

'Butt facials' the new fad in town

by Jocelyne Zablitz Wed May 16, 7:41 PM ET

WASHINGTON (AFP) - Worried about being the butt of jokes this summer? Then how about a "facial" for a sagging derriere.

Spas across the United States -- from New York, to Miami, Los Angeles and Minneapolis -- are promoting "Butt Facials" this spring, promising to tighten, lift and tone the posteriors of clients eager to don their bathing suits and make an impression on the beach. "I call mine the 'Butt Lift' and it has gotten pretty popular especially as the weather gets warmer and the summer nears," said Kristine Panariello, who runs a spa boutique in the Reed Center in New York.

The treatment is part of a wave of non-invasive procedures spas have created to capitalize on clients who have money to spare and who are keen on taking care of every inch of their body. Some treatments for the rear-end focus on cleansing and detoxifying the skin, much like a regular facial. Others use microdermabrasion or microcurrent therapy to rid the buttocks of cellulite deposits, acne and other skin problems.

"People want to look great all the time so why not there," Panariello told AFP. "You definitely see a major difference in the silhouette of the body." Her clients, mostly women, spend 650 dollars for the one-hour treatment and she recommends at least two sessions for optimum results that will last through summer. The few men that choose to pamper their tush are usually athletes who sweat a lot and break out. Aleksa Montpetit, of the midwestern state of Minnesota, said she began getting facials for her buttocks at Extradors Spa in Minneapolis about 18 months ago and hasn't looked back since. "It's a stress reliever and it's relaxing," said Montpetit, who pays 65 dollars for each session. "My husband also seems to like it and with bikini season coming up, I am more confident wearing a swimsuit."

At **Smooth Synergy Spa** in New York the 220-dollar signature buttocks facial consists of three steps aimed at leaving clients with a perfectly smooth and polished derriere. The behind is first exfoliated with a papaya mint scrub. Next, microcurrent therapy is used to lift and tone the skin and last the entire body is given an organic spray tan to achieve "that total bombshell look", as the spa's web site proclaims.

Jessica Martin, of New York, said she has gotten a "butt facial" twice in the last 18 months at **Smooth Synergy** and is mulling treating herself to another before the onset of summer. "When you look in the mirror, your butt just looks tighter and more uplifted and that's all I really want," Martin said. "I'd like to have it done again before I go on vacation. "I guess I'll just have to get my parents to fund it."