

Homme Improvement

by Enrique Ramirez, L.E., L.M.T.

Move over baby boomers! There is a new BOOM in town and it has nothing to do with combat boots or camouflage visages, and it is more virile than John Wayne desert galloping in the Old West! I am talking about today's modern man who has made a handsome boom in the last 10 years. When savvy marketing companies unveiled the word *metrosexual*, our grade A, all American males were given a magnifying mirror to look closer at their appearances. According to the spa vigilantes, the International Spa Association, 47 percent of spa visitors are men between the young ages of 25 to 44, with an average income of \$50,000 per year. And most of these gentlemen live in the Southwest. When my spa opened in 2004, massage therapy was already in full bloom and men were comfortable disrobing to get their knots undone or for much needed de-stressing. However, guys were still neglecting their skin and grooming habits. We immediately focused on skin care, grooming, and waxing. It seems in the last decade, more men have come out of the ungroomed and pore-grime filled closet and are ready to take over the spa world. Ladies, watch out! After all, it is a man's world.



I do not mean to burst any female bubbles; guys may be shy and scared at first, but once they trust you, you will have them eating out of your hand while you extract their pores with the other hand. This I have proven since I started my spa – well, maybe not the eating-out-of-my-hand part. Men are more loyal clients than women. Eighty percent of our clients are guys from various backgrounds; we have artists, lawyers, cops and even tough guys like construction workers and athletes in need of waxing and body clipping to make their competitive selves perform better in their aquatic or cycling platforms.

As previously mentioned, we specialize in men's skin care and grooming which keeps our treatment rooms filled almost every working hour. Many spas are missing out on revenue (shame on you) for not offering guy specific treatments such as waxing and body clipping, which always come hand in hand. "I can't find a salon near me," is the constant comment I get from frustrated gents who desperately want to look their handsome best. Guys come

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from as far as the District of Columbia, Philadelphia or New Jersey to see us. We have business men who visit New York from California, Texas, and many other states, who make grooming pit stops with us.

Here are some popular treatment tips and two men's spa treatments that you should include right away.

Waxing

Although most men realize the benefits of a wellness facility, many still find the word "spa" intimidating. How-

ever, deep inside their tight muscles and pore congestion, they want to look good on the outside just as badly as women. Unfortunately, American society has taught them to be strong, macho, and to embrace unsightly hair coming out of their ears and nose, as well as the usual suspect – the unibrow.

Aestheticians should learn how to wax guys below the waist without intimidation. If you exude professionalism, your clients will sense that and respect your spa and employees. Guys want to look and feel good all around, so have some compassion. Aside from back and chest waxing, the most popular treatments are those below the waist. You guessed it – buttocks, penis and testicles. It may sound dangerous and difficult, but there are several techniques that can be learned to ease the hair removal treatment. The easiest way for both client and aesthetician is using a hard wax. It can even be somewhat painless with the right technique. "It was not as bad as I thought," nine out of 10 guys will say after treatment. Once the word gets out that you are offering these unique services, men will





flock to your spa before they can say “touchdown!”. The technique is easy, as long as your aestheticians or waxistas leave their fears outside the treatment room. Your demographics will help decide what is most appropriate to charge clients for this treatment. Personally, I perform this treatment for an average of \$65. You may be able to charge more! And the best part is that men tip well above the average woman... *cha-ching!*

Body Clipping

Another missed revenue treatment is body clipping (or *manscaping*). There are so many men out there with excessive body hair who are terrified of waxing – no matter what you say to calm their fears. Like waxing, the most common areas for body clipping on men are the back and chest. You can charge up to \$20 for each area, and 15 minutes later – boom, \$40 in your pocket. Some men prefer their entire bodies to be clipped, and you can charge up to \$100. This is the easiest treatment that you can offer at your spa. Just purchase a professional clipper with attachments. The attachments come in several sizes, which determines how long or short body hair can be trimmed. Please note that, with body clipping, the attachments come with a blade and can easily clip off skin tags or raised moles. Aestheticians should assess the skin properly before beginning. The shortest is the 000 attachment, which shaves every hair off. The 3.5 attachment gives clients’ chest and stomach a simple and natural look. Always use the word natural – never pretty or beautiful to describe something to a man. Otherwise, you will make these highly vulnerable men feel feminine, and I can attest that no man wants that.



