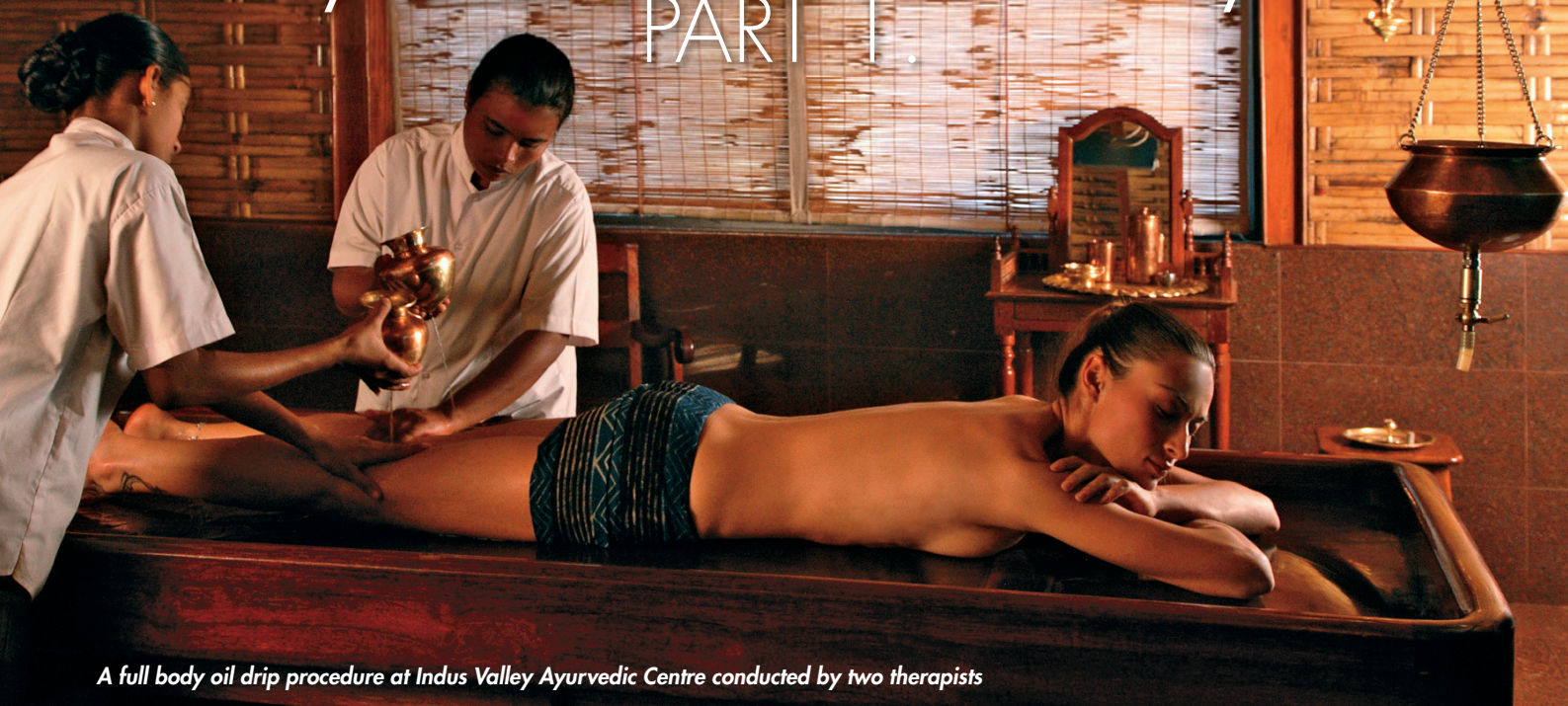




What is Ayurvedic Beauty?

PART 1.



A full body oil drip procedure at Indus Valley Ayurvedic Centre conducted by two therapists

Indigenous to India, Ayurvedic skin care is derived from medicinal practices that began over 5,000 years ago. Ayurvedic medicine and healing practices are based on Indian philosophical, psychological, biological and medicinal understanding. Its approach to skin care is holistic and considers the mind, body, and spirit together. Ayurveda practices the belief that there are three basic principles or humors born out of five basic elements that exist in nature. These principles are known as Vata, Pitta, and Kapha. These principles are believed to work together in harmony to make up the entire body.

Ayurvedic skin care theory claims that there are seven different types of constitution that govern skin and hair types: Vata, Pitta, Kapha, Vata-Pitta, Vata-Kapha, Pitta-Kapha, or Vata-Pitta-Kapha. Most people fall into a combination of two of the three principles.

Beauty care is based on three pillars: Roopam – outer beauty, Gunam – inner beauty, Vayastyag – lasting beauty.

Roopam – Outer Beauty

Roopam has different levels, but we are generally referring to that outer beauty which we see in day-to-day life, our visible skin condition, the glow, radiance and lustre.

