

TIP:

You don't have to be afraid of body wraps. Even though you'll be in the nude, the therapist covers your body with strategically placed towels—no sensitive area is ever exposed.



spa escape

Our 10 favourite treatments
from Calgary's top spas
**BY LAURA PELLERINE, SALLY MACKINNON
AND RICHARD SAAD**

Leave behind your worries and relax in some of Calgary's best spas—we did. With more than 30 spas on the market, the choices can be overwhelming. To help you out, we've combed the city trying new and different spa sessions and have come up with a list of our favourites. We're sure you'll enjoy the results.

1. ROYAL BAMBOO MASSAGE - The Spa Ritual

Begin this treatment at one of Calgary's newest spas, by closing your eyes and allowing your senses to tell you what kind of aromatherapy your body needs: ginger helps with circulation and digestion, lavender for better relaxation and grapefruit/mint to refresh and energize. After this is chosen, the therapist glides, kneads and rolls warmed bamboo and rattan sticks along your entire body. This Asian-inspired massage is deeply therapeutic, and relieves built-up tension, improves circulation and lymphatic drainage. If you like a hot stone treatment, but wish you could get a deeper massage out of it, you'll especially enjoy this. Top it off with a blueberry matcha smoothie, or one of their signature teas, and then relax on one of their heated limestone chaises.

Length: 1 hr to 1 hr, 30 min **Price:** \$150 - \$210

2. AYURVEDIC TREATMENT - Riverside Spa

Before beginning this treatment, you're asked to fill out a questionnaire to determine your elemental constitution, known as your dosha. Once this, and your current state of health and mind are known, a specially trained therapist will decide what type of Abhyanga massage you'll receive (e.g. calming if you're stressed, energized if you're feeling lethargic). This method of massage varies slightly, in that the therapist uses steady, smooth movements to work warm, herb-infused oil deeply into the body. A Shirodhara is then set up to gently pour a continuous stream of warm herbal oil over the forehead—this is thought to integrate the mind with the body, and to create a deep sense of inner peace. Be aware: the oil does spread to your hair, but afterwards guests are encouraged to use their granite shower and eucalyptus steam room to further develop the effects from the treatment. Depending on your dosha, you should feel relaxed or energized for days after completing the session.

Length: 1 hr, 30 min to 2 hrs **Price:** \$185 - \$235

SPA FOR \$50 OR LESS

If your bank account is feeling the pinch, here's a list of spa treatments that will make you—and your wallet—feel better:

Detox Foot Bath \$50 at Inner Balance

Classic Massage \$40; make it a hot stone for \$10 more, at Dharma Studios

Pedicure including polish \$45 at Oraoxygen

Quickie Facial \$35 at Skoah

Avenue Manicure \$50 at Stillwater Spa

Milk Bath \$49 at Spa Europa

Relaxation Massage, 30 min for \$45 at Swirl Day Spa

French Manicure \$45 at Esthetica Salon & Spa

Intermezzo Petite Facial \$40 at Jadestone Spa

Cosmetic Application \$50 at Diva Salon Spa or EvelineCharles Salons & Spas

MASSAGE THERAPIST EXTRAORDINAIRE

Francis Cabucos has touched the lives of hundreds of people, and he's done it all as a 26-year-old registered massage therapist.

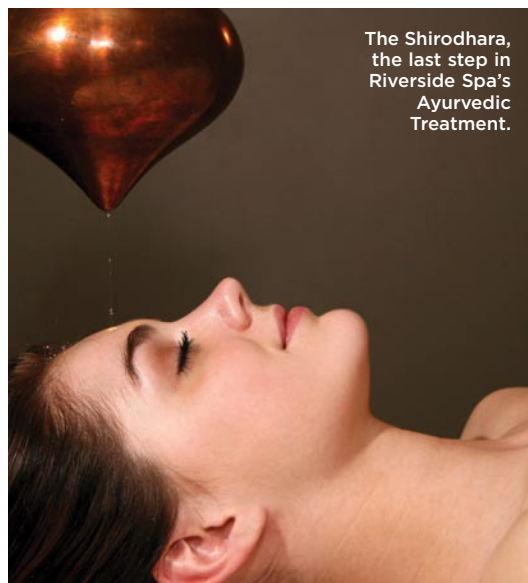
Six years ago, had Cabucos been asked what he wanted to do with his life, he would have been hard pressed to come up with an answer. He knew he wanted to help people, but while studying psychology and sociology at the University of Calgary, he didn't feel right. Something was still missing.

