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## American Spa Content

### Natural Selection

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By: American Spa Staff  
American Spa

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#### A growing number of spas are moving beyond providing just relaxation and indulgence and-based on consumer demand-are taking a holistic path.

In broad terms, the word "holistic" means promoting long-term health. More specifically, a holistic spa "is a place of healing for the mind and body," explains Amy McDonald, director of the spa and guest programs at Miraval in Catalina, Arizona. In reference to skincare products, the term is used when formulas contain no caustic or synthetic ingredients that stress the skin or are harmful to the body once absorbed.

#### in touch

"The spa world is moving away from spas that are about pampering and toward nurturing more holistically," says Barbara Close, founder of Naturopathica, a holistic day spa in East Hampton, NY. She opened the day spa in 1995 and followed a year later with the Naturopathica line. "There's a big demand for holistic skincare from spas," says Close, adding that the line's wholesale volume so far this year is up 60 percent over last year's figures at the same time. The

line is now available in spas across the country. The extensive Naturopathica line consists of cleansing, moisturizing, and treatment products for the face as well as bath and body items. All contain botanical ingredients grown at a family farm in Virginia.

#### A Holistic History

Utilizing only all-natural ingredients and grown by the companies on bio-dynamic farms (farms that use herbal, vegetable, and composted material to enrich the soil and grow herbs, vegetables, and trees without chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and insecticides and in coordination with the seasons), Weleda, Jurlique, and Dr. Hauschka are three holistic companies that offer a broad range of skincare and personal care products. Weleda, founded in 1921 and brought to the United States in 1931, and Dr. Hauschka, manufacturing skincare since 1967, have been most widely available to American consumers in health food stores. Executives at each have recently started to focus more on the spa market. Recognizing a growing demand for holistic services, Dr. Hauschka began promoting its training program more aggressively several years ago, and, as a result, has grown from seven classes in 1999 to 17 classes last year. "The spas that seek us out are looking to elevate the role of the esthetician to that of a holistic therapist," says Mirran Raphaely, manager of development. In the classes, technicians learn to work with the lymphatic system to detoxify the body and to produce a deep state of relaxation, she explains. Classes are offered on the classic Dr. Hauschka treatments, body work, and advanced training for estheticians.

The spa market was a natural direction for Weleda to go in, because the line was developed "for the whole human being," says creative director Christine Mack. Two years ago, the company created a training program so it could partner with "holistic-minded spas throughout the country." Currently, only Heaven Spa [part of The Manning Institute] in lower Manhattan offers services using Weleda products.

Jurlique, based in Australia and distributed in 20 countries, was introduced to the spa industry in 1985 and has since developed several Jurlique concept spa stores that offer not only the full line of Jurlique products but also full-service spa treatments. Since its beginning, Jurlique has tapped into the needs of the consumer looking for holistic products and now grosses approximately \$80 million worldwide.

In Europe, "holistic" has a long history. Carrying on the tradition of Sebastian Kneipp, considered by many to be the founder of wellness, Kneipp is a family-owned German company that has produced high quality plant-based products for more than 100 years. The company has long been known for its holistic approach to life and health. In fact, it's that approach that serves as the basis for Kneipp's wide range of wellness products. Utilizing the powerful health benefits of herbs and plants, Kneipp offers products containing ingredients that meet U.S. regulations for organically grown products, including spa treatments for the bath, shower, body, and more. The Kneipp System, which is based on water and plant therapies integrated with exercise, nutrition, and emotional harmony, is practiced in many European spa towns.

The philosophy of Eminence Organic Skin Care, also a family affair, was founded by several generations of the Hungarian Molnar family, herbalists who follow the tradition of using only naturally occurring ingredients in their recipes for skincare remedies and treatments. The ingredients are hand-picked and hand-mixed in small batches by trained herbalists in Hungary, and the line has undergone independent dermatological testing in Japan, where it now has a large and loyal following. Established in 1958, the products include herbs, fruits, and flower buds-one can see the fresh fruit pulps and seeds in the products and smell the real herbs-in such products as the Wild Plum Tonic, Quince Apple Masque, Gooseberry Blackberry Serum, Naseberry Treatment Cream, and Eucalyptus Cleansing Concentrate. Once only available in European spas, Eminence is developing a following in American spas, as well.