Gunam – Inner Beauty

Gunam reflects the personality from the inside. Regardless of the type of face or type of skin, the aura will come from inside – the eternal quest for inner peace and happiness.

Vayastyag – Lasting Beauty

Both Roopam and Gunam support the third pillar Vayastyag or lasting beauty. Vayastyag offers complete instruction on how to achieve lasting beauty, how to look younger than your chronological age and how to reverse ageing and retard ageing.

Psychological, Biological and Social Ageing

Then there is psychological ageing, biological ageing and social ageing. I have often observed people who strictly lead a disciplined spiritual life and have always marveled at the glow of their skin and eyes, this comes from a purity at all levels.

Ayurvedic Cosmetology

Ayurvedic cosmetology focuses on the natural principles and is ideal to meet today's challenges. Apart from its long history of practical usage and the element of safety, Ayurveda has many superior benefits in skin, hair and body care. Plant extracts and natural substances have been formulated into cosmetic products, according to the Ayurvedic system, not only for the daily care of the skin and hair, but also for the treatment of many problems. One of the major benefits is that biologically active ingredients are easily absorbed into the deeper layers of the skin and influence it at the cellular level. These organic ingredients are based on the same biological principles as the human body. This is the reason why the human body responds extremely well to natural substances, while it has an in-built resistance to synthetic ones.

Advantages of Ayurveda in Beauty Care

- ◆ Long history of safe human usage
- ◆ Not tested on animals
- ◆ Offers safety from long-term irritative after-effects.
- ◆ The human body responds well to natural substances and has a resistance to synthetic ones

- ◆ The skin and scalp are influenced at the cellular level, helping to improve normal functions
- ◆ Promotes the capacity to absorb products
- ◆ Restores the normal PH balances
- ◆ Herbs have a mild effect, but have powerful and specific healing properties
- ◆ Particularly suited to skin and hair care
- ◆ Natural fragrances of flower and herb extracts help to calm the nerves and induce relaxation

beauty care is based on three pillars outer beauty, inner beauty and lasting beauty

Indian Botanical Ingredients

For centuries, the west has been attracted to Indian spices and herbs. Many Indian plants are now being used in the formulation of modern medicines. Re-

search has also been conducted into the medicinal properties and other traditional uses of ingredients, which have long been a part of Ayurvedic pharmacopoeia and folk medicine. This has helped to provide scientific support to the empirical knowledge contained in Ayurveda.

Many of the medicinal ingredients have been in use due to their beneficial effects on the skin and scalp, proving to be ideal in external treatments. As well as general care, there are many therapeutic formulations for the treatment of specific problems, like acne, pigmented skin, freckles, premature ageing, scars, skin-sensitivity, dehydration, dark circles, enlarged pores, dandruff, hair damage, hair loss and alopecia.

The ingredients that have been selected for these formulations not only have specific curative properties, but also have shown a lack of

harmful after-effects and irritative reactions, soothing the skin and curing inflammatory conditions. Ayurvedic ingredients are chosen according to their ability to increase or reduce specific doshas. Herbs are also remarkably versatile; they can have a combination of effects, allowing the entire scope of the problem to be treated. For instance, a particular herb may cleanse the skin, restore the normal acid-alkaline balance and also have a germicidal and soothing effect. Thus, the properties of the herb can be related to individual needs. Neem (Margosa – *Azadirachta Indica*) is one such versatile product and every part of the tree is used for healing purposes. Neem leaf infusions have been used to cure skin diseases and are still used today to relieve itching, soothe rashes, create a germicidal environment and clear inflammatory conditions. Neem contains organic sulphur compounds, which have powerful and versatile healing actions.



Part of the Ayurvedic oil production centre at Poomully Aramthamuran's Ayurvedic Mana where ancient recipes formulated by Poomully doctors from the past are utilised for today's medicines.



Siro Vasthi therapy at Kumarakom Lake Resort

Cosmetology

Nature is not only an expert chemist, but also the best cosmetologist. An entire range of cosmetic products exists in nature, with definite preventative and corrective actions. Henna, which is so much in use today, has its basis in the ancient dyeing method, at a time when chemical dyes and colourants were unknown. Apart from imparting colour, Henna has also proven to be an effective and natural hair conditioner. It has the ability to coat each hair shaft, lending strength, body and shine to the hair. Henna has been combined with other herbal extracts, like Bael (Aegle Marmelos), Amla (Embellica Officinalis), Brahmi (Indian Pennywort - Centella Asiatica) and Arnica (Arnica Montana), to formulate hair cleansers, tonics, rinses, nourishers and more. These preparations have helped to bring back health to damaged hair, promote hair growth and maintain the health of the hair and scalp, in addition to controlling dandruff and other problems. Herbs like Shikakai (Acacia Concinna) and Arishtak (Indian Soapnut) have been traditionally used for washing the hair. Amla (Embellica Officinalis) is another such popular ingredient. The ancient physician Charaka referred to Amla as a medicine that delays ageing,

because of its high Vitamin C content. It is said that the Vitamin C content of Amla is so stable that it is resistant to heat.

