

Head to toe

When faced with a spa menu it can be daunting to know what to choose, luckily we've done some ground work for you



Universal Contour Wrap

BODY

Treatment in Question?

Universal Contour Wrap @ Buff Day Spa (€95)

What does it promise?

An easy way to lose inches from all over your body

How long does it last?

Ninety minutes in total, half an hour for measuring and then an hour for the wrap

What goes on?

Once I arrived I was shown into the relaxation room and was invited to sit and have some herbal tea. Once I got into the room my measurements were taken and I was wrapped in warm clay soaked bandages and left to lie down and relax while the clay solution got to work. The effect is that of a giant poultice. The treatment works by drawing out toxins from the fluid around the fat cells, whilst the bandaging technique works to compress and compact the soft fatty tissue, creating a smoother base over which the soft tissue lies. I of course, promptly fell asleep and the next thing I heard was a gentle knocking on the door! Once the clay and bandages were removed I was re-measured again and overall I had lost 9 inches from my chicken wings, upper back, abdomen, and thighs.

Does it deliver?

Yes, see above.

Any complaints?

If you get agitated lying around for long periods of time this treatment might not be for you as you are left to your own devices for almost an hour.

Overall impression?

I was very happy with the outcome and would recommend this treatment to anyone who wants to lose a couple of inches. I believe that a course of three gives you the best results so I will be back...

Contact Details:

Buff Day Spa, 52 South King Street, Dublin 2. For appointments, tel: 01 677 4624 or log onto www.thebuffdayspa.com

Tri-active Body Treatment



Treatment in Question?

Clarins Tri Active Body Treatment (from €67)

What does it promise?

Depending on the exact treatment recommended, the treatment can help sculpt and shape the body, it can help to firm up mature skin, or it can return moisture to dehydrated skin using the Clarin's range of professional products.

How long did the treatment last?

One hour

What goes on?

The therapist first examines your skin to see which treatment is most appropriate, focusing in particular on any problem areas, such as cellulite, water retention, dry skin, etc. The treatment is broken into three stages. The first is a gentle exfoliation using a liquid. The second is a luxurious masque massaged into the skin, covering every area from the neck downwards. For the last stage, extra special attention is given to any particular problem areas.

Does it deliver?

The treatment was very relaxing and left my skin feeling hydrated and soft. It would be particularly suited to those with problem areas as they would get the most from the treatment.

Any complaints?

Not a complaint as such but this treatment does include the bust and bum so perhaps it's not for the shy or body-conscious.

Overall impression?

Although it is very relaxing, this treatment is best suited to those with problem skin, mature skin, those looking to lose weight or with particular issues that need addressing such as water retention or cellulite.

Contact Details:

Clarins Counter and Beauty Rooms, House of Fraser, Dundrum Shopping Centre, Dublin 14. Tel: 01 299 1483

Chakra Balancing



Treatment in Question?

Chakra Balancing Treatment (€190 @ The Four Seasons Hotel)

What does it promise?

To restore a natural sense of well being by aligning your seven chakras and ensuring they're all in balance with each other, as well as deeply relaxing your body and mind.

How long did it last?

90 minutes

What goes on?

After the entire treatment and some general info about chakras was explained to me, a brief bout of kinesiology to check my chakras for balance was carried out. My therapist then massaged my body with warm oils before placing different crystals on chakra-relevant points on my body. This is done front and back and afterwards reflexology was performed on my feet.

Does it deliver?

The relaxing nature of this treatment is absolutely not in doubt, as to whether or not my chakras are more balanced I think that's a question it will take a few days to answer. However, I did leave feeling fantastic and had the best night's sleep.

Any complaints?

None at all.

Overall impression?

An amazing treatment. Sandra my therapist was incredibly knowledgeable without being preachy and was well aware that this is an unusual treatment. The facilities were impressive while the delivery of a ginger tea to the relaxation area after my treatment to help with the issues that were uncovered during my treatment was the icing on the cake.

Contact Details:

The Four Seasons Dublin, Simonscourt Road, Dublin 4. For spa appointment, tel: 01 655 4602.

HOLISTIC



Warm Heart Cocoon

Treatment in Question?

Mandala's Warm Heart Chakra Cocoon (€170)

What does it promise?

