

# Healing

*lifestyles & spas*

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## all things new & natural

# GREENER Travels



Are you looking for an eco-adventure in Belize? How about a calming escape to Europe where you can trust that your visit doesn't impact the earth in a harmful way? The online company, [www.manaca.com](http://www.manaca.com), has taken the guesswork out of eco-traveling. Instead of trusting that a lodge that claims to be eco-friendly really is, you can visit their site, find your dream destination, and then sift through the eco-properties that have passed their eco-assessment and have taken the Responsible Tourism Pledge. Each tour operator, lodge, spa, and hotel is evaluated on food, education, community, fragile sites, and construction, ensuring their quality and authenticity. In the mood for a low-emission vehicle while traveling? Manaca can help with that too. For more information visit [www.manaca.com](http://www.manaca.com)



—M.B.S.

## Raise the Bar



Move over yoga, step aside pilates, for a new total-body-toning trend is emerging. Combining dance, yoga, isometrics and strength training, The Bar Method ([barmethod.com](http://barmethod.com)) has raised the bar for all other fitness classes. This budding exercise craze is trimming, tightening, sculpting, and stretching bodies across the country with controlled movements. As you watch your body transform, you will be thrilled to do away with copious exercise contraptions, finally get out of downward dog and instead simply grab a ballet barre or even a kitchen counter. But hold on for dear life, because your muscles will be trembling with exhaustion and after fifty



repetitions you will only be able to lift your leg that "one last time" out of sheer will. A few sessions later, you will begin to notice your butt lifting and your waist tightening. Soon your body will be taut, your shape svelte, your confidence sky high, and you won't even need to utter "om."

—Laurel House-Ng

## Give a Gift that Lasts

Sometimes the gifts that are the most exciting are the ones that keep on giving. Green Mountain Coffee Roasters offers several coffee and provisions gift packages that deliver an enticing gift every month to the recipient. With the Coffee and Treats gift, the recipient (or yourself if you choose!) will receive a pound of coffee each month (many of their coffees are fair trade and certified organic) along with goodies like chocolate biscotti, Vermont maple syrup, or mini peppermint pillows. For more information call (800) 223-6768 or visit [www.GreenMountainCoffee.com](http://www.GreenMountainCoffee.com).

With Allison's Gourmet cookies and brownies you can send a package of home-baked sweetness—all products are vegan and 100% organic—to those on your list who don't have time to do the baking themselves. Allison's Gourmet has a brownie of the month club as well as a cookie of the month club, featuring flavors like Pumpkin Spice, Vanilla Almond, and my favorite Double Chocolate Chunk! For more information call (800) 361-8292 or visit [www.AllisonsGourmet.com](http://www.AllisonsGourmet.com).

If you're looking for gift ideas that keep on giving, look no further than Unicef or Ten Thousand Villages. Unicef's unique cards and gifts provide children around the world with better healthcare, nutrition, water, education, and more. With each item that you purchase you're giving necessary funds to children in need. The cards are beautifully made, and the gifts include everything from candles and t-shirts to stationery, pillow covers, and story books. For more information call (800) 553-1200 or visit [www.unicefusa.org](http://www.unicefusa.org).

Ten Thousand Villages unique gift basket includes Divine milk and dark chocolate bars, an angel ornament from SERRV International, organic hot cocoa mix from Equal Exchange, and potholders from MarketPlace—all beautifully displayed in a bread basket. With this gift, you'll be supporting Ten Thousand Villages which provides fair income to artisans in more than thirty countries, SERRV International which promotes economic progress in thirty countries by marketing local artisans handicraft, Equal Exchange a cooperative dedicated to fair trade, and MarketPlace: Handwork of India, which assists women in India with economic development. For more information on this gift and others, please contact (717) 859-8100 or visit [www.tenthousandvillages.com](http://www.tenthousandvillages.com).