Trifala, a combination of three herbs, has varied uses, from toning the scalp to curing eye ailments and digestive disorders as well as soothing coughs and inflammation. It consists of Amla, Haritaki (Terminalis Chebula) and Vibhitika (Terminalis Belerica).

Bilva (Aegle Marmelos) and Brahmi have also been used in hair care. Bilva helps to control Vata and cures hair problems and inflammatory conditions, while Brahmi helps to control stress-related problems, as it has a calming effect on the nerves in addition to other beneficial properties. Brahmi is well known for its ability to bring back health to the hair, and its fragrance induces relaxation, helping in cases of stress related conditions such as alopecia and general hair loss. Other ingredients, such as Amla, Shikakai, Reetha (Sapindus Trifolatus), have been made into tonics, oils, cleansers and conditioners for hair care, also proving effective in the treatment of dandruff, seborrhoea, alopecia and hair loss.

Sandalwood (Santalum Album) is one of the most popular cosmetic ingredients used in India. It has been mentioned in ancient Indian texts as far back as the 5th century BC. It has powerful germicidal and antiseptic properties, while its exotic fragrance is said to have a relaxing effect on the mind. Not only does Sandalwood soothe the skin and heal inflammatory conditions, but it also has anti-ageing and rejuvenating effects. It is ideal for all skin types. Creams formulated with Sandalwood protect the skin from the effects of pollutants, sun-exposure, dehydration and skin sensitivity. Raktachadan - red sandalwood, has wound healing properties and the ability to heal skin.

Rose (Rosa Centifolia) - typically used in Ayurvedic formulations is suited to all skin types with a refreshing effect. It has powerful tonic properties, improving skin texture and soothing inflammations. It can assume the role of a cleanser combination refreshing lotion for all types of skins. It benefits the delicate skin around the eyes, reducing puffiness and fatigue. It has been used for centuries, in many ways, both for its healing action and delightful fragrance. The fragrance of Rose, Sandalwood, Brahmi and other natural scents is said to have a soothing and relaxing effect on the nerves. In fact, Rose was used as an anti-depressant during ancient times.

Prolonging Youthful Skin and Hair

Herbs and natural substances help to promote the elimination of toxins and wastes, as well as dead epithelial cells, thus encouraging the regeneration of new cells. This, in turn, helps to preserve the youthful qualities of the skin. The ageing process can be hastened by many factors, among which exposure to sunlight is the most significant. Chemical pollutants, artificial

heating and cooling, make-up, cosmetics, chlorinated water and alkaline soaps can also trigger off the manifestation of ageing.

It is only through daily cleansing and care with natural ingredients that the skin can be

protected from early ageing and its associated problems. Cleansers containing powerful moisturisers, such as Aloe Vera, have been formulated to remove impurities without disturbing the moisture balance. They also improve the skin's ability to retain moisture and restore the normal acid-alkaline balance. Aloe Vera is also known to help cell renewal. During ancient times, Aloe Vera was used to heal cuts and wounds as it speeds up the skin's process of cell renewal. Extracts

Vayastyag offers complete instruction on how to achieve lasting beauty

Pedicure spa



8 in 1

- facial steamer
- magnifying lamp
- brush
- vac
- spray
- galvanic
- woods lamp
- high frequency



Magnifying lamp – stand



Hot towel cabinet



Aquaris



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- Pigmented Lesions
- Photorejuvenation
- Acne



Spa Jet

Hydrospa capsule with steam, infrared and ceramic dry heat. Features multiple water massage systems. 10 pre-set programmes, perfect for body wraps, slimming and detox treatments.



Hydraulic massage table



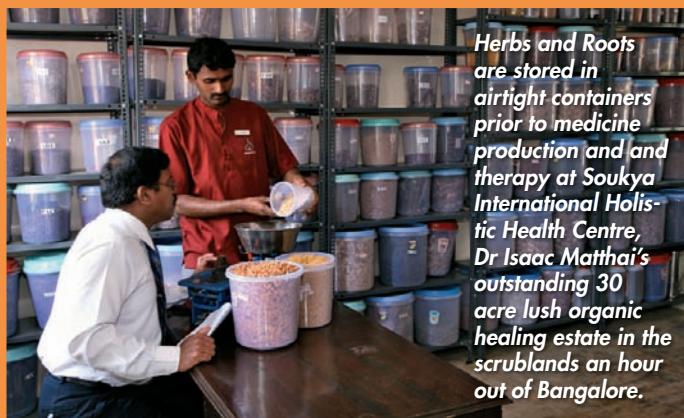
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Herbs and Roots are stored in airtight containers prior to medicine production and therapy at Soukya International Holistic Health Centre, Dr Isaac Matthai's outstanding 30 acre lush organic healing estate in the scrublands an hour out of Bangalore.

