

## 10 BIZARRE SPA TREATMENTS

Julie Keller

Thu June 21 2007

The glass cups were placed against Gwyneth Paltrow's skin then lit with flame, creating a powerful suction which left a series of circular welts along her spine. After she arrived at a film premiere in a backless gown, the paparazzi went nuts, and the world was introduced to the practice of cupping.

Cupping, ancient Asian practice intended to stimulate the circulation, is just one of dozens of rather unconventional treatments that are cropping up at spa destinations around the world. Gone are the days of simple cold cream and Swedish massage. Nowadays, ailments like sore muscles and sallow skin are being remedied with snake massages and nightingale excrement facials.

It's an old geisha trick. At the Diamond Spa at the Diamond Hawaii Resort & Spa in Maui, spa-goers looking for a little face finessing turn to the complexion-healing power of nightingale dung. The skin is treated with coating of dehydrated droppings, a technique used for centuries by geishas in Japan to repair damaged skin and create white, translucent-looking skin.

Booze therapy is also big. Cactus paddles in a hydrating tequila and cactus blend are used to knead during the Hakali Massage at Apuane Spa at the Four Seasons Resort Punta Mita in Mexico. And beer imbibers can sip their favorite lager while immersed in a tub full of active beer yeast and a mixture of crushed herbs at one hops-happy spa in the Czech Republic.

Don't know the color of your inner crystal? Spa-goers at Ole Henriksen's Los Angeles spa are hypnotized into a state of relaxation with the Inner Peace Hypnotic Tranquility Session, while in Sedona, Ariz., relaxation-seekers find supreme serenity with the Aura-Soma Color Reading. There, guests are given a life reading and massage based solely on their selection of bottled colors. And in several other spas in the area you can have your toes read.

"With treatments like perscentoelogy [toe reading – ed.] guests come in to relax, truly emotionally release, reflect and then learn techniques and skills that they can take with them for a lifetime," says Marie Bernat, who conducts personality profiling sessions based on toe shape throughout several resorts in Phoenix and Scottsdale. "I guess you can say that perscentoelogy is a little life tune-up."

And in the end, there's always your end. **Smooth Synergy Cosmedical Spa in New York City offers the Fanny Facial.** The spa has skipped the face completely and headed directly down south with a treatment that combines a body scrub, microcurrents to zap zits deep down, and a sunless tanning application that gets bottoms beach ready.

According to spa owner Nicole Contos, "The derriere is an area that is often neglected, but people are concerned about keeping it in shape and there aren't many other spa treatments that pay attention to this area."

So whether you're a businessperson looking for a unique mid-meeting break, or a fan of the far out looking to take a trip to spa nirvana, ready your robe. We're spanning the globe on a quest for extraordinary healing techniques.

**Beyoncé hasn't got anything on purveyors of the booty centric Fanny Facial at Smooth Synergy Cosmedical Spa in New York City. The spa's three-step exfoliating, microcurrent and sunless tanning treatment aimed at bettering the backside provides spa-goers with a perfectly polished derriere. "The response to the Fanny Facial has been incredible; it's become one of Smooth Synergy's most popular treatments," says spa owner Nicole Contos. "Every client who has tried it has loved the treatment and, most importantly, been thrilled with the results." Bootylicious indeed.**



For more information, visit [www.SmoothSynergy.com](http://www.SmoothSynergy.com)