## To Your Health

WINE AFICIONADOS ADOPTED THE 100-POINT scale rating wine for taste, but a new publication applies the same scale to rank wine's healthful characteristics. Each quarter, Truth in Wine sends thirty wines to an independent laboratory for content analysis. Its premier issue focused on popular grocery store wines, analyzing samples for components including calories, sugars, carbohydrates, minerals, alcohol, and antioxidants such as polyphenols and resveratrol. Among its findings: wines with higher alcohol had the least carbs; white wines contained more sulfites; and overall the red wines tested had more antioxidants and minerals. Lower-sugar wines earned



higher overall rankings; Columbia Crest Merlot/Cabernet and Woodbridge Chardonnay topped the list with 90-point rankings. Surprisingly, every wine tested significantly overstated alcohol content. (While thirty wines is a small sample, time will tell if the first issue's findings merit broader conclusions.) As news continues to unfold about the health benefits of wine, the newsletter provides a way for health-conscious wine-lovers to make more informed choices in buying wine with the beneficial qualities they seek. For a subscription or more information, call (866) TRUTH-WN or visit [www.truthinwine.com](http://www.truthinwine.com)

—Bess J.M. Hochstein

## Spa Day LA

**H**aving a spa treatment makes you want to share the good feeling. With Spa Day LA on November 12, 2003, Southern California spa-lovers can be good to themselves and do something nice for others at the same time. On that day, participating spas will donate 20 percent of their sales from spa treatments and gift certificates to Aid For AIDS (AFA).

This nonprofit organization is unusual in that it provides direct financial assistance to people living with HIV and AIDS who are disabled and living below the poverty line. Checks are made out directly to whoever is owed, assuring that funds are being used properly and eliminating stress for the people in need.

"Our mission is simple," says AFA. "Keep a roof over their heads and the lights on. AFA helps people by paying for the necessities of life—housing, utilities, health insurance premiums, transportation, medications, and nutritional supplements." So far, AFA has assisted more than 11,000 men, women, and children with over \$13,000,000 in gifts. Organizers hope to make this an annual event to help people in more cities across the nation.

On November 12, get a massage, have a hydrotherapy bath, relax with a facial: Take care of yourself on this special day, and think ahead to the holidays: What better present can you give than making friends and loved ones feel good? Gift certificates purchased that day will include a card indicating that 20 percent of the proceeds go to AFA. Spas will offer raffle tickets for great prizes: a five-night stay in French Polynesia, one at Sheraton Hotel Tahiti, and four in an overwater bungalow at Sheraton Moorea, plus a spa treatment at each; a night at Le Merigot Beach Hotel & Spa in Santa Monica, with a spa treatment; and a one-day Wardrobe Clarification with Visual Therapy's Creative Director Jesse Garza, renowned image consultant.

The ultimate gift is helping others who are unable to help themselves. For more information and to find participating spas and salons near you, visit [www.spadayla.org](http://www.spadayla.org) or [www.healinglifestyles.com](http://www.healinglifestyles.com) or call (323) 656-1107. For more information on Aid for AIDS visit [www.aidforaids.net](http://www.aidforaids.net).

## MASSAGE BY THE NUMBERS

There are between 260,000 and 290,000 massage therapists in the United States.

In 2002, Americans made an estimated 114 million visits to massage therapists.

That means each therapist could have performed as many as 438 massages last year!

Approximately 18 percent of American adults had a massage in the past year.

People who seek massage therapy from a trained professional average seven massages per year.

"Health concerns" is the most common reason for having a professional massage. Stress relief and relaxation is second.

The most popularly used massage technique is Swedish massage. Deep tissue is second.

Statistics courtesy of American Massage Therapy Association. —Leslie Gilbert Elman

## Karma for Kids

There's still time to register for Karma for Kids, a fundraiser that helps children with cancer through the practice of Yoga. Until December 1st, yogis around the country are pledging to complete 15, 30, 60, or 90 yoga classes to raise a minimum of \$1000 for Camp Okizu in northern California and Camp Adventure on New York's Long Island. Every summer and fall, the camps invite children with cancer, their siblings and families to enjoy traditional activities like swimming, talent shows, and nature hikes in a safe, welcoming environment where campers can make friends and build self-confidence. Upon registering, K4K participants receive a "good karma" card to help them keep track of classes attended, which can be done at any studio or even at home (on the honor system). Registrants are also invited to social events and classes at sponsoring studios, restaurants, and clubs, which makes it easy to explore new styles of yoga, try out different instructors, and meet other activists. The top fundraiser will even win a cruise for two to a tropical destination—which is almost as exciting as enhancing one's own physical and spiritual well-being while making a positive change in a child's life. Find out more and register by November 15th at [www.karmaforkids.com](http://www.karmaforkids.com).

