

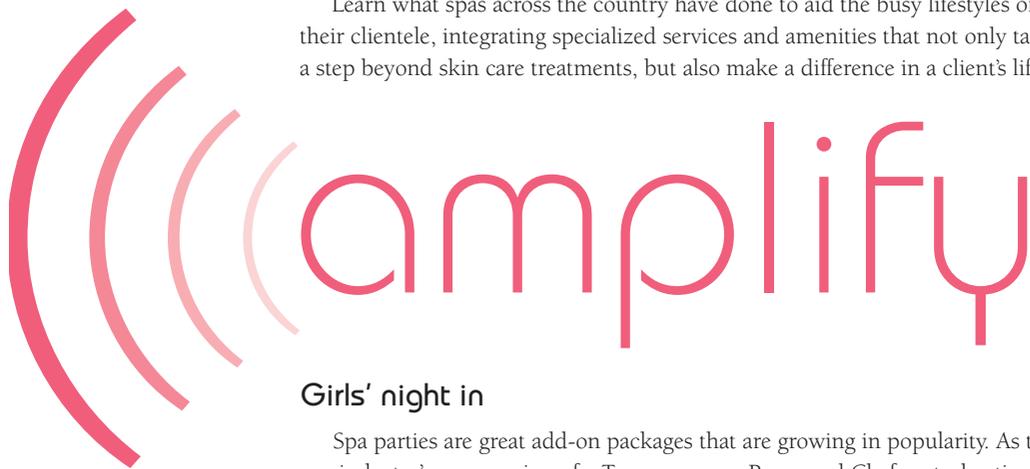
by kate hamilton

Spas across the country have made significant efforts to supply unique niche offerings in an ever-growing industry. Differentiation is of peak importance when creating an environment that is not only a getaway from daily stresses, but also a flexible retreat that meets the varied needs of a client.

Providing unique, specialized services to clientele can set a spa above its competition. Whether simply offering a take-home gift or refreshments during a service, going that extra mile leaves a lasting impression. Even more impressive is presenting services that benefit the client in substantial ways.

Adding to the comfort and relaxation experience of a client can be as simple as providing day care at a spa facility, assisting the busy mom with children in tow. Custom tailoring and shoe services support the hardworking businessperson attempting to fit a spa treatment into their busy day. A variety of options can take a spa from a treatment supplier to a complete life-enhancing experience.

Learn what spas across the country have done to aid the busy lifestyles of their clientele, integrating specialized services and amenities that not only take a step beyond skin care treatments, but also make a difference in a client's life.



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### Girls' night in

Spa parties are great add-on packages that are growing in popularity. As the spa industry's own version of a Tupperware or Pampered Chef party, hosting themed gatherings in a home environment can be fun for the client, as well as financially beneficial to the spa. Occasions for parties can include birthdays, graduations, anniversaries, work promotions, bridal parties and baby showers; or they can be thrown "just because."

San Diego's Puur Spa offers its Mobile Spa Service where qualified, licensed spa professionals educate clients about products and skin care in the comfort of their own homes. Owner Kirstina Schuff created a one-stop shopping experience that brings the spa directly to clients. "People seem to have less time to devote to themselves, but, at the same time, they are more educated and more open to the idea of preventive wellness care, inside and out," she says.

Adding mobile services to an existing spa's menu can be fairly easy. Schuff



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# spa amenities

offers information and consultation on providing these services, as well as hosting spa parties and corporate events. “The determining factor in a spa’s success is most importantly marketing and advertising these services to new clients, as well as existing ones,” she says. “Spas that aren’t offering these services really are missing out on entire groups of people that, for some reason or another, can’t make it to the spa.”

## Ask Mr. Belvedere

Empowering the front desk and reception area with concierge authority can add an air of convenience for your clientele. Anticipate a client’s needs, and offer to take care of those errands personally. Hartsdale, New York-based spa Enhance Face & Body Spa provides such services to its clients. “We commonly make restaurant reservations, run errands such as

picking up grocery items from the supermarket, send flowers and fruit baskets on clients’ behalf, and make doctor appointments,” says co-owner Bonnie Hagen.

