

BY AMY M. COTHAM

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Whether you're slipping into a fuzzy robe and slippers for a full day of pampering or just stopping in for a maintenance mani-pedi, time spent at a spa is always about improving the spirit as well as appearance.

Fortunately, the Northwest Arkansas spa-scape has many offerings for those seeking services, from simple grooming to treatments designed to soothe the senses. With many such businesses in our area, proprietors are sure to keep up with the latest trends as a way to stay competitive. Spa-goers win with the range of services from the very basic to the truly indulgent.

## Massage Trends

Many types of massage are available in Northwest Arkansas, from ancient touch techniques to more modern approaches such as reflexology and reiki. Perhaps the fastest growing trend, however, is couple's massage – and area spas have strived to accommodate the demand.

Many spas have a massage room specifically designated for dual massages.

"Couple's massages do not always involve those who are romantically linked," points out Jason Fechter, owner of NU:U Day Spa in Fayetteville, where a dual-massage room was added more than a year ago. "The term 'couple' means a lot of things," he says. "We get a lot of moms and daughters, for example, or friends who just want to get away and spend some quality 'girl time' together."

Of course, many massage pairs are comprised of men and women, a reflection of an overall increase in spa services sought by men.



## Men's Services

Men are visiting spas now more than ever, driven by the same pampering that attracts women plus the awareness that good grooming makes good sense and can be an advantage – in the boardroom and the bedroom.

While manicures have long been popular with men, more guys are receiving pedicures as well, many spa owners say. Hair removal is also a service popular with men.

"We do a lot of backs and chests," says Sherri Williams, an esthetician at The Pink Papaya in Fayetteville. "We also do men's brows, which can make a huge difference in appearance and really bring out the eyes. We don't want them to be so groomed that they are 'pretty,' but you can keep them from looking too bushy."

Patty Kulish of White Lotus Fayetteville agrees. "Lots of men are asking for waxing," she says. "I call it 'man-scaping,' and it can make a huge difference."

Men are also seeking anti-aging treatments such as facials and good skin care products, and many companies have created lines that cater to men with masculine scents and packaging.

More men are also discovering the more technologically advanced ways that women combat appearance flaws. Ashley Spurlock of WellQuest Spa in Bentonville points out that many gentlemen have found LipoDissolve—most commonly used on women, particularly in the abdomen area—to be an effective remedy for the dreaded "man boobs" that cannot always be countered with diet and exercise.

Most spas, Kulish adds, have even begun to create a unisex décor to make male customers feel comfortable. "You'll notice most places aren't designed solely in feminine ways anymore."

## Medical Spas

LipoDissolve is just one of the many scientific spa trends to hit the Northwest Arkansas spa scene. Here in the Ozarks, we can choose from the latest in such treatments, including Fraxel, Botox, Restylane, microdermabrasion, chemical peels, oxygen facials, and laser hair removal – just to name a few. Providers of such services must be trained and certified to perform these procedures, and we are fortunate to have qualified practitioners at several area "medi-spas" where a gamut of treatments are offered.

Many of these procedures can provide more dramatic results than other approaches. "I know [at WellQuest] most of our clients are looking to see a change in their appearance fairly quickly," Spurlock says.