

O PRACTICAL MATTERS

STRATEGIES AND DETAILS FOR ▶ BEAUTY ▶ HOME ▶ FOOD

In the Realm of the Senses

Can you say “I need to relax” in French or Javanese? You don’t need to with these exotic beauty treatments taken from around the world.

THE DESIRE FOR A LITTLE PAMPERING IS universal, almost every culture has its indigenous rituals designed to soothe body and mind. Here, simple recipes for stress relief from the far corners of the world.

THE JAVANESE LULUR BODY SCRUB For more than 200 years, women in Java have prepared for their wedding ceremonies with this skin-softening ritual. **Bring it home:** Combine two teaspoons of turmeric, six teaspoons of rice flour, three drops of jasmine oil, and three tablespoons of warm milk. (Or try the premade Jamu scrub, shown below.) Massage the scrub over your entire body and brush it off. Then take a shower using a jasmine body wash (such as La Compagnie de

A WORLD OF RELAXATION

Clockwise from left: Abano mint Dead Sea bath salts, Sundari nighttime nourishing oil, Jamu Javanese Lulur body scrub, Sothys ThalassoThys bath salts, and Thalgo effervescent bath pebbles

Provence jasmine shower gel). The turmeric acts as a natural deodorant, while the rice flour exfoliates dead skin cells.

THE FRENCH SEAWEED BATH The French have been “spa-ing” for centuries, enjoying treatments containing mineral-rich seaweed. **Bring it home:** Drop a heaping scoop of seaweed bath salts or a bath tablet into your tub, and soak in the warm water for 15 to 20 minutes. Trace elements in seaweed are thought to improve the texture of your skin.

THE INDIAN OIL COMPRESS Ayurveda, an ancient Indian holistic health philosophy, promotes treatments designed to enhance inner balance. One ritual, *shirdhara*, involves pouring a stream of warm oil onto the “third eye,” a spot at the center of the forehead thought to govern the nervous system.

Bring it home: Warm a few drops of Ayurvedic oil in the microwave for about 30 seconds. Fold a soft cloth into a rectangle and pour the oil in the middle of the compress,

or *pichu*. Apply the heated cloth just above your brow. “The warm oil stimulates your body to secrete endorphins and helps you relax,” says Pratima Raichur, director of Pratima Ayurvedic Skin Care Clinic in New York City.

THE DEAD SEA SOAK The high mineral content of the Dead Sea has made it a destination for people seeking healthy, glowing skin. **Bring it home:** Dissolve at least one cup of Dead Sea salts in a tubful of very warm water. After soaking for 10 to 20 minutes, take a quick shower in cool water. Then wrap yourself in a warm blanket and rest.

—Andrea Dawn Clark

