

Tips to get the most out of your spa experience

A trip to a spa should be a relaxing, rejuvenating experience, but if you're unsure of spa etiquette, it can be anything but. This guide will teach you how to make reservations, how to tip, what to wear, and much more. Remember our reservation and spa staffs are here to answer any and all of your questions, so if in doubt please call us.

SPA GUESTS WITH AN OVERNIGHT HOTEL/INN STAY.

Advance booking Our hotel overnight packages often fill up fast, book as far in advance as possible. Reserve all Spa treatments prior to your arrival, then confirm at check-in. Want to avoid the crowds? Try reserving a treatment during off-peak hours or during the week. If you do, you may also receive a discount.

Medical conditions If you have any type of medical condition, mention it when you book your appointment. Certain treatments may not be advisable for you. Also, tell the technician if you're wearing contact lenses before you have a facial.

Mixing activities and spa-going On the day of treatment, try to stay out of the sun and avoid alcoholic beverages. Also don't schedule a physically demanding endeavor after a spa appointment. When in doubt, contact the spa to ask whether it is advisable to engage in a particular activity prior to your appointment.

Valuables In order to avoid all worries, leave all jewelry and valuables at home or in the hotel safe and don't bring them with you to the spa.

Punctuality Ideally arrive 15-30 minutes early so you can enjoy an unhurried transition into the spa. If you are late, your treatment time will be shortened. After a treatment, it's customary to vacate the room within five or ten minutes, though you are welcome to spend additional time unwinding in the spa's relaxation or waiting rooms.

Exploring the facility On arrival at the spa, check out the activity schedule, so you won't miss anything that might be of interest, and ask for a tour prior to your treatment. The tour will acquaint you with your surroundings and introduce you to the spa facilities, such as saunas, steam rooms, and relaxation rooms. Generally, their use is complimentary if you are having a treatment, though there may be a charge at other times.

Therapists If you prefer either a male or female therapist, but the spa fails to ask, don't hesitate to let your choice be known. Also, if you have enjoyed the services of a particular therapist on a prior visit, feel free to request that person.

Nudity The idea of going au naturel is very scary to some people, but don't let that stop you from enjoying the spa. If modesty is an issue, some treatments can be done while you're fully clothed, but others (such as hydrotherapy) are best received in the nude. Facilities such as the sauna and the whirlpool may be enjoyed either in a bathing suit or with no clothing at all.

Attire In addition to a swimsuit, bring attire for other activities you plan to enjoy: light, comfortable attire for fitness classes, gear and boots for hiking, and sneakers for exercise class along with another pair of comfortable shoes.

Cancellation Unexpected things do happen, and sometimes it's impossible to keep an appointment. If you must cancel, give the spa as much advance notice as possible.

Communicating your preferences Be sure to speak up. All aspects of treatment can be modified to your taste: amount of light, kind (or absence) of music, room temperature, and whether or not you choose to have a conversation or enjoy the treatment in silence. If you want the therapist to give you a deep massage, or be gentler, let him or her know. Also, feel free to ask questions. Your therapist will enjoy knowing your thoughts and clarifying any issues you may have. If any part of your experience is unsatisfactory, first tell the therapist. If the response isn't helpful, speak to a manager or the owner of the spa, if available.

Shaving If you must shave, do so at least two hours before your scheduled appointment, particularly if you're a man receiving a facial or a woman receiving any kind of scheduled bodywork.

Eating and drinking Try not to eat for at least an hour before a treatment, and avoid the consumption of alcohol on the day of a treatment. Drink plenty of water before and afterward, especially if you plan to take a fitness class or

enjoy heat therapy, such as a sauna, whirlpool or the steam room.

Using shared facilities Before entering a soaking pool, swimming pool, or whirlpool, always shower. When enjoying the sauna or steam, always sit on your towel and wear the plastic shoes provided by the spa. Women should not shave their legs in the steam room.

Meals The spa provides healthy and nutritious meals during your stay. Please check if your reserved program or package stay includes a meal. There will be menu options available and feel free to make any specific personal requests. Be sure to mention any dietary restrictions at the time you schedule your visit.

Smoking For the most part, smoking is not allowed. There are usually designated areas where you can smoke, so please feel free to inquire.

Children The spa is a great place to get a little alone time, so it's best to not to bring children under 16. If children are with you, be attentive to their safety as well as their impact on the comfort and relaxation of others.

Pets Pets are not permitted at the Spa, Hotel or Inn facilities. We may be able to recommend a local boarding facility should you need to travel with your pet.

Cell phones Leave phones and pagers at home or in your room; or turn them off before entering the spa.

Conversation In the relaxation room and elsewhere, keep conversations at a low volume.

Gratuities Ask if gratuities are included, though that is not usually the case. If not, about 15 percent is customary, but you may of course leave more or less, depending on the quality of the service. Leave the tip at the reception desk when you pay your bill rather than giving it directly to the therapist. If you receive multiple services from different people (a massage therapist, a facial esthetician, etc.), leave a separate tip for each of them.

