



As the owner of one of the largest female-operated companies in Southern India, Ani Miryala comes from a long line of skin care professionals. With her three sisters, she has brought the Indian principles of ayurveda and herbal treatments to the United States. Anoo's Skin Retreat Herbal Day Spa, in Boca Raton, Florida, specializes in all-natural products and treatments, and is the 10th spa opened by her family and the first in the United States.

Following in the footsteps of family tradition—her uncles are ayurvedic doctors—Miryala began helping at the family beauty school in India, learning the healing secrets and native skin care therapies. Shortly afterward, she received her license at age 13. "I got my license when I was very young—India has no age limit on licenses for skin care," Miryala notes.

In 1984, after five years of intense research into India's ancient beauty practices, the sisters launched their first spa that featured unique herbal treatments. The facility's appeal and popularity escalated throughout the years, and the concept chain was expanded to nine locations and a manufacturing plant in India—substantial growth for a company with modest backyard beginnings where the family would harvest the herbs themselves.

In 1995, Miryala left India and followed her physician husband, Vinod, to the United States, where she earned her esthetic license in New York

and then Florida. She then spent a year working at a spa before deciding to open her own in 2000. Now, Anoo's 2,000-square-foot facility services 60 clients a day with body massage and wraps, facials, manicures and pedicures, ancient scalp treatments and laser services. The treatments utilize 22 specially

selected Indian herbs, all grown organically, and harvested and processed without pesticides for the purest form of product available. "From the beginning, our company has specialized in organic treatments," says Miryala.

Mint, sandalwood and orange peel powder are only a few of the herbs in Anoo's self-formulated product line. Lemon peel powder makes a great exfoliation method, and tulsi—a native Indian plant—contains antibacterial properties and is believed to help ward off infections and colds. Miryala's family also capitalized on the ingredients that Indian kings and queens applied to their skin, and incorporated fruits and vegetables known for their healthful qualities.

Anoo's Indian philosophy offers a unique perspective for Miryala's clientele. Treatments are all natural and organic, and don't involve abrasive machines, creating a very relaxing,

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my name is

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Boca Raton, Florida

results-oriented menu. Miryala notes that many clients will travel a distance to get to the spa. "It's really nice to have that appeal," she says. "You will be successful if you do something different than your competition."

Miryala believes that organic treatments can dramatically boost the profit margin of a spa. "Spa owners could increase their revenue by 20-30% by introducing and marketing organic ayurvedic skin and body spa treatments," she says. "Ayurvedic treatments can help prevent skin problems and infections by removing body heat created by age and stress."

Miryala continues to remain active in the industry, teaching facial, body treatment and massage seminars. She also has developed step-by-step videos on facial and massage techniques. In the future, she hopes to continue educating estheticians on the benefits of natural, organic skin care by opening a school and carrying on her family's tradition. "Without my sisters' support in India, I wouldn't be able to do all that I do," she concludes. X

