

Healing

lifestyles & spas magazine

Featuring: Mr. Steam

Get Steamed

The Benefits of Steam Therapy

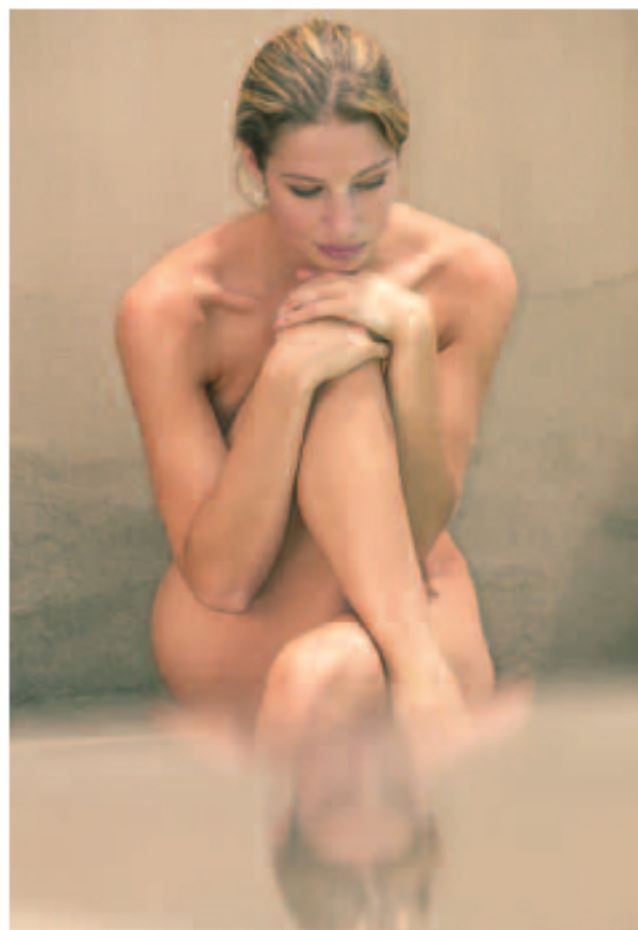
By Karen Werner

The North American sweat lodge, the Turkish hammam, the African Sifutu, the Jewish Shvitz—all around the world, for thousands of years, people have used steam to promote well-being.

And why not? Steam promotes relaxation, relieves muscle tension, soothes congestion, and stimulates the lymphatic system. It increases blood circulation, boosts the metabolism, and helps the body detoxify itself. Vasodilation caused by high temperature allows important nutrients to come to the skin's surface, improving its elasticity and appearance. Steaming eases bronchitis, allergies, and asthma, fights stress, and even promotes collagen production.

That's why steam rooms are a mainstay of spas, and why experts recommend you arrive about thirty minutes before your appointment to steam. Sheryl McCormick, the spa director at The Phoenician Centre for Well-Being in Scottsdale, says it's important to steam before a massage because the steam warms up the muscles, allowing the massage to penetrate deeper. "If you're having a detoxifying treatment, like a scrub, wrap or facial, it's also really good for opening your pores so your body can absorb the nutrients from the products being put on your skin," she says.

What's more, there are real benefits to be had from steaming *after* a treatment. First, steaming speeds up the elimination of toxins that the massage puts into motion. "It's almost like a detoxifying treatment after a massage," McCormick says. Steaming also helps get rid of lactic acid buildup, so you won't be sore the next day.



Bring It Home!

Check out the following companies to learn more about steam showers for residential use:

MR. STEAM

www.mrsteam.com

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