Eco-awareness Being respectful of your environment is part of the spa experience. Use only the number of towels necessary: washing them uses water and electrical, which are limited resources in some communities. If you spend time in nature, don't leave any trash behind.

DAY SPA GUESTS

Booking spa appointments At our day spas, peak hours are often late afternoons and weekends (especially Saturdays), so book as far in advance as possible in order to ensure getting the particular time, day, and therapist you want. It's easiest to accommodate you during off-peak hours, which are often in the mornings and mid-week. If you will be attending the spa with a gift certificate, it is a good idea to mention it so that the spa can advise you of any policy that may affect its use.

Therapists Our day spas have both male and female therapists on staff. If you have a preference, don't hesitate to let your choice be known. If you have enjoyed the services of a particular therapist on a prior visit, you may request that person. Do realize that your first choice may not always be available.

Punctuality Arrive on time or early. If you are late, your treatment time will need to be shortened since the treatment room (and therapist) is generally booked after your session. After a treatment, it's customary to vacate the room within five or ten minutes. However, you are free to spend additional time unwinding in the day spa's relaxation or waiting rooms.

Arrival If this is your first day spa visit let the receptionist know when you arrive. They are very accustomed to first-time guests and usually provide a more detailed reception. Some of our spas may ask you to complete a questionnaire on your first visit to provide them with medical and contact information. This is another reason to arrive early.

Exploring the facility On arrival at the day spa, ask for a tour prior to your treatment. The tour will acquaint you with your surroundings and introduce you to any additional spa facilities, such as saunas, steam rooms, and relaxation rooms.

Cancellations If you must cancel an appointment, give the spa as much advance notice as possible. Approximately 24 hours' notice is minimum to cancel a single service, and 48 hours or more is usually required for a package of

services.

Attire Most people come to our day spas in very casual attire-something they can easily slip off and put away in small lockers. If modesty is an issue, call the spa in advance to find out its policies and suggestions. Some treatments can be done while you're fully clothed, but others (such as hydrotherapy) are best received in the nude. Facilities such as the sauna and the whirlpool may be enjoyed either in a bathing suit or au naturel. There are always towels and usually robes and slippers provided during your visit.

Jewelry If possible, leave your jewelry at home as you will not need it for your day spa visit. If however, you have brought valuables, make certain that they are securely locked in your locker or in a safety deposit box. If you choose instead to take them with you to your treatment, be mindful of not leaving them behind or in a robe pocket

Communicating your preferences All aspects of treatment can usually be modified to your taste: amount of light, kind (or absence) of music, room temperature, and whether or not you choose to have a conversation or enjoy the treatment in silence. If you want the therapist to go deeper or be gentler, let him or her know. Also, feel free to ask questions. Your therapist will appreciate knowing your thoughts and clarifying any issues you may have. If any part of your experience is unsatisfactory, first tell the therapist. If the response isn't helpful, ask to speak to a supervisor.

Medical conditions If you have any type of medical condition, mention it when you book your appointment. Certain treatments may not be advisable for you. Also, before your treatment begins, let your therapist or aesthetician know of any medical concerns. Tell the technician if you're wearing contact lenses before you have a facial.

Nudity issues It is never required that you are unclothed in front of anyone in a day spa. There are places where a person can change and towels and robes are generally provided so that you can keep continually covered. Therapists are generally well trained in the "art of draping" which means that they leave the treatment room while you get under the sheet on the massage table, and they keep you covered at all times except for the area of the body they are massaging. They also leave the treatment room before you get up from the table. If you feel more comfortable, it is also possible for you to wear a swimsuit during your treatment and in Jacuzzi or saunas.

Shaving If you must shave, do so at least two hours before your scheduled appointment, particularly if you're a man receiving a facial or a woman receiving any kind of scheduled bodywork.

Sun and spa going Try to avoid the sun on the day of treatment and, in some cases, the day after.

Eating and drinking Try not to eat for at least an hour before a treatment, and avoid the consumption of alcohol on the day of a treatment. Drink plenty of water before and afterward, especially if heat therapies, such as a sauna or the steam room, are part of your day spa experience.

Gratuities In general, gratuities are not included in the price of the service but accepted. Between 15 and 20 percent for each person who gave you a service is customary, but you may of course leave more or less, depending on the quality of the service. It's easiest to leave the tip at the reception desk when you pay your bill rather than giving it directly to the therapist.

Using shared facilities Before entering a soaking pool, a swimming pool, or a whirlpool, you will want to shower. When enjoying the sauna or steam, always sit on your towel and wear the plastic shoes provided by the spa. Women should not shave their legs in the steam room.

Cell phones Because the day spa environment is supposed to be a tranquil and stress-reducing experience, it's best to leave cell phones and pagers at home or turn them off before entering the day spa.

Children Children are generally not allowed so that the day spa ambiance remains as relaxing as possible. Teens may be accommodated for certain services or at certain times over the age of 16 unless accompanied by an adult.

Socializing When in the relaxation room and elsewhere in the day spa, be mindful of others. Keep conversations at a low volume.