Everything changed when a continuing education brochure for massage therapy arrived in the mail. On a lark, he decided to give the program a shot.

During his time in school, Cabucos realized his training in social sciences would be an asset as a massage therapist. To Cabucos, massage wasn't just about applying the right physical pressure, it was about helping people mentally and emotionally. "I understood the connection between the massage and the therapy," he recalls.

After graduating, Cabucos got a job working for a cruise ship spa. For two years, Cabucos travelled the world while improving his skills as a massage therapist. He worked for months in Australia, Tasmania and New Zealand, before moving on to Japan, Malaysia, Korea, Vietnam and China. While docked in Japan, he learned Shiatsu, and in Australia he learned the art of healing stones from a person he refers to as "The Bohemian."

Arriving back to Calgary in 2007, he applied to Sante Spa. As one of the first medical spas in Canada, Sante Spa fit in with Cabucos's belief that massage therapy should be more than physical. He was hired almost immediately, and has been there ever since.



The Shirodhara, the last step in Riverside Spa's Ayurvedic Treatment.

helping to clear cellulite. Other health benefits include pain relief for muscles, arthritis, blood vessels and soft tissue injuries; weight loss (increased heart rate can burn 600 calories or more); a boosted immune system; and improved circulation. During your session you are able to choose which colour of light you'd like to be surrounded in: they vary in their benefits from creative stimulants (violet) to anxiety soothers (yellow). If you have a difficult time choosing, go for the colour rotating option.

Length: 30 min **Price:** \$25

4. WILD ROSE BODY WRAP - Sante Spa

The soothing scent of rosehips and calming cascades of water from a Vichy shower make the Wild Rose Body Wrap a truly sensory experience. The first step is a full-body exfoliation with rose seed scrub, followed by a

lengthy rinse under the Vichy shower. Next, the skin is massaged with organic rosehip oil—an antioxidant oil high in vitamin C that hydrates and soothes the skin. In order to harness the oil's full potential, the body is wrapped and warmed with a heating blanket, followed by a face and scalp massage. For the final 20 minutes, clients are left to relax in their warm cocoon, with low lighting and soothing ambient music. Afterwards, the skin is fragrant, refreshed and hydrated—a welcome change in the dry, high-altitude air of Calgary.

Length: 1 hr, 30 min **Price:** \$150

5. JUNO PEDICURE - Spa Europa

Referred to as a "facial for the feet," this pedicure is as luxurious as Spa Europa's décor of Roman columns and classical-period statuary. It begins with a soothing, hydro-therapeutic foot treatment and a gentle exfoliation up to the knee. A built-in lower back massager relaxes the rest of your body while a therapist applies a facial mask to your feet and lower legs, then treats your hands to a paraffin treatment. Once this is finished, your feet are massaged with hot stones, given a warm paraffin bath to seal in moisture, and then are wrapped in algae. It ends with your choice of a colourful nail polish application.

Length: 1 hr, 30 min **Price:** \$89

6. SERENITY BODY TREATMENT - Stillwater Spa

This soothing treatment begins with an herbal foot soak, complete with warmed stones. You're next treated to a full-body exfoliation using sea salt, and are then covered in a rose clay mud wrap that absorbs deep into the skin with the help of a heating blanket. While still wrapped up, enjoy a facial and scalp massage by your therapist, who also guides you through peaceful meditation. A Vichy shower gently washes away the clay and a pumpkin body butter is massaged into the body. This treatment is finished with a cup of calming herbal tea while you comfortably lounge in their tranquil Serenity Room.

Length: 1 hr, 30 min **Price:** \$210



—R.S.

DAY SPAS:

