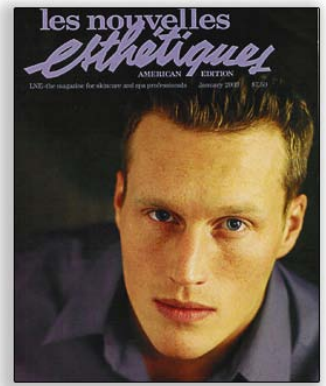


Tips on Manhandling

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Face it folks, men are making their way into your spas. And there are some finite points on manhandling a male clientele. So let's look at some of the most-asked questions about the male market.

How should you handle the first time spa goer?

All new male spa goers should be handled with kid gloves. If a man feels confident, at ease and comfortable with your spa, you set the stage for a wonderful first-time experience and many, many return visits as well. In short, do everything possible (i.e. handshake, greeting, warm smile, answer all questions simply) at the front desk/reception area to disarm any fears and let your individual spa coordinators and technicians do what they do best. It is quite possible that a relaxed, first-time male client will be very appreciative of a well-performed individual service as he probably had pre-visit trepidations and lower expectations.

What is an absolute no-no with men, but would be acceptable for women in your spa?

Pink Slippers. But seriously, all clothing items must be unisex, if not masculine. If you make a man feel too feminine, you have lost him forever. During a service, keep all explanations surface and simple and use brief gender-specific descriptions. Example: (after-shave balm instead of moisturizer). Keep conversation to a minimum and let him relax in peace.

What kinds of things in the spa will men appreciate most?

Obviously men will appreciate things such as spa clothing, special areas, magazines, products and services that are specifically for them. This creates a comfort level and says you care. And conversely, appearances that seem too frilly or feminine, interactions that create any tension or chatter or complicated

explanations can cause a male client to have an unpleasant experience.

What spa services are hits with men? Which are duds?

Massage is by far the most popular service with reflexology, waxing, facials and pedicures all tied for second. On the other hand, I cannot remember a man in my spa doing a body treatment.

Is the approach to a man in your spa different than your approach to a woman?

Only in the initial greeting to absolutely ensure that the male is comfortable and confident, right up front (sensing that he may not be a veteran of spa going). Give simple verbal instructions and keep conversation minimal. Men are usually at a spa to relax, not talk.

What's the best way to make a man feel more comfortable in your spa?

Short of ball games on the tube and beer, the least expensive way is good hospitality. Sure it's great to have a separate entrance and lounge, men's magazines, customized services and products, clothing, etc., but based on your flow of men and your flow of cash, the simplest way is to coddle the male from start to finish.

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Are men easier clients or more difficult than women?

I think men are more appreciative based upon their lack of experience in the spa. (This is especially true in upstate NY as

we do not have the metropolitan influence and big city mentality. In our area, football and golf are the most popular forms of relaxation. With this considered, perhaps we have a simpler approach to life.) It is maybe harder initially to create the comfort level, but men who like your technicians and environment will be among the more loyal clients you have.

What verbal or physical clues should you look for in men and what do they tell you?

Are the men making eye contact with you (and vice versa)? Are they fidgeting or smiling? Are their arms crossed? Verbal and physical clues are pretty universal across the sexes, and it all comes back to one simple question. Have you made them feel at home with your environment and hospitality? If you have they will sit quietly in your waiting area without constantly looking around to see who is there or who is watching them because they are male. Men also do not want to be singled out by other spa goers (especially women).

Do men really follow your recommendations?

On average, yes, because to a less spa-cultured male, you are even more of an expert and as long as your suggestions are simple and straight forward, they will do as you say. And they will be glad you took the time to educate them and usually follow your recommendations exactly and precisely.

Why do men go to spas?

Surely because they got a gift certificate! If it was done voluntarily, though, its most likely to de-stress and relax and escape everyday life. Secondly, they feel they have reached a point in life where they need to take better care of themselves and in addition, they want and need to be educated on home routines to address their particular needs.