



Spring Cleaning FOR Your BODY AND Soul

PHOTOS COURTESY OF SPA GRAND TRAVERSE

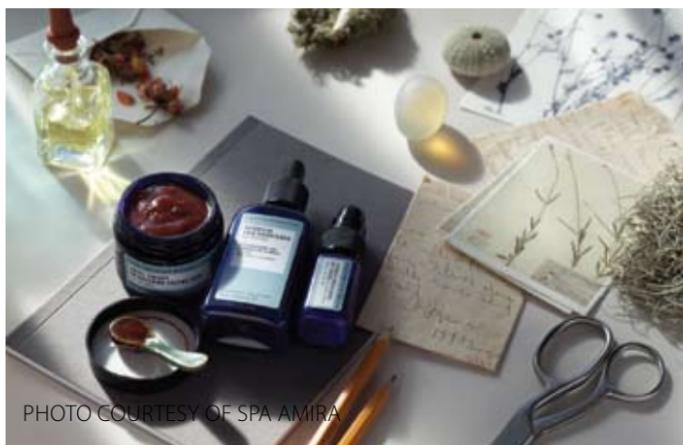
BY DIANNA STAMPFLER
each spring, we make a ritual out of cleaning the clutter out of our homes, dusting off the last remnants of winter, opening up the windows to let fresh air in. Have you ever thought that your body deserved the same type of cleaning—a rejuvenation, a cleansing, an opportunity to shed the old and make way for the new.

Thankfully, Michigan is home to a handful of destination spas offering an extensive menu of treatments aimed to transform the body and soul, awakening a revived spirit just in time for spring.

My first spa experience was nearly 10 years ago – when I was “researching” for an article. The Inn at Bay Harbor, tucked along the southern shoreline of Little Traverse Bay between Petoskey and Charlevoix, offers an incredible spa facility. I was able to share the experience with my mother...our first trip in many years. I remember I had the “signature” treatment – which was a hot Petoskey stone massage – which is still offered.

A year or so later, I made my way to the spa at Grand Traverse Resort in Acme. Being in the heart of “cherry country” – I made an appointment for the “Cherry Honey Glow” – in which a mix of local cherry concentrate and sugar is applied to the body to exfoliate and polish the skin. Afterward, it’s all rinsed off under a Vichy shower, followed by a hydrating cherry lotion. If you’ve never had a Vichy shower experience – you need to give it a try! Essentially, you lay down on a table while a multi-head shower washes back and forth over your body from above.

On a recent spring break trip to Mountain Grand Lodge, next to Boyne Mountain in Boyne Falls, I snuck away to the Solace Spa while the teenagers hit the waterpark. Even though I’m slightly claustrophobic, I opted for a body wrap treatment...and a facial – which was one of the most relaxing experiences I’ve ever gone through. I nearly fell asleep during the facial, and I was later informed that doing so is not considered rude – it’s actually a compliment to the therapist. They’ve got some incredibly interesting programs at Solace, like Tibetan Bowl ceremonies, trapeze class and even family nights. Definitely worth a return visit for me.



Whether it's an exclusive treatment or a special event to indulge your party guests, the Spa & Salon at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel has a range of delightful ways to relax and rejuvenate you.

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When Crystal Mountain opened The Crystal Spa a few years back, I was immediately on the phone booking an appointment. After a morning out on the cross country ski and snowshoe trails, I was anxious to warm up inside the nature-inspired spa – the Midwest's only LEED certified spa! The "Signature Evergreen Renewal" treatment seemed the ideal option, especially given that I was surrounded by the beautiful woodlands of Northern Michigan. This three-in-one experience offered an invigorating sea salt and citrus scrub, followed by a seaweed wrap infused with Icelandic moss, followed by a gentle rain shower to wash away the dead skin. The alpine-infused massage utilized extracts of white pine, balsam fir and silver fir...refreshing!

In the past few months, I've had the opportunity visit three other spas for relaxation treatments...just another day on the "job"!

The Amway Grand Plaza Hotel in downtown Grand Rapids recently added a Spa & Salon to its internationally-recognized hotel. The place is packed whenever a wedding is in the building – as the bridal party prepares for the big day. Luckily for me, it was quiet the day I went in for my first hot bamboo treatment. Despite my original impressions, this incredible treatment did NOT include the therapist smacking my bare back with bamboo rods (whew). Instead, she took the rods – some round, some halved – and pushed them into the tension-filled nooks and crannies of my back, shoulders and neck. Like a baker rolling out dough, the bamboo rods kneaded out all the knots that had taken up residency in my body. Apparently, bamboo is one of the most multi-faceted plants on the planet and is relatively new to the massage scene – much like hot stones were a dozen or so years ago.