Aqua Terra Naturopathic

Medical Spa

1910 - 20 Ave NW, 403-282-4420

Danu Health Centre

849 - 1 Ave NE, 403-258-3268

Dharma Studios

601 - 14 Ave SW, 403-508-9921

Inner Balance

424 - 10 St NW, 403-670-6721

Jadestone Spa

908 - 17 Ave SW, 403-246-5244

LifeSpa Edgemont

7222 Edgemont Blvd NW,
403-257-4772

Newbury Spa

720 - 11 Ave SW, 403-265-7499

Oasis Wellness Centre & Spa

Lower lvl, 880 - 16 Ave SW,
403-216-2747

Oraoxygen

Calgary International Airport,
Departure Level, 403-717-3744

Rejuve Health & Wellness

(clinical spa)
320 - 10 St NW,
403-283-8686

Renovations: The Spa for Men

1000 Centre St N,
403-277-1110

Riverside Spa

110 Point McKay Cres NW,
403-270-7500

RnR Wellness The Spa

102 - 7 St SW, 403-244-9290

Sante Spa

508 - 24 Ave SW, 403-228-2772

Scantorini Spa & Wellness

615 - 3 Ave SW, 403-215-8455

The Spa At 5 by Renovations

5 Calgary Downtown Suites,
618 - 5 Ave SW, 403-298-4878

Spa Europa

1029 - 17 Ave SW, 403-229-1578

The Spa Ritual

106 Crowfoot Terr NW,
403-547-9558

Stillwater Spa

2nd lvl Hyatt Regency, 7 Ave and
Centre St SE, 403-537-4474

Swirl Day Spa

2nd lvl, 524 - 11 Ave SW,
403-228-3046

Tranquil Escape Day Spa

10 Discovery Ridge Hill SW,
403-225-3514

True Fitness, Spa & Wellness

5842 Burbank Rd SE, 403-255-3110

Vanity - A Boutique Spa

3518 Garrison Gate SW,
403-313-2023

SALON SPAS:

Cavabien Hair Studio & Day Spa

2049 - 42 Ave SW, 403-287-7009

Diva Salon Spa

Multiple locations, including
Chinook Centre, 403-301-0909

Elaments Salon & Day Spa

3409 - 20 St SW, 403-242-0104

Esthetica Salon & Spa

Multiple locations, including
Glenmore Landing,
1600 - 90 Ave SW, 403-252-2800

EvelineCharles Salons & Spas

Multiple locations, including
Southcentre, 403-571-5666

Kirei Salon & Spa

1107 - 17 Ave SW, 403-228-2150

Merle Norman Cosmetics & Day Spa

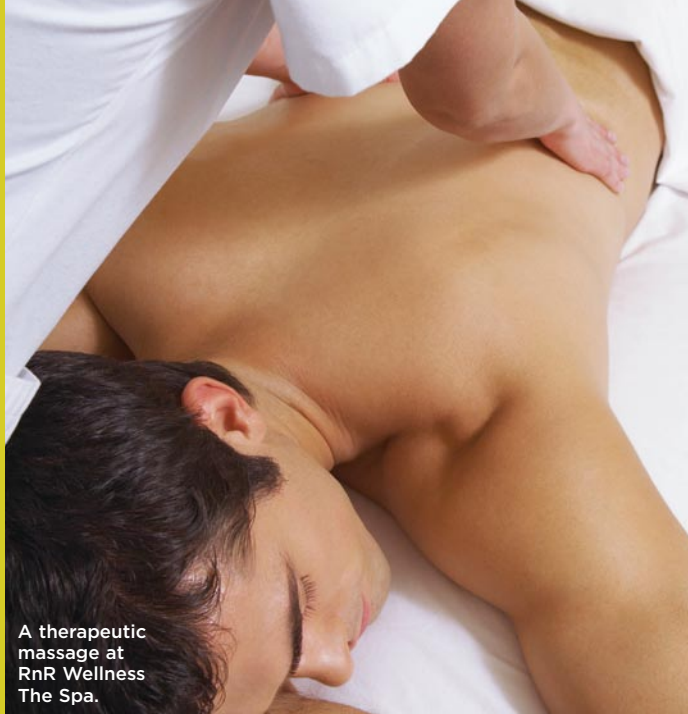
Multiple locations, including
Market Mall, 403-286-1451

Skoah (facials-only spa)

Chinook Centre, 403-203-0200

Swizzlesticks SalonSpa

1211 Kensington Rd NW,
403-270-7333



A therapeutic massage at RnR Wellness The Spa.

MANLY REPOSE

While thought to primarily be a woman's domain, spas are increasingly catering packages to suit the needs of men. More than ever before, spas are pampering their male guests by offering a variety of massage treatments, facials, and, yes, even pedicures. As early as two years ago, the International Spa Association (ISPA) reported that men comprised 31 per cent of spa patrons in 2006, up from 29 per cent in 2003. Here is a list of treatments in Calgary spas that are geared especially for men.

