



Style :: Grooming

Spa Diary :: Homme Improvement

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Men have special needs - jock straps, ego stroking, prostate exams- and grooming is no exception. Men typically haven't been as well informed as women about proper skincare and grooming, often going through life with hairy shoulders and clogged pores. But no more! All of that is changing, with gay men, metrosexuals, and body conscious straight dudes leading the way.

Many men would not feel comfortable popping into their local Korean nail salon and asking for, say, a testicle waxing. Enter the fabulous [face to face nyc day spa](#), one of the only spas in the country devoted to serving the needs of its male clients as completely as it serves its female clientele. This specialization has allowed spa owner Enrique Ramirez to

develop an impressive array of treatments that cater to the unique needs of his rapidly growing male client base.

Now that summer is here and more skin is exposed, good grooming is especially important. The first step is having a clear, vibrant complexion. **face to face** now offers the **Y-Chromosome Facial** a refreshing and revitalizing treatment geared to give guys a clean, healthy glow. Explains Enrique, the spa's lead esthetician, "From frequent shaving, men tend to develop unique concerns such as ingrown hairs, razor burn as well as high debris accumulation from lack of at-home maintenance. This particular facial addresses all in one by combining microdermabrasion and plenty of pore purging."

Indeed; I was hypnotized by Enrique's skilled hands as my visage was given the Y-Chromosome Facial. I remained tranquil even while my face was examined under intense lighting and I was decreed to have clogged pores and would require several 'extractions'. Curse me and my overuse of heavy sunblock! Luckily I did not have any ingrown hairs, as my questionable testosterone levels require me to shave only every 5 days or so.

Enrique extracted, cleaned (with a smooth, pleasant smelling 'cleansing milk'), and performed microdermabrasion. That was an odd sensation, strangely enjoyable actually, at extremely fine particles were blasted at and suctioned away from my skin with quick, smooth waves of the magic wand. My facial was topped off with a cool, delightful seaweed mask. "The main ingredient is seaweed" said the very handsome Enrique, "which contains lots of vitamins and minerals... the coolness of the mask also helps reduce some of the redness that comes after a deep pore cleansing"

While the mask was settling in with all of oceanic goodness, Enrique gave me a foot massage, which was intensely relaxing and fabulous. I think I blacked out for a minute or two. (Note to future dates; don't waste your money getting me boozed up, just rub my feet and I'm yours). My arms, shoulders and neck were also treated to a massage, and my skin was smoothed by a heavenly fragranced lotion called System Corps by Decleor Paris. "The main ingredients consist of vitamins and minerals, and the primary scent comes from Coconut Oil and Geranium" explained Enrique. Oui, tres magnifique!

The **Massage without Borders** is another new service that busy, stressed-out urban

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dudes should check out. Enrique described it as "East meets west." It's a comprehensive rub which targets knotted muscles as well as plenty of stretching. Not many men - or women - spend time stretching their shrunken muscles. Flexible and lengthened bodies work better in any lifestyle- from weekend warriors to sedentary office workers.

For this body rub, **face to face** advises "tighty-whities," encouraged for "those with a shy ego." "Since Massage Without Borders has a lot of detail modalities and many stretching techniques which involve raising your legs and putting you in a not-very-common positions (for some, at least...), this can create an uncomfortable feeling for people who are on the shy side of the human spectrum" Enrique delicately put it. "We have a lot of spa visitors who want to get massages, but who are very conscious of their bodies. I want them to know that we respect their bodies and we don't want them to feel uncomfortable in any way during their visit." Basically, your goodies are gonna be exposed baby, so if that freaks you out, slap on a pair of Calvins.

face to face is also one of the few spas in the city to offer **Anal Bleaching**. Yes, you read it correctly: anal bleaching. It's not just for porn stars anymore! Why, you may ask? Some people may be unusually dark or discolored in their nether regions, or perhaps they are just trying to 'think pink'. In any case, Enrique believes that "Anal bleaching makes the area more appealing to the lustful eye." The treatment involves three steps: sanitize, remove the hair (if necessary), and apply the peel.

"I recommend 6 treatments before any noticeable results can be seen" explains Enrique. "Some clients respond faster than others and they can see results immediately. Those who are darker may need several series of treatments." Results are permanent, but Enrique cautions that clients need to come in for occasional touch up, and advises an at home regiment as well. (F2F sells the 'South Beach Skin Solutions Lightening Gel for Sensitive Areas', which contains botanical ingredients including Uva Ursi Leaf Extract and Licorice Root Extract.)

Now honey you just *know* I had to try it. Anytime a man says "remove your underwear, turn over and get on your knees," I respond! Plus, I'm a journalist dammit, and I was determined to get my story! Enrique worked quickly, and maintained his pleasant, professional demeanor throughout this curious experience. He spread my cheeks for a look, then applied the bleaching agent. It tingled, but not in a bad way. I kept it on for 2 hours as per his instructions. After leaving the spa, I waked around town, did some light shopping at H&M, and flirted with a cute guy on 6th Avenue, all with a mysterious look on my face and a slathering of beauty cream on my ass. Took a cool shower when I got home, and *voila*- I'm ready for my close up!

For those who may not be quite as freewheeling as I am, the spa has begun offering **Free Tequila Fridays**. Every Friday through Labor Day, booze your way to bliss and beauty! A shot of hooch can do wonders to relax a client who's about to get naked, scrubbed, rubbed and bleached. **face to face** is truly the premier spa for the urban client- other intriguingly named treatments on offer include the **Marble Sac with Shaft** and **Crackdown** hair removal, the **Boot Camp Facial** and the detoxifying **Betty Ford Treatment**.

Gentleman, drink up, strip down and prepare to look gorgeous!

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