

# Gentlemen, start your spa regimens

Men are asking themselves if they want to age gracefully or fight it with exercise and skin care

BY ROCHELLE LASH, SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE JANUARY 18, 2013



A cool suite at Eventi, a Kimpton Hotel in Manhattan.

**Photograph by:** Rochelle Lash

The crucial concerns of buff bodies, mellow minds and careful grooming once were the exclusive domain of women, but stress management, fitness, weight loss and esthetics are essential to men, too. The XY-chromosome half of the world also needs to contend with how they look and feel, and mainstream resorts are stepping up with dedicated male milieus and a panoply of treatments streamlined for dude DNA.

Spa treatments help to surmount the daily grind — the athletic challenges of a mad airport dash and climbing the corporate ladder, the rattling pressure of a meeting with the boss, the pace of the digital world and the all-out gorgeousness required for a big date. Furthermore, men are asking themselves if they want to age gracefully or fight it with exercise and skin care.

The issue of hair alone has taken on a critical importance akin to that of world peace. Spas with

updated barber-shops can help achieve Brad Pitt's wispy goatee, Javier Bardem's dangerously dark shadow, Justin Timberlake's fuzz or Daniel Craig's craggy clean shave. Stylists, personal trainers and masseurs abound at a variety of vacation destinations, many with macho sanctuaries. Men can travel alone, with their spouses or partners or with the kids, and sneak off for a restorative spa sojourn — or share the bliss.

The Claramount Inn & Spa in Ontario's picturesque Prince Edward Country is a place that really knows how to please a guy. The Claramount is a butter-yellow Victorian mansion with lots of antiques and formal dining, all adding up to a feminine mystique. But the Claramount's spa has its male guests' best interests at heart. Here, the Happy Beer foot pedicure soaks those callused Size 11s in a vat of micro-brew to soften and moisturize rough skin. The benefits are all in the enzymes, they say. The ale is from Barley Days Brewery, which has the same owners as the inn.

Quebec is loaded with spa options, many for men and many tailored to sports lovers, male or female.

But, serious snow lovers also can head to the Four Seasons Resort in Whistler, B.C., a lap-of-luxury getaway at North America's largest ski area — the incomparable combo of picturesque Whistler and rugged Blackcomb. Gourmet food, top-drawer service, plush suites and excellent spa treatments are Four Seasons' hallmarks, but there also options strictly for men.

After a day bustin' trails at Whistler and swimming laps in the Four Seasons' steamy outdoor heated pool, guys can recover with a Mountain Men body treatment that revitalizes aching muscles. To treat the aging effects of powder snow and the fierce Alpine sun, the hydrating Four Seasons' environmental skin rescue facial uses lotions by KenMen, an organic Canadian brand. If a guy isn't ready to go spa-solo, there are couples' massages for a new level of togetherness.

There's more trail action, but this time in a hot, dry climate. A guy can channel his inner cowboy at the historic, 65-year-old Rancho De Los Caballeros in Arizona, a sun-baked southwestern resort that appeals to both families and couples with its casual, outdoorsy style, full-fledged spa and sporting facilities, especially golf.

So far that's mainstream. But, factor in a pair of spurs and a corral full of 100 vigorous Appaloosas, and Palominos and Rancho De Los Caballeros becomes a dude ranch for wannabe wranglers. Horseback riding is a great way to relax — it's just the hombre and his stallion out there in the mesmerizing grasslands of the Sonora Desert. You can expect to be sore after a day in the saddle. ("A dude," I was told by the front desk, "is a city slicker who doesn't ride very often.") No worries. Rancho's Native American techniques relieve muscle aches with essential oils of juniper, sage, cypress and cedar. Après-ride, men can recover from the heat and dust with Los Caballeros grooming facial that includes a bracing exfoliation, a hydrating massage and a snip to tame woolly eyebrows. The Ranch Hand's manicure removes the grit when you give up the cowboy life and head home.

Back in the city, jet-setting New Yorkers snatch precious time at The Spa @ Eventi, a Kimpton Hotel, in fashionable Chelsea. The Spa is geared to Manhattan's frantic pace, so massages are offered in

25-, 50- or 80-minute segments. The Jet Lag Recovery resets your body clock with a scrub and lavender oil massage, a sure-fire energy lift. The Man About Town facial refines pores and soothes razor burn so you'll have a confidence boost before the big meeting.