APOLLO MEN'S PACK

On Mondays, Spa Europa is dedicated to men, offering clients a combo that includes a two-hour, full-body massage and a European pedicure, for \$130.

SPORTS MASSAGE

At True Fitness, Spa & Wellness, the sports massage is perfect for sore muscles as a result of rigorous physical activity or chronic injury, \$85 for one hour or \$115 for an hour and a half.

MEN'S RECOVERY FACIAL

A soothing and rejuvenating treatment at Swizzlesticks SalonSpa that includes an intensive eye rejuvenation treatment, a scalp massage and a shoulder, neck and arm massage, \$139.

GENTLEMAN'S PARAFFIN PEDICURE

A full pedicure and foot soak in sweet birch and citrus oil, with cuticle management, an exfoliating massage, lower leg massage, and paraffin moisture application, \$85 at Riverside Spa.

MAN SPACE PACKAGE

This half-day, intensive treatment includes a 60-minute therapeutic massage, 15-minute steam detox, 60-minute facial, and an hour-and-a-half manicure and pedicure, \$269 at RnR Wellness The Spa.

WAXING

Men are the focus at Renovations: The Spa for Men. One of their most popular treatments is a hair removal body wax. After skin is thoroughly cleaned, a warm, scented wax is applied on the skin. A lotion application follows. Prices vary, \$15 - \$75. —R.S.

7. DETOXIFYING MOOR MUD BATH

EvelineCharles Salons and Spas

Mud baths are an ancient treatment, harking back to a time when spas were located next to thermal hot springs. In those days, mud baths were often a mixture of volcanic ash and water; today, the ingredient of choice is moor mud. At EvelineCharles, the mud is mixed with water in a European hydro tub, where clients are left to relax for 20 minutes. Moor mud is known as a natural detoxifier, relaxing the muscles and opening pores to minerals and nutrients. As you soak, calming music and the scent of pine create a serene refuge from the outside world. After the bath, EvelineCharles offers showers and a moisture application. This treatment is particularly recommended for sufferers of arthritis or muscle fatigue. Southcentre and Market Mall locations only. **Length:** 30 to 45 min **Price:** \$60

8. CARIBBEAN RITUAL - Swizzlesticks SalonSpa

This full-body ritual begins with a warm, self-heating, red-and-brown algae wrap that gets massaged onto the body to detoxify, stimulate lymphatic drainage and increase circulation. It then gets washed away by a multi-jetted shower, and a fine fruit and floral mist is applied to your whole body through the use of a Lucca (a device designed to pulverize hydrosol into a fine mist). Next up is a mini-facial with a cleansing, toning and moisture application and a scalp massage done with essential oils. Finally, the body is re-hydrated with mango and cocoa butter and the treatment ends with a foot massage. The smells are fresh and colourful, and you leave with your skin feeling soft and moisturized. **Length:** 1 hr, 30 min **Price:** \$159

9. SIGNATURE MANICURE - Oasis Wellness Centre & Spa

At 16,000 square feet, Calgary's largest spa has the space to really make you feel as if you've "gotten away from it all." This classic manicure begins with a soak in warmed lavender cream and is followed with a hand massage. Next, their professional team of estheticians gently groom, shape and smooth the nails before applying a colourful polish. Add \$10 to turn it into a hydrating paraffin manicure, which includes an application of lavender paraffin wax to your hands and wrists. If you've got the time, you can further unwind by doing a drop-in class at their yoga studio. **Length:** 40 min **Price:** \$53 (\$63 with paraffin)

10. CHOCOLATE SUGAR SCRUB - Scentorini Spa & Wellness

If chocolate uplifts your mood, this treatment is sure to brighten your day. This decadent scrub is performed in a pre-steamed Vichy shower room to help open your pores to better absorb the treatment. A combination of cocoa and sugar is used to exfoliate dead skin cells and clogged pores, leaving your skin bright and healthy looking. The scrub then gets gently washed off in the form of a mini massage from a multi-jetted Vichy shower. It completes with a light application of sweetly scented Chocolate Whip Cream body lotion to nourish the skin with willow and aloe. **Length:** 45 min to 1 hr **Price:** \$115

win!

Log on to where.ca/calgary/contests.htm and you could win a Soothing Botanical Facial from The Spa Ritual (90 minutes, \$135 value). This facial soothes and hydrates skin, reducing redness and hypersensitivity—perfect for a dry climate like Calgary's.