

enjoying an at-home spa day

Are you feeling tense, anxious or overwhelmed? Would you like to feel more joy, calm and confidence? If so, then consider making a 1-day commitment to personal wellness with an at-home spa experience. Rejuvenate yourself with these spa tricks of the trade from Mary Monroe, a Los-Angeles-based health and spa writer.

1

Planning to Relax

How do you get started? These guidelines will help you create your overall spa day plan:

- Don't settle for less by just planning to do a skin treatment or throwing in a yoga videotape. For a fully rejuvenating experience, include all four elements of spa living into your day: meditation/relaxation, body care, fitness and healthy nutrition.
- "Shop" around your house for what you need to turn your home into a spa sanctuary: Gather scents and oils, candles, music, favorite healthy foods, a journal, and meditation or inspirational books.
- Don't just "let it happen." Plan your day in advance: What will you eat to feel healthy? What activities will you include? What relaxation or meditation will you perform?
- Plan to incorporate nature into your day, whether that means a walk in your favorite park or quiet time in your garden.
- Safeguard your solitude. Turn off phones, televisions, radios and computers.

2

Create Your Own Spa Treatments

There are many hair, face and body treatments, ranging from easy to elaborate, that you can make at

creating your spa day

Your spa day can be as simple or complex, short or long, as you like. (Even a spa half-day is better than none!) Phyllis Pilgrim, Rancho La Puerta's specialty weeks director and its former fitness director for nearly 20 years, suggests this at-home spa formula:

- Do 20 minutes of light weightlifting followed by 45 minutes of yoga (or as much of either form of exercise as feels right for your body).
- Give yourself a facial using a good-quality face cleanser, placing a cool pack over your eyes and relaxing for 15 minutes.
- Take a long shower with a salt scrub, rubbing your body in light circles with a loofah or washcloth, depending on your skin sensitivity.
- Eat light meals of fruit and juice, fresh salad with a wide variety of vegetables, cottage cheese, cranberries, nuts, sunflower seeds and a light dressing.
- Relax to classical or New Age music and use incense and fresh flowers to enhance the atmosphere.
- Try meditation or reflective activities, such as reading or journaling.

Your spa day should reflect your personal interests and needs. Is there a visualization tape you've been meaning to try or an emotional issue you would like to reflect on? Why not do it on your spa day?



home. For example, pineapple contains bromelain, a protein-digestive enzyme that helps rid skin of dead cells and dirt, counteracts histamines, has anti-inflammatory properties and acts as a mild astringent. Olive oil also has excellent healing properties and is a good source of vitamin E, which restores the skin's surface.

3

Eat Mindful, Healthy Spa Meals

The Marshall Plan, spa consultant to many of the world's leading spas and resorts, suggests these at-home spa meal tips from *The Spa Life at Home* by Margaret Pierpont and Diane Tegmeyer (Whitecap Books 1997):

Don't Skip Breakfast. If you're frantic, do as spa-goers do on their way to an early-morning hike—pack a bag with whole fruits, low-fat cheese, hard-boiled eggs or healthy granola.

Begin Lunch or Dinner by Eating Light Soups. They'll help fill you up so you won't overindulge in heavier foods. Also, keep fresh fruit and lots of water within reach throughout the day.

Eat Mindfully. Stop and think about what you are about to consume; slow down and try not to reach for more food before you've finished what's in your mouth. ■

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