



## ▶▶ Homestyle Features

### Spa Diary: I Feel Good All Over!

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Enrique works his magic

Like the Sprite commercials say, image is everything. I don't care what People magazine says, Jennifer Lopez is just a ghetto-skank with good lighting.

No matter what they say, everybody is wrapped up in externals, illusions and presentations. Is there really ever a reason for eyebrow piercing? Isn't a Prada bag exactly as useful as a plastic take out sack from Taco Bell? It's all hype, honey. It's why

people pay big bucks for a Beanie Baby made in China for 11 cents. If Kate Moss wasn't a glamorous coked up supermodel, we'd be force feeding her ham and cheesecake intravenously.

No image is more powerful in our culture than youth. This explains why 12 year old models shill clothing to 40 year olds, and why poor little Jon Benet Ramsey still pops up in tabloid magazines (right next to 'Ben Affleck is now 87% Botox' and 'Judge Judy Battles Prostate Cancer'). Show biz is no place for crow's feet. That's why Joan Rivers looks like a powdered sand crab in lipstick. That face! The bitch is so hard you could chop vegetables on her.

Dammit, I want to look young! Now, my complexion isn't exactly peaches and cream; I figured it was high time for my very first facial - a spring cleaning if you will. I made an appointment with Enrique Ramirez, 'Skin Care Specialist & Massage Therapist' over at the **Face to Face NYC spa**. Tucked away on the 6th floor of a non descript building on a block where Chelsea blends into the Flatiron district, the spa is an oasis of tranquility in our otherwise chaotic urban cage.

Upon entering the facility, I was immediately enchanted by the soft lighting, soothing music and delicious scent of the various organic and herbal products used in the treatments. I also felt like one gigantic, grease-clogged pore, but upon meeting Enrique, I put my self consciousness on the back burner, and put myself in his able, well moisturized hands.

Enrique, the owner of Face to Face (which officially opened in February of 2006), has been 'doing skin' since 2001. His motto is "fresh, healthy-looking skin is hot!"; his method is total relaxation. I lay back and enjoyed the calmest, most enjoyable 90 minutes I've had since I fell asleep at a showing of Brokeback Mountain. First, Enrique analyzed my skin; apparently my pores are 'congested'. Out came the micro-dermabrasion tool, a magic wand of exfoliation. It was a gritty sensation, but not unpleasant, sort of like making love at the beach... face down in the sand. I could feel the grime getting sloughed away!

I was then treated to a variety of wonderful, pampered moments; a

hydrating geranium and chamomile infusion; a thorough cleansing and extraction process, and a calming seaweed clarifying mask. The seaweed mask solidifies into a green rubbery substance, and I did feel somewhat like an extra on 'Star Trek'... A lovely facial massage and some warm, wet towels followed. "I spend a lot of time cleaning the skin -exfoliation is key" explains Enrique. "Men's skin is thicker than a woman's so it can handle more aggressive techniques"

I was in heaven by this point, a sleepy mass of gelatinous flesh. My 'visage' was then bathed in a Vitamin C&E serum, and the final touch, a cooling oxygen mist to soothe my skin. **Face to Face**- with a team of friendly manscaping professionals- offers many variations on this beauty regimen, with cutsey names like 'Boot Camp Facial', and 'Desert Skin Facial' (for all you parched bitches out there, and you know who you are). Reflexology and massage are also on the 'F2F' menu, from a 30 minute 'Rubbing Express' to a 70 minute 'Feng Shui Massage'.

90% of the spa's clients are men, and the services are geared to the urban male. Body waxing is also available, including the 'Marble Sack' (for the scrotum) and 'Crackdown' for the buttcrack. Nose and ear hair trimming is also offered. Also, explains Enrique, "If a man wants me to shape his eyebrows, I clean them up without making them looked plucked. The trick for men is to look like they didn't do a thing"

My very first facial was fab-tastic; I felt just like a rich white lady! The price for all this luxury face fluffing was around \$150, and worth every cent. I asked Enrique how he felt about working on people's mugs all day long. "I love it! 'he replied. "I like to see the transformation from dull, clogged skin to fresh-healthy looking skin. Also, a bad complexion equals poor self esteem, and I just enjoy making people happy".

Honey, mission accomplished!

For more information, check [Face to Face NYC](#) or visit them at 20 West 20th Street, Suite 603. (212) 633-0404

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