Botanically based products line the shelves in one of the treatment rooms at Area Emporium & Treatment Center.

#### A Demand in America

At the Woodstock Spa inside the Benjamin Hotel in Manhattan, clients pay \$195 for the two-hour classic Dr. Hauschka facial. And they can't get enough of it, according to spa director Kelley Wohlfarth. Earlier this year, Wohlfarth replaced the spa's former line with Dr. Hauschka because customers were demanding a more holistic experience. Since the switch last August, the spa has seen its overall business increase approximately 22 percent. Its skincare business increased 13 percent during this time, and its aromatherapy massage increased 9 percent.

Miraval's McDonald also wanted to give customers a more holistic experience, which is why she has added the Naturopathica line to the menu. "I'm so tired of the old paradigm that spas are a place where people go for beauty," says McDonald. While it's too soon to tell how the clients are responding to the wide array of new services based on Naturopathica, she points to evidence that the time has come for holistic spas. "Walk into [most supermarkets] and you'll find organic produce. Obviously, if people are conscious of what chemicals they might be ingesting then they're going to be conscious of what they put on their bodies," says McDonald.

In some spas, though, holistic is easier to sell in the retail area than in treatment rooms. Marie Ralston, who owns three Nouveau Body day spas in Arizona, says her clients aren't demanding holistic services. "The problem is that they still want the fast, superficial benefits you're not going to get with holistic skincare," she says. She adds that they are looking for holistic products to take home. Currently, Nouveau Body carries Suis for Face & Body, a holistic line developed by esthetician Claudia Keith that launched in 2000. She also stocks Sprayology, a line of homeopathic remedies.

#### The Right Touch

It's true that holistic treatments don't contain the high concentrations of fast-acting ingredients like glycolic acid that many clients have come to expect. But what they offer instead is a lot of healing touch, as estheticians work with the circulatory, lymphatic, and immune systems to support the body's innate ability to heal and encourage the client to relax. According to Raphaely, it is one of the keys to the success of the Dr. Hauschka facial. "Touch is something that can take years to learn how to do appropriately. But when it is, the results are staggering," Raphaely says. And with the demand for holistic products and treatments growing, it appears that spa-goers would agree.



It's back to basics at Area Emporium & Treatment Center in Brooklyn, NY. The day spa uses Dr. Hauschka and Weleda products, as well as a few of their own handmade items, in all their facial, hand and foot, and body treatments.

**new ORGANIC law**

As of October 21, 2002, consumers might be more aware of the ingredients used in their skincare and beauty products due to the new United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulations on the use of the word "organic" on food items. To help you stay ahead of the curve, here's the lowdown on the new law.

All organic products must include the phrase "Certified organic by..." and list the name of the certifying agent (one that is pre-approved by the USDA). ● Items labeled 100 percent organic contain 100 percent certified organic ingredients. To be certified, the ingredients must get an annual on-site inspection at the farm where the items grow to make sure that the farmer is not using prohibited materials like pesticides. ● An organic designation means that at least 95 percent or more (by weight) of organic ingredients are used. ● If an item says the words with organic ingredients designation, it must contain at least 70 percent organic ingredients. Items with 71 percent ingredients or more will also be able to use the USDA organic seal. ● You may also see items labeled with the phrase some organic ingredients, which means that organic ingredients make up 50 percent or less of the item.

The USDA has not regulated use of the term "natural." According to the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service, "natural" refers to a product containing no artificial ingredient or added color and that is only minimally processed. For more information, you can log on to the USDA's website at [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov).

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