

Spa spy Can you stomach it?

Expose yourself to the benefits of an abdominal massage with Joanna Anderson

The treatment

A two hour Arvigo Abdominal Massage with Joanna Anderson at Neal's Yard. The first appointment is £85 and follow-ups are £55 for 60 minutes.

Why go?

Created by Dr Rosita Arvigo, they say, "The main aim of Arvigo Therapy is to stimulate the circulation in the abdomen, blood, nerve, lymph and energy. When all this is in balance the body will find its natural optimal function."

Our spy says

As I'm just here for a general treatment to give me an overview, Joanna skims through the thorough consultation form with me. Usually, clients would get a whole hour to discuss their health and emotional concerns, with the treatment itself lasting the same length of time. However, we just talk generally about my abdominal health and how this experience might benefit me.

I hop onto the table and the towels are arranged so just my abdomen is exposed.

As Joanna explained earlier, it's an area that makes one feel vulnerable, and at first I feel slightly jumpy when my stomach is touched, though taking deep breaths helps. She starts work on my lower abdomen, moving down to the pelvic bone and hips, using scooping and lifting motions. It's not uncomfortable – quite



pleasant really – but I am aware of areas that are tighter than others.

All the movements are performed three, or nine times (apparently, this is the Mayan way, developed after Dr Avigo underwent an apprenticeship with a Mayan healer).

Then it's onto the middle abdomen, where Joanna works on lymphatic drainage, by pressing and kneading in a circle, as if my stomach was a clock face.

Up another level, and my diaphragm is massaged. This feels uncomfortable and tight at first, but I think that's just my body resisting, and soon the muscles soften, though my stomach is rumbling like crazy (a good sign, according to Joanna).

This side is concluded with pressing and twisting motion on my stomach over the towel, and Joanne pulls

my legs to, presumably, realign my jumbled innards and pelvis.

Then it's onto my back – ahhh, this is the relaxing bit. Joanna works quickly, rubbing along my spine but mainly concentrating on my pelvis and hips. My sit bones and hips are "shaken" into place. I don't really want this bit to end, but it does, bah.

The results

I'm given nutritional advice and shown how to administer self care at home. I leave feeling relaxed – a bit tired – and with an interesting beat in my belly, as if the circulation is pumping. ■

Neal's Yard, 102 Hanover Street, Edinburgh (0131-226 3223, www.arvigotherapy.com, www.nealsyardremedies.com)

WHAT'S NEW

Body beautiful

Devotees of the classic Chanel No 5 rejoice, as they've just launched the body oil version of the scent. In a square chunky bottle, with the black logo, it's the perfect way to layer up your fragrance (not to mention to make your bathroom look fancy). Just slick a little onto still-damp skin.

£62 for 200ml, www.chanel.com

Drink to that

We're slightly dubious about the name, but still intrigued by the new Hey Like Wow drinks that have just launched in Tesco stores. According to the makers, soluble vitamins are most effective when they've just hit the water, so these feature a loaded Blast-cap (just push down on it) that releases these supplements before you open the bottle. As well as plain old Apple (pictured), we like the sound of the Mango, Lime and Coconut version, which contains vitamins B6, C and D, with no sugar or artificial sweeteners.



99p, www.tesco.com

Keep your spirits up

If you're a man who finds sitting in the barber's chair a white knuckle experience, then get along to Ruffians. Until the end of December, in collaboration with Wemyss Batch Strength Blended Malts, they'll be offering a sweet, spicy or smoky Old Fashioned cocktail to those taking advantage of their services, which include a haircut (£40), a cut-throat razor shave (£40) or beard tidy and razor work (£25).

23 Queensferry Street, Edinburgh (0131-225 8962, www.ruffians.co.uk)

THREE OF THE BEST

Essential collection

If you're not into glitter and brights, but just want to enhance what your mumma gave you, invest in this lovely palette. In a chunky case with huge mirror and good quality double ended blending brush, it contains a



dozen neutral and mostly matte taupes, beiges and browns, from the brow bone highlighting Blow to the terracotta of Extra Bitter.

Naked Ultimate Basics, £38.50, Urban Decay, www.urbandecay.co.uk



All day and all night

Last year, Sisley launched its Soir d'Orient perfume, which featured a lush blend of balsamic and spicy notes of saffron, black pepper and geranium. Now it has added this matching lotion, which contains skin boosting lily extract, myrrh extract and pro-vitamin B5, as well as the complex and sophisticated scent, which lingers all day long.

Soir d'Orient Moisturising Perfumed Body Cream, £75, Sisley, www.sisley-paris.com

Sparkling notes

As this is part of Jo Malone's Christmas collection, we were expecting cinnamony spice and nutmeg when it came to this new cologne, in its harlequin print bottle. But, no, this fragrance features sparkling notes of orange and mandarin as well as a base of prune and sandalwood. Delicious, and wearable way beyond 25 December.

Orange Bitters Cologne, £90, Jo Malone, www.jomalone.co.uk