This treatment consists of an organic rose and almond sugar body scrub, organic essential rose oil facial massage, Shirodhara warm oil hair and scalp treatment and a hot stone and rose Quartz full body massage. It promises a mind, body and soul experience designed to soften and exfoliate your skin from head to toe! The treatment is finished off with a Signature Hot Stone and Rose Quartz Massage during which the energies from the stones promote a meditative and calm state, and open the heart helping to relax mind, body and soul.

How long does it last?

Two and a half hours

What goes on?

Once I had got changed and was ready I was taken to a treatment room where my therapist talked me through the treatment while giving me a relaxing foot wash. I was then given an all over body scrub which was just right for my very sensitive skin. I then had a shower in the private shower area in the treatment room. I returned to the bed and the therapist gave me a massage which worked the stress out of my muscles and was followed with a hot stone massage which was blissful. Then there was a facial with essential rose oil that was again gentle on my sensitive skin. Finally there was the Shirodhara mind and scalp treatment whereby hot oil is run through your hair from a container above your head. Once the treatment is done you have time to enjoy the relaxation area.

Does it deliver?

You leave the spa feeling like a new, utterly relaxed woman, with glowing skin and utterly relaxed.

Any complaints?

Not everyone will enjoy the hot oil hair and scalp treatment because it is quite a strange sensation, but it does leave your hair looking shiny and healthy looking. This is the kind of treatment you need an afternoon for, so leave enough time.

Overall impression

I loved it – you leave feeling super pampered and more relaxed than you can imagine and that's down to the expert staff and the overall feel of the spa.

Contact Details:

Mandala Day Spa, La Stampa Hotel, 35 Dawson Street, Dublin 2 Tel: 01 671 7099



Three week manicure

Treatment in Question?

3 Week Manicure @ Burgundy Beauty (€45)

What does it promise?

A professional polish that won't chip.

How long did the treatment last?

One hour

What goes on?

A standard manicure which saw my cuticles be removed and my nails filed down before the painting began. Basically a base coat was applied to my nails before two coats of my chosen colour were applied. The 'Burgundy Secret Top Coat' was then applied to ensure that my polish stayed glossy. Plus Burgundy Beauty has the ability to mix colours meaning you can get the exact shade you're after. The polish does need to be removed by a professional though so as not to damage the nail itself.

Does it deliver?

Absolutely, two weeks in and some serious housework later my polish remains chip and smudge free.

Any complaints?

The only complaint I have is that as your nail starts to grow the colour grows with it, but you can't argue with nature.

Overall impression?

I'm hooked! I chose a neutral colour and loved the feeling of having freshly painted nails without the fear of putting them in my pocket or into a sink full of bleach. Definitely something I'll look into again.

Contact Details:

Burgundy Beauty Salon, 14 The Cottage, Newtown Park Blackrock. For appointments, tel: 01 283 6281 or log onto www.burgundybeautysalon.wordpress.com



Xtreme Lashes

Treatment in Question?

Xtreme lashes @ Akina (€130)

What does it promise?

Beautiful luscious eyelashes that last 4-6 weeks

How long did the treatment last?

The whole process took 1 hour 45 minutes.

What goes on?

I lay on a bed under a blanket in a warm treatment room, my bottom eyelashes were separated from my top lashes and I lay with my eyes closed while the therapist applied individual lashes.

Does it deliver?

Absolutely, my eyelashes are longer and fuller while still looking natural. However, I didn't get the suggested length of time out of them.

Any complaints?

As the lashes are falling out there can be some trouble with the glue and they can look patchy – but that's to be expected.

Overall impression?

I am very happy with the results and the treatment is something I'd be very interested in keeping up

Contact Details:

Akina, Crow Street, Dublin 2. For appointments, tel: 01 474 8000



FACE



Oxygenating Facial

Treatment in Question?

Oxygenating facial using Germaine de Capuccini range @ Skinscape Beauty Therapy (€85)

What does it promise?

Plumped up fuller skin with a reduction in fine lines.

How long did the treatment last?

75 minutes

What goes on?

The usual cleansing, exfoliating and toning that you expect from a facial and then a mask was applied which remained on the skin for about 20 minutes.

Does it deliver?

