

SPA: 'You've just got one face. It's important to take care of it'

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body polishes, sea salt exfoliation and seaweed wraps. Ingredients applied to the skin are washed off behind the doors of a wall shower, not simply wiped off.

Spas regularly offer treatment packages, and Beyond Beauty has 12 gift packages to pick from. Wedding and party samplers have special rates for brides, grooms, wedding party members and friends, and a lavish, seven-hour day of beauty features six different treatments.

Payder has joined a growing trend toward offering services beyond traditional beauty shops that provide nail care, salons and massages. And backed with 20 years of skin care study and experience, she can sometimes provide skin care treatments and products that once were only available in a dermatologist's office.

She uses two lines of skin and body care known in the spa industry — Pevonia, which is from France, and Murad, developed by Dr. Howard Murad, a dermatologist and pharmacist from California.

Day spas cater to clients of all ages, from men and women in their 20s and 30s juggling busy careers and families to aging baby boomers concerned about maintaining their appearance.

The mental benefit of cutting stress is just as important a reason for a massage or facial as the purely physical aspects.

Years away from noticeable wrinkles and sagging skin, 28-year-old Britton Frank believes taking care of herself is just as important now as it will be when she is older.

Since relocating to Edmond from Tulsa last year, she has relied on Payder for help in maintaining her skin.

"You've just got one face," Frank said, her pale blond eyebrows shaped to perfection. "It's important to take care of it."

She snubbed on the salon — and Payder — soon after arriving in town, and she has remained a faithful customer. Besides having her eyebrows shaped, Frank has her eyebrows and lashes tinted because her coloring is so fair.

She likes facials that cleanse and smooth her skin, and recently, she had an aromatherapy facial, complete with a neck and shoulder massage, to help alleviate the stress of dealing with cancer in her family.

"Mary's very good... she knows what she's doing," Frank said.

Besides their relaxation benefits, facials give the kind of deep



Mary Payder has years of training in connective skin care, and has also developed a full line of cosmetics. Customers can arrange for an hour-long instructional session on how to apply makeup or they can have Payder apply it for them.

cleaning and exfoliation that's difficult for someone to accomplish on their own. "It's much more than you can do at home," she said. "I try to do it at least once a month."

Payder, who is of Persian heritage, came to Edmond 20 years ago, sent by her father to obtain a degree in interior design at then-Central State University.

She stayed, and for many years was a stay-at-home mom to her two children. But her interest in skin care, and beauty in general, began many years before she arrived in the United States.

"I've always been into corrective skin care," she said of her background in facials and hair removal. "I used to do it for friends."

Payder credits her mother, who she watched diligently as a girl, and the customs and traditions of her home land, with teaching her about how to use natural products and age-old procedures to maintain skin and hair.

"We are good with skin care, that is our nature," Payder said. "We know about herbs and essential oils, and how to use them. I learned from my mother — I guess I took after her."

One of those ancient techniques she loves to show clients is banding, where she removes facial and neck hair using only

a thin thread.

Without chemicals or pain, Payder can leave skin smooth and fuzzless using only that thread and a series of quick snaps of her wrist. Banding hasn't been that well-known in this country, she said, but recent discussions of the natural hair removal technique on television shows like "The View" are bringing it some national attention.

"People are just starting to know about banding," she said, loops of string hanging from her neck. "It's gentle on the skin and tough on hair — it's the best way to remove hair on the face and neck."

And once Payder introduces clients to the method of hair removal, they are hooked. "I do a great eyebrow shape... I'm known for that," she said, nodding her head.

She has supplemented what she learned back home with studies in both Europe and the United States, and she trained and is certified by well-known French skin care educator Sylvia Hennessy.

Once a year, she still travels to London to learn the latest industry trends and about new products. "I try to attend all the skin care seminars I can."

One of the services she offers at Beyond Beauty is a skin consultation and analysis to help determine what products and treatments are best for each per-

son. That expertise includes discussions about makeup, and clients can opt for a makeup application, a lesson in how to apply makeup or make-up for one, special occasion.

She has her own line of cosmetics — foundations, powders, eye liners and shadows, blushes

and lipsticks — that are available for purchase. "The makeup is custom-made to my specifications," she said. "I hope to put my own name on it one day."

Payder says one of her talents is her ability to know almost immediately what products or treatments might work best for a client.

"I can look at people and tell what they need."

Jan Holiday has been going to Payder for facials off and on for two years. She has tried several different types, including a vitamin C environmental shield and a series of facials fortified with elastin and collagen.

"She has been pleased with the results."

"I've noticed a difference," said Holiday, who doesn't expect Payder to perform miracles on her skin. "They do help, the texture looks smoother."

People notice the face, hair and teeth of others first, she said, and the price of regular treatments are worth the time and money. "I think if a person can afford to go — if they have the money, the benefits are great. They keep your pores clean."

Holiday said Payder spends the time, no matter how long it takes, to make a session pleasant. "She doesn't rush. Mary's really good... she's knows what she's doing."

Most treatments require an appointment, but Payder says she often works walk-in customers

who want smaller procedures, like brow shaping, into her schedule.

And she will stay after her normal day ends at 6 p.m. to accommodate clients. "People know I'm always here," she said. "I try to make people happy."

Offering services that help people maintain a healthy, attractive appearance isn't the leisurely indulgence it was once considered to be.

"People call them a luxury, but I think they are necessities," she said of everything from spa pedicures and manicures and leg waxings to a herbal green peel that helps remove portions of sun-damaged, pigmented and blemished skin.

"It's all about personal hygiene."

(Debbie Blossom can be reached via email at dblossom@edmondson.com)