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Skin Care

Guys love to get pampered and they expect immediate results after a facial. Get to it fast and serious when you approach a man's skin. Facials are different for men than for women. Men have thicker and oilier skin and services can be more aggressive. Most men have a poor at-home regimen, therefore, deep pore cleansing is usually required. For example, one of my facials includes microdermabrasion, deep pore extractions, and a fruit acid peel – all this to clean the skin from the outside in and inside out. Some guys shave right before a facial, so beware of any nicks and cuts or you will have them screaming like they were getting a root canal at their dentist's office! Also, perform men's facials using hot towels barber style. This gives it a manly touch.

Like women, guys are also concerned with aging skin, particularly with crow's feet and lines across the forehead. I strongly encourage aestheticians to suggest the right

moisturizer and the perfect eye cream. They expect it and will appreciate the recommendation, and 90 percent of men will invest in it. Real men do spend money.

Shaving concerns such as razor burn or ingrown hairs are always at the top of their improvement lists. Have the skin care products that address these concerns in your retail area. Whenever you recommend a product, make it sound as easy as possible, as most men do not want to work hard at anything.

Many guys are into outdoor activities or have a job that requires them to be outside. Remind them of the importance of sunscreen application and reapplication.

Do your guy clients a favor and offer a mid-brow or an ear and nose wax when needed – which is about 80 percent of the time. It is a great add-on to the facial and they will thank you for it. It only takes about 10 minutes to wax these small areas. Once again, use hard wax to get a precise application and thorough hair cleanup.



How to Get Guys to Visit Your Spa

Start with your website. Most men will find you via the Internet. Use every keyword you can think of: men's waxing, guy waxing, manscaping, gay spa. It may not be a gay spa, but those little words will help the witty gays find you. Use specific area words; for example, we use Flatiron District Men's Spa. You ladies already know that guys are too lazy to drive or walk and want a spa very close to them, and if you are next to a pizza parlor or sports bar, you are in luck!

Offer online booking. Most spas have this available already. This is extremely helpful for men because most prefer to book online, as they are too shy or embarrassed to call on the phone to request a facial and eyebrow wax. Eavesdropping on the job is rampant.

Market to the men. Have a special section for men's services on your website and spa menu. Avoid using words like supple, soft, and beauty. Insert masculine words such as natural, clean, fresh or grooming in your spa descriptions and headlines. This will automatically bring their heart rates to a normal beat. Include images such as an attractive masculine model with a sculpted six pack, broad shoulders, and perfect skin that speak to men. Straight and gay men respond to this, but they will never admit to it, not even if you place a gun to their heads.

Beware of your spa décor. Avoid pink hues and use more neutral colors. Beiges, browns or forest greens are good colors for both genders. You should also consider your magazine rack. The issue of *Cosmopolitan* can trigger goose



bumps all over the pre-waxed hair. Include *Sports Illustrated* or *Men's Health* to make them feel right at home. Skip the chamomile tea and offer them a Corona or a Heineken instead.

Retail Confidential

Real men spend money! Again, when suggesting skin care or post-waxing products, make it easy and simple to be able to use at home. Any hint of complication (just like relationships) and they will walk away and never look back. Hasta la vista, \$50 moisturizer!

Grooming treatments will give your annual service revenue a huge boost. Summer is here and both body clipping and waxing give men that fresh and cool feeling during the dog days of summer. Take action now. ➡



Born in Mexico and raised in Chicago, Enrique Ramirez has built a career as a skin care and massage expert. A graduate of the prestigious Swedish Institute and the Christine Valmy School of Esthetics, Ramirez is renowned by clients for a friendly, professional demeanor, a natural, intuitive touch and the utmost precision. face to face nyc opened in New York City's Flatiron district in 2004. Offering a cozy, relaxed atmosphere and a wide range of skin care, massage and beauty services, the salon has built a loyal following due to the unmatched personal attention given to each client.

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