As I often have flare ups or redness in my skin, I noticed that after the treatment my face was all the same colour – a rare treat. My skin also definitely looked fuller and more plumped and I felt that I looked younger.

Any complaints?

None at all – it was an enjoyable experience from start to finish.

Overall impression?

It was a very nice salon, well decorated, bright and spacious. I found the staff to be very friendly and knowledgeable. Overall the whole experience was very pleasant with great results.

Contact:

Skinscape Beauty Therapy, 14 Main Street, Blackrock, Co Dublin. For appointments, tel: 01 210 1817 or log onto www.skinscape.ie



CACI Skin Regenerating Facial

Treatment in Question?

CACI Skin Regeneration Facial (€110) at the Pink Beauty Boutique

How long did the treatment last?

75 minutes.

What does it promise?

This facial can be customised to each person's skin type so it can target specific concerns. It does all this through the CACI Ultra system by combining the effects from micro-dermabrasion, micro current, lymphatic drainage, light therapy and a collagen-based Hydro mask.

What goes on?

Firstly my therapist Kirstie cleansed my skin and then she did some micro-dermabrasion on my face. This basically takes away the dead surface of skin on my face and contrary to what I'd heard it didn't hurt at all. Then Kirstie performed some micro-current therapy on my skin called microlift which emits tiny electrical impulses to mirror the body's own natural bio electrical field. Don't be scared – it doesn't hurt. Just more of a light electrical tingling sensation. Then Kirstie did some tissue repair on my face called ETR, some light therapy, and afterwards performed some hydrating on my face which combines a silicone gel mask with micro-current rollers. Lastly she did some feathering which allows the skin to effectively absorb the products.

Does it deliver?

Yes – it definitely does. My skin was in great condition for up to three weeks afterwards. It felt clean, clear and it was blemish free. I also tend to get outbreaks of spots but I was spot free for three weeks which I couldn't believe. I also tend to get slightly dry skin and little patches of eczema around my forehead but again I didn't for almost three weeks.

Any complaints?

It's not a complaint, more of a gentle warning to women looking for a relaxing facial – this is not it! The use of the CACI system means that your skin is constantly being moved and gently prodded, it doesn't hurt but it's a tougher type of facial to give your skin the best results possible.

Overall impression

I was sceptical of this facial but I'm definitely a convert – I've never had a facial make my skin look so clear for so long.

Contact Details:

Pink Beauty Boutique, Main Street, Dundrum, Dublin 14. For appointment, tel: 01 215 7958



Intraceutical Facial

Treatment in Question?

Intraceutical Facial @ MEDICO (€150 per session but a course of 4 is €450)

What does it promise?

A non-invasive skin treatment (loved by Madonna) described as a 'natural facelift'. It aims to hydrate, firm and tighten skin offering instant results which you can see and feel through using hyperbaric oxygen and serum.

What goes on?

The therapist cleanses your face before applying a mineral and nutrient-rich serum to half your face (this is so you can see the results once the machine containing the oxygen does its work). She then uses a wand that administers hyperbaric oxygen topically, directly on your lines and creases through what looks like an airbrush. The serum works immediately to plump and hydrate the skin's surface, giving it a glow unlike any other treatment. It's not painful, more like a tickling sensation over your skin, almost like she's painting over your skin. She then completes the other side of your face and voila, beautiful, healthy skin that the Hollywood celebs have to have!

Does it deliver?

Immediately. The look and plumpness of the post-oxygen facial side of my face was significantly different to the other. My skin felt refreshed, as though I'd had a regular facial (though I've never had a facial that left my skin looking so lovely so quickly). Having fairly good skin already I didn't know how well my skin would react to the serum and oxygen, but I was very impressed.

How long does it last?

45 minutes, though there are a range of add-ons (such as a collagen mask, or blemish moisturiser) that will add additional time. The results are instant but can continue to improve for up to 24 hours.

Any complaints?

Not at all, I thoroughly enjoyed it but it can feel a little cold, which you might not be used to.

Overall impression?

I was very impressed with the service and the therapist, Sade. It's recommended you do a course of six as the effects are cumulative and I'd be interested to see how your skin would look after a series of treatments, given how noticeable the results were after just one.

Contact Details

MEDICO, Revive Milltown Road, Dublin 6. For appointments, tel: 01 260 4781 or log onto www.revive.ie