

R&R

A GENTLEMAN'S GUIDE

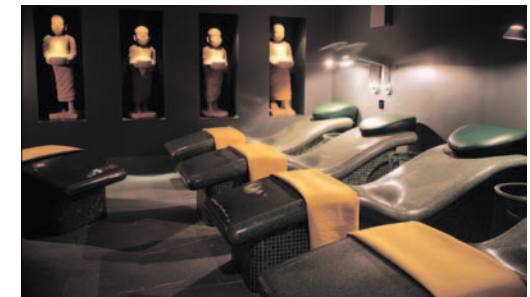


In our mile-a-minute, chaotic city lifestyles, it seems time is now the ultimate luxury – not least time spent unwinding, indulging and pampering... Something men are finally increasing their investment in, too, says Hayley Kadrou

Far from being a feminine pastime, indulging in lavish grooming treatments and luxury spa days is a tradition that once belonged to the masculine realm. “From the Roman man visiting the thermae, to the Edwardian gentleman booking into a Turkish bath, historically a spa was a place where men could go to recuperate and relax,” explains Daphne Metland, director of GoodSpaGuide.com. And judging by the 11 per cent growth in men seeking out spa experiences in the past year (according to *The Good Spa Guide* winter 14/15 report) – let alone the male-centric retreats and grooming menus becoming more visible – it appears that, once again, spa-going is a gentlemen’s game.

“Today, of course, a lot more men are taking care of their grooming and how they look,” observes treatments manager at ESPA Life at Corinthia, Davina Patel. But like the days of our Roman

THIS PAGE: MAIN IMAGE © ISTOCK/THINKSTOCK/PINKPILLS. FACING PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: ALFRED DUNHILL © CHRIS TUBBS; THE MAY FAIR SPA, COURTESY OF THE MAY FAIR; THE POOL AT ESPA LIFE AT CORINTHIA © RICHARD POWERS



counterparts, feeling good is still at the core. “It’s definitely a lot more about health and wellbeing than just beauty and pampering,” she says. “Everybody’s stressed, everybody wants to relax and everybody’s got fast-paced lifestyles. Whether because of dedication to their gym routine or a jetlag-inducing work life, men need to iron out tension and de-stress more than ever.” And devoting time to pampering and self-indulgence really is the perfect way to do so. Read on and get ready to relax and recharge...

FROM HEAD...

What: The Long Package: Haircut & Shave.
Where: The Spa & Barber at Alfred Dunhill, Bourdon House, 2 Davies Street, W1K 3DJ.
Why: If you want to be styled to perfection without a single hair out of place, opt for The Long Package at the Barber within Alfred Dunhill’s Bourdon House, which consists of a consultation, re-style and a deluxe wet shave, all while unwinding by watching a classic movie of your choice, soaking up the opulent ambience. And speaking of style, the precision and attention to detail dedicated to each of the treatments is reflected in the omnipresence of grandeur in this authentic Georgian house – think mahogany, mosaics and marble. Truly a gentlemen’s getaway.
Price: £130 for 120 minutes.
www.dunhill.com/en/london

TO FACE...

What: Swiss Perfection Men’s Skin Cleanse Facial.
Where: Bulgari hotel, 171 Knightsbridge, SW7 1DW.
Why: If you are caught between Harrods and the Victoria and Albert Museum, escape to a more discreet, contemporary Knightsbridge delight at the Bulgari hotel spa. Masculine and serene without compromising on luxury, this swanky setting is perfect for the modern man seeking peace and pampering. And for a genuinely unique and personalised indulgence, the Swiss Perfection Men’s Skin Cleanse facial comes highly recommended – performed using high-powered, exclusive anti-ageing skincare – to transform fatigued, dull and lacklustre skin. Thanks to the deep cleanse, treatment mask, massage and customised aftercare, your complexion will be brightened and rejuvenated, along with your spirits.
Price: £550 for 80 minutes.
www.bulgarihotels.com

TO BODY...

What: ‘Mucho Macho’ Package.
Where: The May Fair, Stratton Street, W1J 8LT.
Why: If you’ve only a few hours to spare, spend them at the cosy-yet-cultured Middle Eastern-inspired spa at The May Fair hotel. If it’s your back that’s the bother, try the ‘Mucho Macho’ treatment

to gratify it from all angles. The treatment begins with a hot stone massage to melt away muscle tension, before moving on to an invigorating deep cleanse to reach those impossible spots, then finishing with an express facial for a final boost. Whichever treatment you book, remember to arrive an hour beforehand to access the calming wet spa facilities – such as the aromatic steam room – to leave both your mind and body feeling completely relaxed.

Price: £239 for 135 minutes.
www.themayfairhotel.co.uk

TO TOE...

What: Ultimate Luxury Foot Therapy Pedicure.
Where: Margaret Dabbs Foot Clinic & Nail Spa, 7 New Cavendish Street, W1G 8UU.
Why: With sandal season upon us, book in to the clinic of celebrity podiatrist Margaret Dabbs and spoil yourself with her famous medical pedicure. This is a crucial part of her feet-transforming Ultimate Luxury Foot Therapy, which also sees feet being soaked, scrubbed and massaged to reduce muscle tension and boost circulation, while you kick back in a bespoke oxygen revitalisation relaxation chair. The tranquil yet ever-so-slightly clinic-esque interior ensures men will feel at home when investing in the best foot care in town.

Price: From £135 for 70 minutes or £175 for 70 minutes with the principal podiatrist.
www.margaretdabbs.co.uk

THE ULTIMATE EXPERIENCE

What: Gentlemen's Topiary Spa Day.
Where: ESPA Life at Corinthia, Whitehall Place, SW1A 2BD.
Why: Seeking the ultimate in men's grooming? Escape the hustle and bustle of the capital in the prestigious ESPA Life Spa at the Corinthia Hotel, a stone's throw away from Embankment. A hub of serenity and stillness, you'll start your day with a precision haircut, blow dry and traditional cut-throat wet shave at the highly esteemed Daniel Galvin salon, followed by a targeted facial to address your skincare needs, an essential mani-pedi to neaten your digits, and a back or chest wax. And finally, finish up by unwinding in the soul-soothing thermal floor. All in a day's work!

Price: £395 for a day package.
www.espalifeatcorinthia.com



IMAGES: FROM TOP: MALE CHANGING ESPA LIFE AT CORINTHIA; COURTESY OF ESPA LIFE AT CORINTHIA; MARGARET DABBS © DUNCAN CHARD; POOL AT BULGARI SPA © RICHARD BRYANT/ARCAIDIMAGES.COM