The senior physician at Kumarakom Lake Resort performs a pulse diagnosis



of Aloe Vera, Lemon, Ashwagandha (Withania Somnifera), Turmeric, Rose, etc., have long been used to formulate cleansers and protective creams for the skin.

Similarly, Almond, Wheat-germ, Jasmine (Jasminum Grandiflorum – indigenous to India), Bael Fruit, Sesame and many such herbal extracts form the ingredients of emollient nourishing creams. Wheatgerm Oil is rich in Vitamin E and helps to protect the tissues from degeneration. Almond is ideal for the delicate skin around the eyes, keeping it free from wrinkles and dark circles. These vitamin and mineral rich extracts benefit the skin by increasing blood flow and restoring damaged capillaries. Sesame Seed, Sunflower Oils and even Sandalwood are well known for their sunscreen properties. Such natural sun-filters have been used in Ayurvedic sun-protection products, along with natural rehydrants and humectants. Many of the herbs have anti-oxidant properties, tissue-building abilities and therefore are 'anti ageing'.

Apart from plant products, Ayurveda also used metals and gems for healing. These have been incorporated in formulations for skin care, mainly due to their powerful age-control properties. Among these are Gold, Diamond, Silver and the powder of Pearls. These are softened to ash or a soft leaf until they are rendered non-toxic and fit for human consumption – in other words food grade.

Traditional Ayurvedic formulations are never comprised of a singular herb, they are always in combination selected specifically to work in synergy to either heal, soothe, increase circulation (heat), cool and constrict or nourish. Ayurvedic ingredient selections are a perfect union of an ancient tradition and the latest scientific techniques. Not only have they been subjected to stringent clinical and laboratory tests, but to the most exacting test of all - the Test of Time on humans - not animals.

There are some unique characteristics of Ayurvedic skin, hair and body care when made to traditional formulations:

◆ Creams and Lotions can appear to be thick – the reason for this is

the fact that there is no water in the formulations. The base is not water as with many creams, it is beeswax and oil that have been combined with herbal powders. The benefit of this is that it is concentrated and the action of the herbs can work most effectively. The trick is to use a little cream, dot the face and use wet hands to give slip, lighten and thin the formulation.

- ◆ Some product aromas may appear to be intense, this is because the formulations are concentrated and therefore can be diluted when used.
- ◆ Masks are kalkas, or herbal pastes, that are a combination of herbs made into a paste. They can dry out over time, a very natural process. A perfectly natural solution is to add a little water to the mask to make it into a paste again.
- ◆ Tonics are made to special formulations and generally contain herbs that will help to preserve the product.
- ◆ Massage Oils are made through a lengthy and arduous procedure where herbs are steeped in oil over three weeks. These are called herbal oils and normally have a marked prescriptive effect on the muscles, skin and general mobility.
- ◆ Oils used in Ayurvedic formulations are edible oils eg sesame, almond, and sunflower.
- ◆ The colours seen in various formulations are natural and created by the herbal powders, for instance: Red Sandalwood (Rakta Chandan), Turmeric, Manjishta (Indian Madder).
- ◆ Colour, aroma and consistency can vary from batch to batch by

around plus or minus 5%. Just as there are no two apples that are exactly the same.

◆ Shelf life is generally two years from the date of manufacture, and one year from the date of opening.

- ◆ Specific combinations of herbal powders are available to make into a fresh paste just prior to use. These vary in their combinations according to the problem they are formulated to heal.
- ◆ The addition of fresh ingredients, such as: finely grated cucumber, carrots, potatoes, yoghurt, milk, honey or eggs can be added to both body, face and hair treatments. The results are outstanding. 🍃

Part Two of this article will continue in the next edition.

** The pictures in this article are from the book **The Indian Spa**: recently released by Luca Tettoni and Kim Inglis. The book contains a wealth of information on Ayurvedic ingredients, therapies and practicing centres and Spas in India. See pages: 66-71.*



By Yasmin Sadikot

Yasmin is a pioneer of traditional Ayurvedic Beauty products and treatments in Australia. A qualified homeopath, Yasmin has studied Ayurvedic herbology and treatments over the last 20 years, working with Ayurvedic cosmeticians and doctors. Her passion for traditional rituals led her on a journey to the creation of OmVeda

in 1997, her commonly used phrase "if you cannot eat it, do not put on your skin", gives an understanding that the herbs used in products should have the same efficacy as that prescribed internally.