

Spa gazing

Mairead Robinson examines which spa treatments are designed with the over 50s in mind.

Rejuvenate, Revive, Turn back Time, Anti-aging - now these are terms that we have become very familiar with in recent years. We have seen a phenomenal increase in the number of hotel spas around Ireland over the past decade with treatment menus that promise to “bathe you in a sea of tranquillity” and “sooth the senses and the soul”. This sounds all very wonderful and we do love a bit of pampering, but just how effective are these treatments, and are they really worth the money?

Firstly, it can be somewhat off-putting for those of us the far side of 40 to enter a world of therapists who all appear to be in their 20s and looking as glamorous as a cat-walk model. Once we get over the embarrassment of showing them our time-ravaged bodies and faces, we then have to decide which treatment is really going to make us look and feel very much better as opposed to something that was designed for skin half our age. To be honest, like when choosing make-up and moisturisers I think many of us opt for the wrong treatment so a good consultation with the spa manager or therapist is vital before you make a decision.

I took myself off to **Bellaza Salon** in Ranelagh, Dublin recently to meet one of Ireland's top skin care therapists, Sue Machesney. I was keen to find out what really works for women over 50. Pampering treatments are all very lovely, but I wanted something that actually showed results. Like many women, I was certainly not going to go under the knife, nor did I want Botox - injecting poison under my skin just does not appeal. So I enquired as to what treatments would work for me.

Sue offers a personal consultation with each client prior to booking any



One of Ireland's top skin care therapists, Sue Machesney.



treatment, and she will recommend something that suits your particular skin and health while there is no obligation to go for anything. Bellaza have been established 17 years and offer a wide range of treatments including Microdermabrasion; Red Light Therapy; Laser Treatments and Skin Peels. On Sue's advice I opted for the very latest in non-surgical anti-aging treatments - Fusion RF. This works with a radiofrequency (RF) generator and treats both the skin and the fat cells through the generation of heat which prompts the body to produce more collagen. It is painless, non-invasive, takes just 20 minutes and is almost natural in that it tricks the body into plumping up the skin! With before and after photographs to prove the point, I have to admit that I did see immediate results in that my skin looked much firmer, specially round the eyes and jaw-line. A course of 6 is recommended,

and I am planning to return and do that. Fusion RF is the latest thing in anti-aging technology, and I was fascinated to learn that some of our famous over 50s the world over are opting for it. The key is the new collagen production which results in firmer and younger looking skin. While a face-lift might stretch the skin, it will not plump it up like collagen will. And to make the treatment even more tempting, Sue has offered readers of Senior Beauty a special rate of just €150 for an initial treatment (it usually costs €300) and a course of 6 at €720. If you check out private clinics in Ireland and abroad you will see that this is an excellent price for Fusion RF treatment.

Check out www.bellazabeauty.com or call them on 01-4963484, they are based in Ranelagh, Dublin. And do mention you heard about it in Senior Times.

Now when it comes to hotel spas, we

are spoilt for choice in Ireland these days. I grew up in Sandycove, Co. Dublin and The Royal Marine Hotel in Dun Laoghaire was always a family favourite for all our celebrations, and that was before the spa concept took off! I was delighted when the hotel reopened a few years ago after extensive refurbishment and added the fabulous new sansanaSPA while keeping its abiding elegance and style. So, I decided to check out if this hotel, so beloved by many of both mine and my parent's generation, would have a spa that we would feel comfortable with. I was delighted when I visited sansanaSPA, the staff are lovely, the treatments were perfect for me, and they used the Irish Voya products which are traditional, organic and fabulous!

I am totally sold on seaweed now. Time was when you needed mud from The Black Sea to feed your skin and ease your muscles. However these seaweed products are not only pure and seriously anti-aging, but they hail from our own shores, as the company is based in Sligo where they have been harvesting the seaweed for years and generations have availed of the benefits of a seaweed bath.

I have been wrapped in seaweed,

exfoliated with seaweed and massaged with seaweed, and I have to admit that my skin was feeling really smooth and nourished afterwards, but the deeper health benefits of the treatments were particularly beneficial. Whatever your feelings about spa treatments might have been in the past, I strongly urge you to get a Voya Seaweed treatment and you will be impressed. The Voya Leg ritual is particularly wonderful for tired legs and poor circulation. Contact sansanaSPA at The Royal Marine Hotel, www.royalmarinehotel.ie 'phone 01-2300030 and treat yourself, or a special friend to one of these really wonderful treatments.

Remember that it is possible also to enjoy a treatment in the comfort of your own home. While you will not have the indulgent pampering of a top spa therapist and facilities, you can certainly enjoy great benefits. Voya have a great little product which will only cost you €16 and has the benefits of a real spa treatment. This magical product is called Lazy Days Seaweed Bath in a Box. The organic seaweed and sea salt rehydrate in a very hot bath, cooler water is then added to make the temperature comfortable. The resultant soak will leave your skin toned and helps against the signs of ageing, improves



suppleness and elasticity of the skin, has anti-cellulite properties and naturally soothes and moisturises the skin. All that in one simple bath! It does work though, and the net of seaweed makes a great garden fertilizer afterwards. One word of caution - be careful getting out of the bath, as it can become quite slippery.

So do treat yourself, Spa treatments have never been such good value and there are products that suit all of us. As we are constantly reminded "we are worth it"

Finally, after all the natural and technological pampering, do remember that the most effective face-lift is always your smile!

For tips and ideas on health and beauty issues contact mairead.seniorbeauty@gmail.com