aromatherapy or read a poem every night to get that Zen feeling. Once there, you're ready to turn off the light.
4. It's a big mistake to ignore your sleep space. Declutter your bedroom of all chaos—this will have a remarkable effect on clearing your mind of sleep-robbing thoughts. Remove magazines, photos and especially the TV. Studies show that having the telly on can actually rev your brain waves even while you sleep.

NAME THAT QUESTION

HGTV's Joan Kohn answers your questions about swinging saunas, radiant-heat rumors and wallpaper trends.



1. SAUNA RECYCLING
Our new home's basement has a wooden sauna circa the 1970s. What alternatives can you suggest for this space?
Kerri English, San Francisco, CA

Why not convert that unused sauna into a cedar closet for summer storage of woolens? You'll never have to worry about the odor of mothballs, and you might also store luggage down there. Keeping your home orderly is essential to full function as well as good design, and I've never heard one complaint about too much organized storage. Other options include turning the sauna into a pantry for bulk storage, a playhouse for the kids or a quiet and sequestered study for reading.

2. HAPPY FEET
We'd like to install in-floor heating in our master bathroom, but we've heard horror stories about maintenance. Just rumor?
Steven Dalani, Pittsburgh, PA

In-floor radiant-heating systems are generally considered simple and long-lasting. Plus, they get raves for comfort on the feet as

well as their energy efficiency, since the heat stays localized (to only about 6" off the ground). Be sure to shop carefully, checking manufacturer guarantees, and be sure you get skilled professional advice on installation if you're a do-it-yourselfer. You could talk to the manufacturer about installing the system from below the floor, in the basement or crawlspace between the joists. This would sacrifice efficiency but give you peace of mind knowing that you could readily identify and repair any future problems.

3. WONDERWALL
Wallpaper is very trendy right now, but can it work in a bathroom? Any companies you can recommend?
Emily Zachs, Winter Park, FL

Wallpaper works beautifully in bathrooms so long as you use common sense. How heavy is the paper, and is it coated with a thick or thin layer of vinyl? Is it wipeable or scrubbable? While normal levels of humidity in a bath are generally safe for wallpapers, are there members of your family who favor long steamy showers

and turn your bathroom into a sauna? Be watchful that no water is splashing directly onto the paper. For example, wallpaper around a bathtub can work as long as there's no showerhead spray hitting the walls. For longevity, stone or ceramic backsplashes behind a sink are an elegant way to help avoid staining, and some designers use a clear acrylic panel to protect wallpapers. To further minimize risk, play it safe by using your powder room as a design laboratory for exploring the transformative powers of wallpaper. To get your creative juices flowing, here are a few excellent, well-established companies to visit online: farrowandball.com, leejofa.com and cowtan.com. It's best to ask for samples first as onscreen images often don't portray the true color and texture of the paper. ■

Joan the "Bathroom Goddess" is host, writer and associate producer of Home & Garden Television's Kitchen Design and Bed & Bath Design series as well as the author of three books. She's currently hard at work developing a gorgeous new TV show: Your Beautiful Home with Joan Kohn. Send your questions to Joan at letters@homespa-magazine.com.