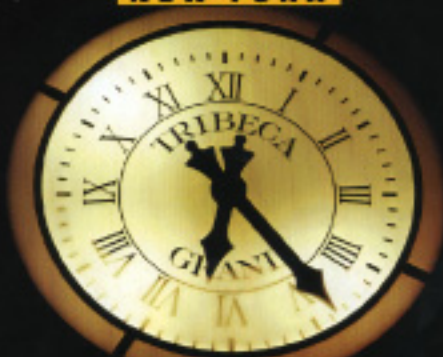


WHERE

NEW YORK



TRIBECA TIME

Whiling away the hours in Manhattan's grandest enclave

PLUS

Robert De Niro's TriBeCa Film Festival brings Hollywood to the Hudson

UNMASKING THE CITY'S MOST LUXURIOUS SPAS

COSTUME DRAMA AT A QUEEN'S MUSEUM



your hotel room. Or special suite are unusual services including flotation tank therapy (\$100) and the warm lava stone treatment (\$110).

THE NATURALS

HEALTH IS THE FOCUS OF THESE SPAS, WHICH use natural products or favor holistic treatments. Though health is job one, beauty and pleasure are natural by-products.

Tucked away in the Bergdorf Goodman department store, the Susan Ciminelli Day Spa (Bergdorf Goodman, 794 Fifth Ave. between 57th and 58th Street, ninth floor, 872-2650, susciminelli.com) is an oasis in the retail tumult. Ciminelli, an early advocate of holistic treatments to detoxify and nourish the body, provides pampering services that promote health and well-being. All products are organic. The Pumpkin and Prune Fruit Enzyme Peel is good enough to eat (\$35 additional to any facial, \$25 hands, \$300 full body).

The same spa that gave birth to all living creatures gave birth to the marine-inspired treatments found at Repêchage Spa de Beauté (Galleria Building, 115 E. 57th St. between Park and Lexington avenues, 721-2500, repechage.com). This spa with French flair has won accolades for its treatments from *Elle*, *The New York Times*, *Cosmopolitan* and *Madeira*. A specialty here is thalassotherapy—seaweed treatments to relax, heal and purify.

Le Cadet (39 E. 30th St. between Park and Madison avenues, 448-8833) is a holistic skin-care spa offering innovative treatments for skin and body using only natural products. Outstanding here is the Pao-Thermal treatment provided by a body-emulating machine—the only one of its kind in the city—that steams, oxygenates and provides an aloe massage (\$75 half hour, \$130 full hour). Although skin care is a specialty, this is a full-service spa, offering nail services, hair removal and hairstyling.

Located in a quiet, sunny space off Madison Avenue, Advanced Skin Care Day Spa (552 Madison Ave. at 54th Street, third floor, 758-8867, advancedspa.com) offers top-to-toe pampering with a scientific edge. Traditional Eastern European treatments are blended with advanced beauty techniques in state-of-the-art facilities. The spa is known for its expert facials and its 2K Facial Treatment (which uses a skin-enzyme treatment for aging) and also offers a full menu of body wraps and scrubs, massage, dermabrasion, pedic, nail services and more.

NEW

NEW SPAS OPEN ALMOST DAILY IN THIS BOHEMIAN city. These are among the best.

Just opened on April 29 in the new Ritz-Carlton Hotel, the first New York location of Europe's prestigious La Prairie spa (50 Central Park South at Sixth Avenue, second floor, 521-6135) offers the ultimate in luxury. The luxe carrier skin rejuvenating treatments that make La Prairie an international destination for the world's wealthiest women are offered here at prices so high they could not be revealed, but rumor has it that a tiny jar of the carboxy cellular eye cream, sans treatment, goes for \$250.

Men and women at the top of the food chain are perfectly attuned to Anne Sémonin at the Plaza Spa at the grand hotel (Fifth Avenue at Central Park South, lower level, 546-5444). Outstanding in a posh setting of Italian marble and European antiques is a luxurious whirlpool bath set in an atrium. The Plaza Spa recently partnered with Sémonin, who is the force behind a prestigious chain of European spas, and now offers her unique treatments including the famed Jet Lag treatment that relaxes the weary traveler's spine with warm, bubbling algae-and-mineral mud (\$90).

A spa to die for, Maximus on Mercer

(15 Mercer St. between Canal and Grand streets, 431-3333)

offers high-tech pleasures in a sensually enticing setting.

The huge space is graced with a two-story-high cascading oil sculpture. The hair salon features massaging armchairs, the glass walls of massage rooms slowly change color to promote desired moods, and each room has a leather bed. The pièce de résistance treatment is the voluptuous Water Journey (\$140), which incorporates a full-body exfoliation, a Vichy shower, a hydrotherapy tub, a waterfall shower and steam in an enclosed cylinder, a full-body massage and more sheer pleasure than the human species was meant to endure.

Another newcomer to SoHo is the Oscar Bond Salon Spa (42 Wooster St. between Broome and Grand streets, 334-3777, oscarbondsalon.com). This high-tech addition to the burgeoning downtown beauty scene has its roots in hair—Bond is a hairstylist beloved by top fashion models and his wife, Wendy, is the resident colorist—but it has gone the spa route with the addition of services including facials and massage. The Self-Renewal Face & Body treatment is a top-to-toe (literally—it includes a foot and scalp massage) treat (\$105).

ONE FOR THE GUYS

FINALLY, A SPA WHERE MEN CAN LET THEIR hair down. Nickel (77 Eighth Ave. at 14th Street, 742-3303, nickel.fr) is a posh new French day spa for men only, the first U.S. branch of the two Parisian Nickels frequented by Jean Paul Gaultier, Thierry Mugler, Issy Miyake and John Malkovich. This space is huge, all chrome, glass and cobalt lighting—very masculine, yet very pampering. A highlight of the spa carries no price tag, yet is worth a million bucks. It's a napping room, a cozy room designed to provide the ultimate luxury, a midday nap in the middle of Manhattan. ☐