—Audrey D. Brashich

## A Good Night's Sleep Guaranteed

Packing a pillow in order to get a good night's sleep when traveling can be quite the bulky inconvenience. In the "city that never sleeps," leave your pillow at home because getting some quality shut eye will not be an issue. The Benjamin Hotel, in Manhattan, New York, offers a money-back guarantee that you will sleep well. In fact, they are so dedicated to this promise that they have created a Sleep Concierge fully stocked with pillows, milk and cookies, massage therapists, and white noise

machines available around the clock. With eleven types of pillows to choose from, ranging from down and buckwheat to snore-no-more and magnetic therapy, together with specially designed mattresses, you may never want to return to your own bed. Thankfully, The Benjamin Hotel has considered this contingency and offers your favorite pillow or mattress for purchase. Who would have thought that thousands of people would shove their hotel pillows into their suitcases and ship their mattresses home? Isn't it supposed to be the other way around?

—Laurel House-Ng

## ON YOUR TOES

Marie Bernat believes your past and future are written on your toes. At the end of the multi-therapy Perscentology treatment, she takes a close look: Those on your left foot supposedly tell your spiritual destiny, and the ones on the right reveal what you are doing with your life. Bernat, spa director and therapist at CopperWynd Resort & Club in Fountain Hills, Arizona, says, "Toe reading works on your personal perception, not necessarily how others may see your life. It's a tool to take stock of your personal issues, and using the awareness to change."

The 75-minute session starts with a relaxing spray of locally blended mint and lavender on the massage table. Exfoliating with a dry brush prepares you for an herbal body splash of geranium, ginseng, and ginkgo biloba for cleansing. The music from the otherworldly CD is said to balance the heart chakra, and muscles follow suit with an application of warm aromatherapy oil and hot stone massage. During the last half-hour, she does some reflexology to check out organs and discuss overall physical issues, and then comes the toe reading.

Bernat says the shape of your toes and the lines on top all indicate something about your life, attitude, and intuition. The big toe denotes your purpose and direction, the next one reflects how you communicate, and the next tells about your anger and passion. Next to the last is all about your relationships and addictions, and the pinkie is your security toe. For example, if your littlest toe turns down like a cat's claw digging into the rug, you probably have security issues—physical, emotional, or financial. Does your big toe stand apart or lean into its neighbor? You might want to examine your feelings about independence and interdependence. Maybe you'll change your destiny. "You can use self-massage and spacers between your toes to influence your future," says Bernat. For more information, call (877) 707-7760 or visit [www.copperwynd.com](http://www.copperwynd.com).

—Judith Lazarus

## Dental Spas Leave Patients Smiling

Fear of the dentist may be a thing of the past thanks to the budding trend of dental spas. In 1986, Lorin Berland, DDS opened the first Dallas Dental spa, offering massage, aromatherapy, and paraffin hand-wax treatments to his patients. Today, at Atlanta Center for Cosmetic Dentistry, dental patients sit in "Dental Zen Chairs," sending soothing sound waves from their neck to toes.

At Scarsdale Dental Spa in New York, patients are immediately relaxed when offered a beverage choice in an entry room with a calming waterfall and meditative music.

Dentists here see patients in doorless rooms with curved softly-colored walls, no cabinetry, and expansive windows. Lighting is dim and recessed. Patients can distract themselves by listening to music on headsets or watching DVD movies or DirectTV on overhead plasma TV screens.

If the patient still feels anxious at a dental spa, he can receive a chairside neck, foot, or hand massage. Or, a more complete massage in a relaxation room filled with lavender burning candles. "In the last few years," comments Kimberly Harms, DDS, of Riversedge Dental Practice, in Farmington, Minnesota, "licensed masseuses have been brought into the dental offices. Consequently, patients are more relaxed, more willing to visit the dentist," says Dr. Harms whose practice includes warm moist towels and virtual reality glasses. "The more comfortable the person is, the better they take care of their teeth, and the more they'll get their dental problems taken care of." The American Dental Association strongly recommends stress reduction techniques in dental offices, especially for patients with anxiety problems or known heart disease.

Although spa dentistry sounds expensive, practitioners claim they don't charge more than the average dentist without perks. A basic cleaning at a Chicago dental spa costs about \$80, more (\$125) in New York. For the nearest dental spa near you, contact your local Dental Society.

—Wesley Davidson

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