



beauty secrets *of the spas*

Never have we been so in need of a little R & R: A recent survey reveals that 75 percent of us are more stressed now than we were just two years ago. But even if a pampering getaway isn't in your budget, you don't have to miss out on all the aahs. We asked spa specialists from coast to coast for their best tips so you can start looking and feeling fabulous now.

by Sally Wadyka photography by Ondrea Barbe

SPA SECRET

Use household and kitchen staples to get spotless skin and de-puff eyes.

→ **Banish a blemish** "To treat the occasional breakout, crush an aspirin and mix it with enough water to make a paste. Put it directly on the pimple and leave it on for about 10 minutes before rinsing it off," says Francisco Cisneros, lead aesthetician at the Bliss spa in the chic W Hotel in Scottsdale, Arizona (blissworld.com). "The main ingredient in aspirin is salicylic acid, which speeds healing by encouraging exfoliation."

→ **Lose your eye baggage** "To shrink swollen under-eyes, finely chop a whole chilled cucumber," suggests Cisneros. Then roll the entire cut-up cuke in a paper towel and lay it over your eyes for 15 minutes. "Cucumber contains vitamin C and caffeic acid," he says, "which together help prevent water retention and take down puffiness."

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You are what you eat: Consume lots of nutrient-rich foods to shave years off your looks.

→ **Squeeze in supercharged fruit** Judy Deutsch, R.D., the resident nutritionist at the idyllic Canyon Ranch spa in Lenox, Massachusetts (canyonranch.com), where rates start at \$1,700 per person, suggests loading up on "exceptional" fruits, like blueberries, goji berries, red grapes, mangoes, and pomegranates, all of which contain high concentrations of antioxidants and give you the most health and beauty bang for each bite.

→ **Sprinkle on omega-3s** "Omega-3 fatty acids are essential for keeping skin supple and hydrated, which ultimately helps it stay young-looking," says Deutsch. Try topping cereal, yogurt, salads, or smoothies with omega-3-rich ground flaxseed.

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Purify your mind—and complexion—with inexpensive DIY solutions.

→ **Spritz yourself happy** "Fill a spray bottle with a cup of water and five drops of an essential oil and use it as an aromatherapy spray," advises Rebecca Vogdanos, an aesthetician and massage therapist at the upscale Equinox Fitness club in Chicago (equinoxfitness.com). "Mist jasmine-infused water on your sheets to help you relax at bedtime or spray juniper-scented water around your office for a midday energy boost." Find essential oils at auracacia.com. ▶



Dab oils on pulse points to relieve tension



A thin coat of mud is all you need


SPA SECRET

Play in the mud to refresh from head to toe.

→ **Score softer skin** At the spa in Sè, a swank new hotel in San Diego (sesandiego.com), you can indulge in the Moroccan Rasul treatment, a traditional Arabic cleansing ritual that involves applying desert clay mud and relaxing in a sauna. But Michelle Frye, the spa director, says you can recreate the experience in your own bathroom.

"While in the shower, shampoo, then use a scrub to exfoliate—and open your pores—from your neck down. Next, stand away from the nozzle and apply a mud mask to your whole body. Let it sit for a minute while you work in your hair conditioner, then rinse everything off," says Frye. A best bet is the **Ahava Purifying Mud Mask** (\$28; ahavaus.com) with Dead Sea minerals. Before you step into the shower, try fixing yourself some antioxidant-rich green, white, or black tea to sip while the mud dries.





Spread balm to the outer edges of your lips for the best results



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Protect extra-dry lips with lip and eye products for 24-hour moisture.

→ **Give your mouth TLC** "To moisturize the thin, delicate skin on the lips, I advise my clients—who ski in extremely cold, dry air—to smooth an eye cream onto their pout and leave it on overnight," says Jenni Kading, lead aesthetician at the Rêmede Spa at the St. Regis Aspen Resort in Aspen, Colorado (stregis.com/aspen), where rooms start at \$845 a night. We like Bioré Skin Preservation See the Future Fortifying Eye Cream (\$15; at drugstores), which contains skin-queenching ceramides. For day opt for a balm, like June Jacobs Lip Renewal (\$24; junejacobs.com), with ultra-soothing vitamin E.



Eye cream is a multitasker: Use it on your face and body

→ **Brighten up with baking soda** Turns out baking soda isn't just an excellent tooth whitener, it perks up your complexion too. "Slowly mix water into a quarter cup of baking soda until it gets pretty thick," says Vogdanos. "Then use it as a daily scrub to exfoliate and lighten areas of discoloration on your face, even if you have sensitive skin."

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Rub out roughness on your elbows, knees, and cuticles with all-natural ingredients.

→ **Lube up your limbs** "Pure jojoba oil is a close match to human sebum, so it makes an ideal moisturizer for dry skin—especially areas like the legs and elbows, which produce very little natural oil," says Thuyen Nguyen, creative director and lead managing therapist at the Asian-inspired Shibui Spa in New York City's Greenwich Hotel (thegreenwichhotel.com), where suites cost upward of \$550 a night. Since jojoba oil is very concentrated, knead only a few drops into damp skin to keep it soft and supple all day long.