## Tots in tow

A day packed with work and errands leaves little room for fitting in a spa treatment, especially for clients with kids. Finding day care for an hour can become complicated and expensive. Integrating a day care facility with a spa can encourage client visits that otherwise would be impossible.

At Grand Traverse Resort and Spa in Acme, Michigan, a licensed day care facility is located conveniently across the hall from the spa. Members, clients and employees are welcome to utilize the on-site child care. “Our members and clients enjoy this, as it allows them to attend functions while their children remain

on-site,” says Dawn Pater, spa director. “Our licensed day care facility allows clients to relax and enjoy their treatments.”

### Hooked up

Providing Internet kiosks or Wi-Fi, wireless networking, capabilities is another convenience perfect for busy clients. A cyber café can be constructed easily by providing a client-accessible computer with Internet access. Business professionals, travelers and clients who are pressed for time can conduct their business while lounging in a relaxing spa environment. More Internet-savvy clients, such as teens and twentysomethings, also will appreciate the increase in technology-friendly options. Seventeen Studio•Spa•Salon in Plano, Texas, offers a complete cyber café and interactive kiosks that target the specific needs of its teen clientele.

### Head to toe

Clients in the hectic corporate world have little time to waste and prefer one-stop shopping to complete their personal care needs. Adding custom tailoring and shoe services can mean longer



spa treatments with one less errand to run. As part of its 50-minute Express Yourself package, The Nob Hill Spa in San Francisco will buff a client's shoes, leather handbag or briefcase, and steam their suit or outfit. “We serve a busy clientele, many of whom are professional women and men, not just the luxury traveler segment,” says Jenean LaRoche, spa director. “We wanted to add that special touch, and time is a commodity that many of us lack.”

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John Allan's Club in New York City offers custom tailoring and shoe services, including shoeshines, shoe repairs, golf shoe cleaning and golf shoe spike replacement. The spa's management believes these conveniences not only contribute to the service atmosphere, but also complete the style and look of each client. "This is yet another service we offer," says Brian Riordan, director of marketing and business development.

### Teen time

Targeting a young clientele potentially can establish loyal, lifelong clients who enjoy a beneficial relationship with a spa. According to The International SPA Association (ISPA), spa-going youths are becoming more prevalent. The ISPA 2004 *Consumer Trends Report* indicates that there is strong evidence that teenagers are now highly disposed to going to day spas for services they once went to nail and beauty salons exclusively to

receive. Offering services to the younger crowd keeps children accompanying their parents busy and allows mom to relax during her service, knowing her child isn't causing a disturbance or becoming bored.

Anna Pamula, owner of Renu Day Spa in Deerfield, Illinois, saw a need for this add-on more than three years ago. Her clientele increasingly brought kids in with them while they received their services. Now, the spa offers acne control, manicures and hair removal specifically for teens and kids.

In addition to teen and preteen spa services, The Spa at Four Seasons Resort Scottsdale at Troon North in Scottsdale, Arizona, has created teen-oriented fitness programs, including Hatha Yoga, Cardio Obstacle and Stretch. Young clients work with a certified fitness instructor on stretches, exercises and games. The programs were designed to accommodate both children and their parents. "Young clients can receive a bit of pampering while their parents receive more 'adult' treatments," says Kim Cole, public relations manager. "These programs serve a niche for adults looking to spend time with their family, but still enjoy the relaxation of the spa."

### Add it on

Offering unique services can take your spa up a notch. Going above and beyond not only will wow clientele, but set the spa apart from the competition. Integrate some of these additional services, and see how your clients respond. Of course, not every add-on will meet the special needs of each client. However, continuing to utilize client feedback will encourage a dialogue, foster professional relationships and provide important insight on what works best. ■



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