Spa Amira at The Homestead in Glen Arbor – in the heart of the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore (rated the "Most Beautiful

Place in America" by viewers of Good Morning America, in 2011) – sits atop a bluff overlooking Lake Michigan and the North and South Manitou Islands. While small in size, Spa Amira delivers big when it comes to treatments. The hot bamboo treatment has found its way here too – and having had such a wonderful experience with it earlier, I opted for it once again (yes, the stress had returned). I was not disappointed – in fact, I think I've found my own "signature" treatment! I followed this up with an aromatherapy facial treatment – a holistic treatment that incorporates pure essential oils and blended plant extracts to help normalize the pH of the skin. Before I left, I loaded up with samples from the Naturopathica line that are used in all the treatments here. They also have these great take-away cards which give you tips on using the products as bath cures or for facial massages and saunas at home. Bonus!

One of my guilty pleasures is a simple pedicure. In the summer, I'm prone to at least two a month. When scheduling my appointment at Idun Spa inside the Kalamazoo Radisson Hotel, I was craving a pumped up pedi – and that's just what I got. I settled into the massage chair, with a heated and scented neck wrap and waited for my "little extras" – which included a cotton-candy Martini and two chocolate covered strawberries. That's what I call Happy Hour! For the next 60 minutes, my feet were pampered like they've never been pampered before. The "Berries & Bliss" included a warm, buttery milk massage to soften and sooth, followed by an exfoliating scrub and fresh strawberry fruit cells to help replenish.

Afterward, my feet were treated to a paraffin wrap followed by healthy dose of whipped shea butter. They were pretty happy when we walked out of there!

I've been researching other destination spa options to add to my travel schedule for this year – a "bucket list" of sorts! Two treatments have jumped out at me as "must haves" in the coming months, including the "Lavender Infused White Clay" wrap at Shanty Creek Resort in Bellaire. According to the brochure, the 50-minute treatment uses white clay – derived from granite, to "help stimulate circulation to the skin while gently exfoliating and cleansing...the infusion of lavender is soothing, hydrating and the scent imparts a feeling of inner freedom." Um, yes...please! The other on my radar is the "Stone Facial Massage" at Garland Resort in Lewiston – over between Gaylord and Grayling. Since I harbor most of my tension in my head, neck and shoulders, I see this as a perfect stress reliever!



You don't have to be a world traveler or a professional writer to experience these wonderful destinations spas! Often, you don't even have to be a resort or hotel guest – although I recommend it...you deserve it! Even if you sneak off for something as simple as a pedicure or facial, you're treating not only your body – but your mind and soul. If you are able, indulge in a morning/afternoon or full day of treatments. Go it solo or bring a friend (or two) and make it a true experience to be remembered. Trust me, you'll thank me later! ☐



MICHIGAN DESTINATION SPAS

PHOTO COURTESY OF AMWAY GRAND PLAZA HOTEL

ASTOR'S SPA – Grand Hotel, Mackinac Island
www.grandhotel.com/activities/spa

CRYSTAL SPA - Crystal Mountain Resort, Thompsonville
www.crystallmountain.com/spa

IDUN SPA SALON - Kalamazoo Radisson, Kalamazoo
<http://idunspasalon.com/>

IMMERSE SPA – MGM Grand, Detroit
www.mgmgranddetroit.com

SOARING EAGLE SPA – Soaring Eagle Casino, Mt. Pleasant
www.soaringeaglecasino.com/spa.htm

SOLACE SPA - Mountain Grand Lodge, Boyne Falls
www.boyne.com/Spas/Solace/

SPA AMIRA AT THE HOMESTEAD RESORT, Glen Arbor
www.thehomesteadresort.com/spa.php

SPA GRAND TRAVERSE - Grand Traverse Resort, Acme
www.grandtraverseresort.com/spa/

SPA19 - Westin Book Cadillac, Detroit
www.bookcadillacwestin.com

THE SPA – THE H HOTEL, Midland
www.dolce-h-hotel.com

THE SPA - JW MARRIOTT, Grand Rapids
www.ilovethejw.com/spa.html

THE SPA - SHANTY CREEK RESORT, Bellaire
www.shantycreek.com/villages/spa.php

THE SPA & SALON - AMWAY GRAND PLAZA HOTEL, Grand Rapids
www.amwaygrand.com/spa_and_salon.html

THE SPA AT INN AT BAY HARBOR, Bay Harbor
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