

Beauty & Health

Vancouver Elite

Spring/Summer 2004

Vancouver is known for its good looks. Just look around. We're surrounded by beauty - the mighty Pacific meets regal snow-capped mountains. And like Mother Nature, Vancouverites look good, and work hard at it too. It's lifestyle here. And we all know lifestyle is priority. Read on for a list of some of the best beauty spots around town to keep you feeling fabulous and looking your best. So get to it and strut your stuff.

Owner Surinder Bains introduced Vancouver spa goers to the sacred ritual of purification three years ago with the only authentic Middle Eastern steam bathhouse and spa, MIRAJ HAMMAN SPA. In fact, the vast South Granville oasis is the only one of its kind in Canada. But in the Middle East, the traditional hamam-steam bath, and gommage - an intense full body exfoliation, isn't considered pampering at all. It is a daily pre-prayer cleansing. Walk into the mosaic Kasbah past the arched passageways, intricate lanterns, lavish fountains, wrought-iron gates and soaring pillars to change into a sarong. Once you've wrapped yourself in a colourful sari, the hamman begins in the steam chamber where choice of steam pressure - from high mist to low intensity - open pores and stimulate the senses. Lay there on huge slabs of gold Jerusalem marble as an esthetician gently exfoliates - the gommage - your body style with black Moroccan soap and gentle jets. Just when you thought it couldn't possibly get any better, she massages your body and/or face with essential oils. Choose to lengthen the signature hamman gommage treatment by adding service: aromatherapy facials, papaya clay toning mask, algae and essential oil toning mask and 60-minute massages turns this fantasy like experience into an even more exotic paradise. Afterwards, retreat to the Sultana Lounge and recline on the silk cushions and plump pillows while sipping mint tea with Arabic sweet cake. The spa is reserved mainly for women with separate male hours on Thursday and Sunday.