

Spa Etiquette

A trip to the spa should be a relaxing, blissful experience, but if it's your first visit, it can be slightly nerve-wracking not knowing what to expect. The following tips on spa protocol 101 will remind you to mind your p's and q's even while you're being pampered--and act as a manual to make the most out of your first spa-going encounter.

The Basics

Showing up on time



If you're running late, you lose - spas often can't push your appointment back more than 10 minutes. Need an incentive to arrive on time? We have a serene relaxation lounge which acts as a prelude to get you in the tranquil spa mindset before your service. If time permits, you will be treated with a beverage of your choice and a light snack.

Cancellation policies



Be conscious that short-notice cancellations may incur a charge. A 24 hour notice is required for cancellation.

Mind your manners



Your cell phone or BlackBerry should be turned off--and kept off--while in the spa; using either is a huge no-no. In a relaxation room, conversation is fine as long as it's in a soft tone.

Male or female therapist?



It's up to you. We make every effort to accommodate our guest's wishes in this regard. Keep in mind that at peak hours, it may be harder to fulfill your request, and that for less-requested treatments, the spa may have only one therapist available. Remember to book in advance; if you are a fan of a particular therapist, chances are someone else is as well.



In the buff: Spa Nudity

Nudity is probably the aspect of spa-going that causes guests the most anxiety. Let's be serious--baring it all to someone you've just met can feel awkward. But keep in mind that most therapists in the States go to great lengths to maintain guest modesty, stepping out of the treatment room to allow you to disrobe and get comfortable under the sheet on the massage table. If you're uncomfortable about being in the buff, you don't have to undress completely; it's perfectly okay to wear underwear while having a massage. Second, there are select treatments for which The Spa will supply disposable undergarments. Some clients prefer to completely disrobe, while some will remain partially clothed. Either option is fine. Once disrobed, you will lie on the massage table, under the top sheet. Your massage therapist will give you a few minutes for this process and will knock on the door to ask if you are ready before entering your room.

You will always be draped with the top sheet during your massage session. The etiquette your massage therapist will follow is to only uncover the part of the body they are working on, ensuring that your modesty is respected at all times.



Tips for tipping

Leaving 15 to 20 percent is customary. Tips should be left at the reception desk during checkout (you may leave cash or include it in your credit card or check payment). Received services from more than one therapist? Leave a separate tip for each one. Also, more often than not, spa staff appreciates when the gratuity is left in cash.

Top 15 Things Not to do at a Spa

- *Be on time. If you arrive in a frenzied, rushed state, it will take longer to relax.
- * Don't spend your spa treatment talking about your problems at work, with your husband, your kids. You're just stressing yourself out.
- *Don't work out and then show up for your massage all sweaty. It's not nice for you or the therapist.
- * Don't hop into the Jacuzzi and then go straight to your massage or facial. Rinse the chlorine off right away. It's not good for your skin.
- *Don't talk on your cell phone in the waiting lounge. It disturbs others and keeps you from relaxing.
- * Don't treat the staff like they're servants and you're the Queen. You won't get their best work.
- * Don't expect miracles. You won't permanently get rid of all your muscle tension in one massage.
- * Don't rush off right after your treatment. To get the most out of it, you need time to rest afterwards.

* Don't forget to tip.

* Don't go have a big heavy dinner with wine right after a massage. Take it easy and drink plenty of water.

*Give the therapist feedback as to your comfort and special troubled areas. You can talk or be quiet, and he she should follow your lead

*Relax, enjoy and allow others to care for you.

*Don't talk loudly in the public areas.

*Do not bring children and leave them unattended.

*Communicate your preferences, expectations and concerns

*If the therapist says, "take your time getting up," it means not to get up so fast that you get woozy. You generally have five or so minutes. The room must be prepared for the next client unless she or he says otherwise.

Remember, massage has its greatest benefits over time. The therapeutic effects of massage are cumulative, so the more often a person gets a massage, the better he or she will feel and the more quickly one's body will respond. If you are getting massage to address chronic muscular tension or recovery from a soft tissue injury, more than one session is usually needed, so be prepared to schedule several sessions.

Give honest feedback to the therapist, owner, receptionist, etc. We care to know if your spa experience was as expected and if there is anything we can do to improve our services.