



YOUR **AT-HOME SPA** THE ULTIMATE RESPITE

Quick, effortless spa re-creation:
the attitude, the ambiance and the accessories

by **kara** kurylłowicz



“ Always select outstanding products, from treatments to lotions to towels and robes, then dedicate them exclusively to your at-home spa days. ”



Holidays can heal – mind, body and soul – but when we’re juggling work, life and family commitments, taking even a half-day off, let alone an entire week, can seem impossible.

Fortunately, many of us find that several hours of uninterrupted tranquility can recharge and revitalize, working wonders to soothe ragged spirits.

We know that spa time can be a superb investment in one’s self. But the effort it takes to carve out even a half-day of me-time, combined with the jarring return to reality as we pull clothes back on to battle traffic, can undo some of that hard-won serenity.

Now, imagine enjoying a spa session in the comfort of your own home, where you know the transition from tub or massage table to garden hammock or fireside couch will be truly seamless.

Believe it or not, an at-home spa session can be the ultimate respite and Upscale Living is here to help you recreate much of that sanctuary-like ambiance in the comfort of your own home.

Your first spa strategy is simple. Carefully consider your home’s bathrooms. Which one is the most likely to give you several hours of uninterrupted bliss? In other words, select the bathroom that the rest of the family is least likely to use due to location, size or amenities. Now get in there and hide or relocate the accoutrements of daily grooming to better showcase decorative accessories.

Carefully consider your home’s bathrooms. Which one is the most likely to give you several hours of uninterrupted bliss?

“Before you can declutter your mind and soul you need to streamline your physical space and highlight the sensual and aesthetically pleasing,” says Lori Molnar, an interior designer with offices in Calgary and Toronto.

EXCLUSIVELY FOR YOU

Always select outstanding products, from treatments to lotions to towels and robes, then dedicate them exclusively to your at-home spa days. Go with a particular family of scents and the colour palette that really speaks to you. It’s one more way of setting your special me-time

apart from your daily routine. This is all about you and over-the-top luxury!

Stock up on the best possible bath salts, oils, lotions and skin treatments, but remember that some massage therapists and estheticians will do home visits – the definitive upscale pleasure.

SPA STAPLES

The extras, such as gel-filled eye-masks/shields, plush bathrobes, soft slippers and cushy towels, really do make a difference.

For the best feel and maximum absorbency, natural fibres such as cotton and bamboo blends are the only option, with the bamboo offering a silk- or cashmere-like softness. Invest in quality pre-shrunk towels to be sure they don’t pill or shrink.

Many of us associate brilliantly white towels, robes and slippers with our preferred spas, but you might want to select your at-home accessories in your favourite hue(s) to further personalize the experience.

To enjoy toasty towels on cool days, standalone, plug-in towel warmers can really deliver.

Open-toed slippers, terrycloth or Asian





“...some massage therapists and estheticians will do home visits – the definitive upscale pleasure.”



seagrass, may be best right after a pedicure, but consider fleece or sheepskin if cozy toes are your ultimate goal. Heated slippers?! Yes, they're out there but despite the inherent benefits, they can be a little less than elegant.

Whether you're reading or sipping your favourite wine while soaking in the tub, a practical bath caddy and plump pillow up the comfort factor. Many caddies can expand or contract to fit your tub and offer space specifically for books or magazines, candles and beverages.

A rain or twinned shower head that offers a variety of sprays can be the perfect finishing touch as you rinse off after your super soak.

A beautifully upholstered chair or even a cushioned stool makes drying off infinitely more comfortable and relaxing.

JUST A LITTLE LIGHT

Install a dimmer switch to select the light level best suited to the activity, whether it's losing yourself in a novel, the latest issue of Upscale Living or simply being in the moment.

Consider unscented beeswax or soy-based candles, which are better for the environment

and for you, last longer and won't compete with the scents emanating from your flowers, bath salts, bubble baths and lotions. Salt rock lamps and a variety of wall sconces can also enhance the spa-like atmosphere.

Bring nature to you with a simple, elegant vase featuring a single stem or lush bunches of flowers.

SOUND

In your own home, you decide: music, the sound of nature or silence. Unplug the phone, turn the ringer down/off and if necessary, invest in earplugs. If you don't have a built-in sound system, be sure your unit is securely and strategically positioned for safety's sake.

THE ADDED TOUCHES

Bring nature to you with a simple, elegant vase featuring a single stem or lush bunches of flowers. With guidance from your florist, rely on your own senses to select the scents, colours and shapes you find most pleasing. Take a hint from aromatherapy and focus on what specific flowers and herbs can do for you.

Most of us find a lengthy soak in hot, scented

water incredibly relaxing, but don't forget to rehydrate. Find and fill an attractive pitcher or carafe with herbal tea or water, flavoured and scented with fresh herbs and/or fruits. Whole strawberries with a few squares of exquisite chocolate, pineapple slices sprinkled with freshly crushed mint or tiny perfect cookies are the perfect post-spa treat.

Finally, if you can't find a Do-Not-Disturb sign at your local bath boutique or novelty store, consider having one made with the message that's most appropriate. Spa In Session, Me Time, Mom at Rest, Executive Recharging... might fit or you can write your own.

Now – take that sign, hang it on the door of your newly created “personal spa”, enter, lock the door and retreat into your at-home sanctuary.

Thanks to: Lori M Design, Calgary; Splish Splash Bath Boutique, Vancouver; The Royal Flush Bath Boutique and Plumbing Showroom, Calgary.