→ **Give your hands a hand** "Mix up a gently sloughing scrub using turbinado sugar blended with enough oil [soybean and coconut work well] to make a paste," says Nguyen. "Massage it into your hands and cuticles to shed dead, rough skin. Then, in a small bowl, mix equal amounts of the oil you've selected and raw honey. Spread the concoction all over your hands and cuticles, slip on gloves, and allow the mixture to sink in for 20 minutes before rinsing it off."

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Rejuvenate your skin with an enzyme mask—and your spirits with reflexology.

→ **Get glowing** For a more radiant complexion, Myrna Beardshear, spa director at the Sagestone Spa at the Red Mountain resort in Ivins, Utah (redmountainspa.com), recommends mixing 2 teaspoons of canned pumpkin purée with half a teaspoon of honey and a quarter teaspoon of milk or soy milk. "Apply the mixture to your face and relax for 10 to 15 minutes, then rinse it off with warm water," she says. "Pumpkin purée has enzymes that remove dead, dull cells, as well as vitamins A and C and zinc, which provide protective and healing benefits."

→ **Step up your health** "By manipulating and stimulating certain spots on your feet, you can restore wellness and balance to your whole body," says Beardshear. To give yourself a relaxing mini massage at home, take your bare foot in your hands. Start by massaging the point at the base of the ball of your big toe, which corresponds to the brain, your body's mental stress center. Quell anxiety by rubbing the stomach point, located at the arch of your foot. Then press the point related to your solar plexus—considered the nerve switchboard of the body—at the center of the base of the ball of the foot. Focus on each point for 30 seconds per foot.

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Ease pain and stress by working from the outside in.

→ **Minimize muscle aches** Walking in heels (or running) can leave your feet and calves tied up in knots. To soothe sore legs, Lea Cordon, spa director at the celeb favorite Las Ventanas al Paraiso resort in Los Cabos, Mexico (lasventanas.com/spa.cfm), suggests creating a foot soak using hot stones (get them at rubrocks.com). "Heat the stones by placing them on an indoor grill or in a pan of water on the stove," she says. "Then, using tongs, put the hot rocks in a shallow basin or big pot filled with warm water and slide in your feet. For a more invigorating experience, toss in a few fresh lime slices—the heat will help intensify the scent and amplify the aromatherapeutic benefits."

→ **De-clutter your mind** "Dwelling on the past or worrying about the future impairs your ability to enjoy the present," says Cordon. "To get the most out of a relaxing spa treatment—or even a bath at home—you need to stay in the moment. I give my clients this meditation trick to help them focus: Picture two boxes in your head, one for the past and one for the future. Concentrate on inhaling and exhaling deeply. If thoughts come to mind, sort them into one of the two boxes until your mind feels quiet and at peace."



SPA SECRET

Give yourself permission to spend a few minutes on self-improvement daily. Your complexion—and outlook—will thank you.

→ **Make time for you in the a.m.** "I believe in doing a few easy stretches every morning before you get out of bed," says Lisa Hedley, president and creative director of the spa at the opulent Mayflower Inn & Spa in Washington, Connecticut (mayflowerinn.com), where rooms go for up to \$1,600 a night. "This gets your blood flowing and gives you a soothing start to the day rather than just letting the world come at you." She recommends the following moves: "Take three long, deep, cleansing breaths. Then give yourself a mini scalp massage by rubbing the pads of your fingers slowly all around your head, including your earlobes. Not only are you stimulating energy points, you're also bringing circulation to the scalp to help encourage healthy hair growth," says Hedley. "Last, warm up your joints by doing circles with your ankles, wrists, and shoulders."

→ **Iron out wrinkles** Give yourself a quick facial massage after you shower to get your blood flowing and temporarily smooth out creases. Hedley suggests coating your fingertips in moisturizer, then rubbing your face, concentrating on the lines on your forehead and between your eyes. Be sure to use a firm—but not too aggressive—touch.

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A serum with hyaluronic acid helps skin stay luminous and firm

HYDRAMAX +
ACTIVE
SÉRUM
SOLUTION
HYALURONIC ACID
VITAMIN B5
VITAMIN E
PRECISION
CHANEL

SPA SECRET

Moisturize and exfoliate to get silky all over.

→ **Quench parched skin** "When your skin lacks moisture, it looks dull and, worse yet, shriveled and wrinkly," says Kate O'Connel, lead aesthetician at the Spa at the Four Seasons in Jackson Hole, Wyoming (fourseasons.com/jacksonhole/spa), where suites start at \$1,500 a night. To stay hydrated, down six 8-ounce glasses of water a day and slather on a moisturizer with a powerful humectant, such as hyaluronic acid. Two to try: **Chanel Hydramax + Active Sérum Active Moisture Boost** (\$80; chanel.com) or **Peter Thomas Roth Viz-1000** (\$65; sephora.com).

→ **Buff your body** "Brushing your body helps you shed rough, dead cells and get better tone and texture," says O'Connel. We like the **Bath & Body Works Curved Back Brush** (\$10; bathandbodyworks.com).



Use this with a light, circular motion on damp skin