For a quickie vacation, the super-sized Borgata Hotel, Casino & Spa in Atlantic City, N.J., is a gambling and entertainment haven with a Vegas vibe. The Borgata won't break the bank, unless you bet your bottom dollar at blackjack or roulette. This indoor resort has ornate decor, and big numbers throughout: 2,000 deluxe rooms and suites, 11 boutiques, swimming pools and gardens, and 13 restaurants including cool eateries run by celeb chefs Wolfgang Puck and Bobby Flay. Both high and low rollers can wager in a jangling casino that is about the size of an entire city block, with 85 poker tables and hundreds of slot machines. There's never a dull moment. Rufus Wainwright, a now-famous Montreal connection, will headline at the 1,000-seat The Music Box theatre Feb. 8 and Irish rockers the Saw Doctors, on March 9.

Spa Toccare at the Borgata offers indulgent beauty and body treatments for both women and men, but The Barbershop is the ideal male sanctuary. It's equipped with a billiards table and a giant-screen TV, plus services such as executive manis and pedis, straight-razor shaves, hair colouring, beard styling, the men's sports facial and the Whole Nine Yards, a trio of treatments. With expert consultants, this is the place to decide on the new you. Are you going for Justin Trudeau's flirty, tousled look or Ben Mulroney's slick, showbiz veneer.

Farther south, the stunning St. Regis Bal Harbour Resort is a new property in one of the most chi-chi vacation spots in the U.S. Bal Harbour is an expensive oceanfront stretch of Miami Beach made famous by, of all things, by a high-end shopping centre built in the 1960s. The St. Regis' sophisticated interiors were designed by the world-renowned Yabu Pushelberg design virtuosos of Toronto, so guests are surrounded by opulent decor details such as marble quarried especially for the resort. Michelin-starred chef Jean-Georges Vongerichten inspires the cuisine at the J & G Grill and the St. Regis Butler Service takes care of most everything else.

The Remède spa is an over-the-top sanctuary of beauty and body treatments where therapists use natural potions by the European Laboratoire Remède. The plush spa has classic facilities such as a Vichy rain shower, aromatic steam rooms, couples' soaking tubs and a state-of-the-art athletic club, where you can watch the yachts glide by on the Atlantic while you are pumping iron and doing cardio. The signature spa experience, most popular with women, is the 24-Karat Designer facial, which uses a bejewelled sprinkling of gold oil to refresh the skin. Men also can spruce up with bespoke treatments like the Chairman's deluxe package of massages and manicures or the anti-aging men's facial.

#### IF YOU GO:

Claramount Inn & Spa, Picton., Ont.; 800-679-7756, [claramountinn.com](http://claramountinn.com); rooms start at \$199 for two, incl. breakfast, heated indoor pool, infra-red sauna, hot tub. Happy Beer Feet Pedicure, \$45.

Eventi, a Kimpton Hotel: 866-996-8396, 212-564-4567; [eventihotel.com](http://eventihotel.com); 851 Avenue of the Americas

between 29 & 30th Sts., New York, N.Y.; rooms from \$249 U.S.; Man About Town facial, \$125 U.S.

St. Regis Bal Harbour Resort: Miami Beach, Fla.; 305-993-3300, stregisbalharbour.com; 243 rooms and suites from \$850 U.S. for two. Remède Spa: remede.com; Chairman's Deluxe Package, \$500 U.S. for five hours.

Four Seasons Resort Whistler: Whistler, B.C.; 800-268-6282, fourseasons.com/whistler; 273 rooms, suites and apartments start at \$299 for two; The Spa: Mountain Men Body Treatment: \$245.

Rancho de los Caballeros: Wickenburg, Ariz.; (one hour from Phoenix): 800-684-5030, ranchodeloscaballeros.com, ranchrider.com; 79 rooms from \$395 U.S per night, for two incl. meals, tennis, pools and one round of golf or riding. Los Caballeros Grooming Facial, \$105 U.S.; Ranch Hand Manicure, \$45 U.S.

Borgata Hotel Casino & Spa, Atlantic City, N.J.; 866-MY BORGATA/866-692-6742, 609-317-1000, theborgata.com; rooms start at \$89 U.S. for two; Spa Toccare/The Barbershop: 609-317-7555; Men's Sports Facial, \$140; Whole Nine Yards, \$95.

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