

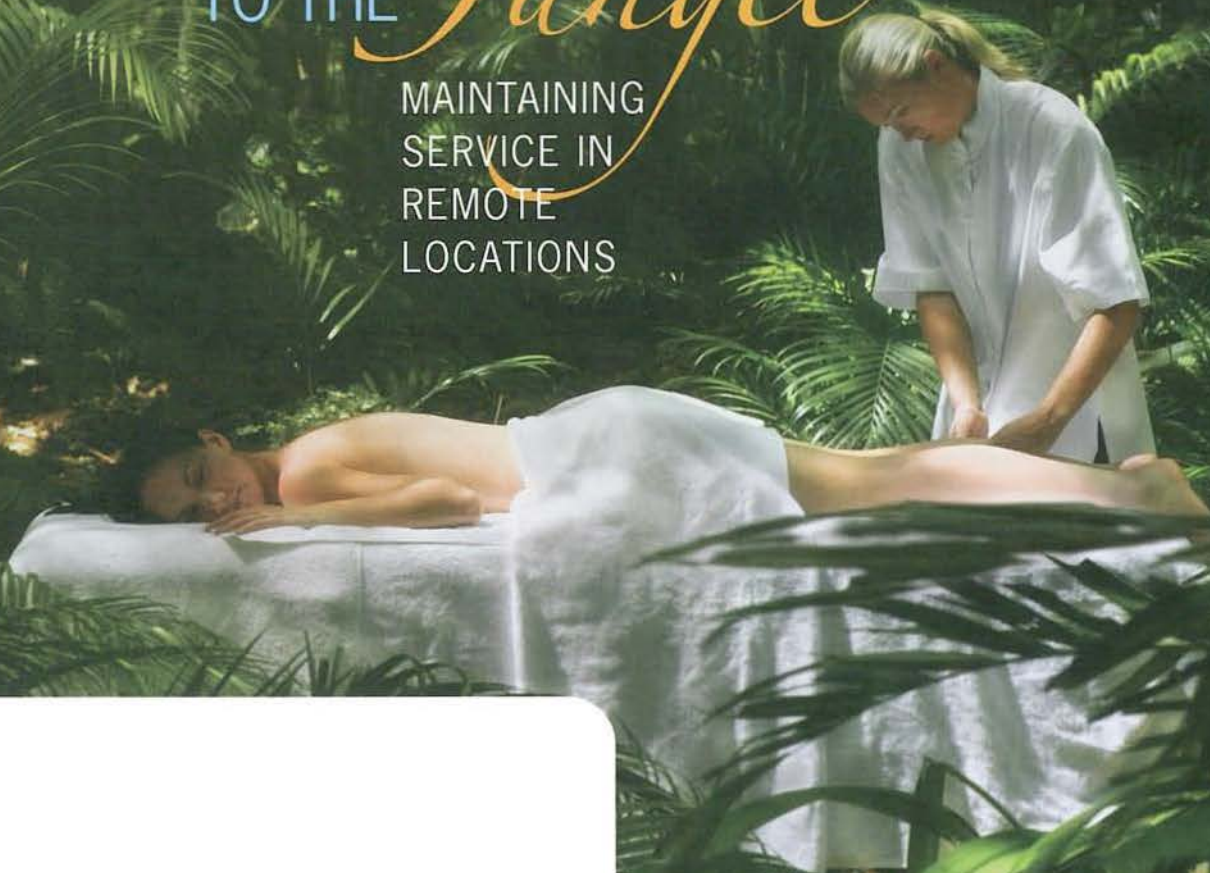
PULSE

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Everything Goes With Wine

When people think of spa, wine might not be the first thing that comes to mind, but more and more companies are finding success in spa with wine-based products. Part of that success comes from the fact that the benefits of drinking wine are widely known.

"People understand the benefits of wine already," said Ken Heng, director of marketing and sales at Olavie (Herbwalk), a company that sells wine-based skin and body care products. "It's an easy sell, if you will; it's not something esoteric."

The company uses chardonnay grapes in its products because the antioxidant concentration is higher. This confuses some people, Heng said, because red wine is higher in antioxidants than white. When using the seeds leftover from making wine in skin and body care products, it's the white varieties that still have antioxidants to extract. In other words, when caring for your heart, drink red wine. When caring for your skin, choose white.

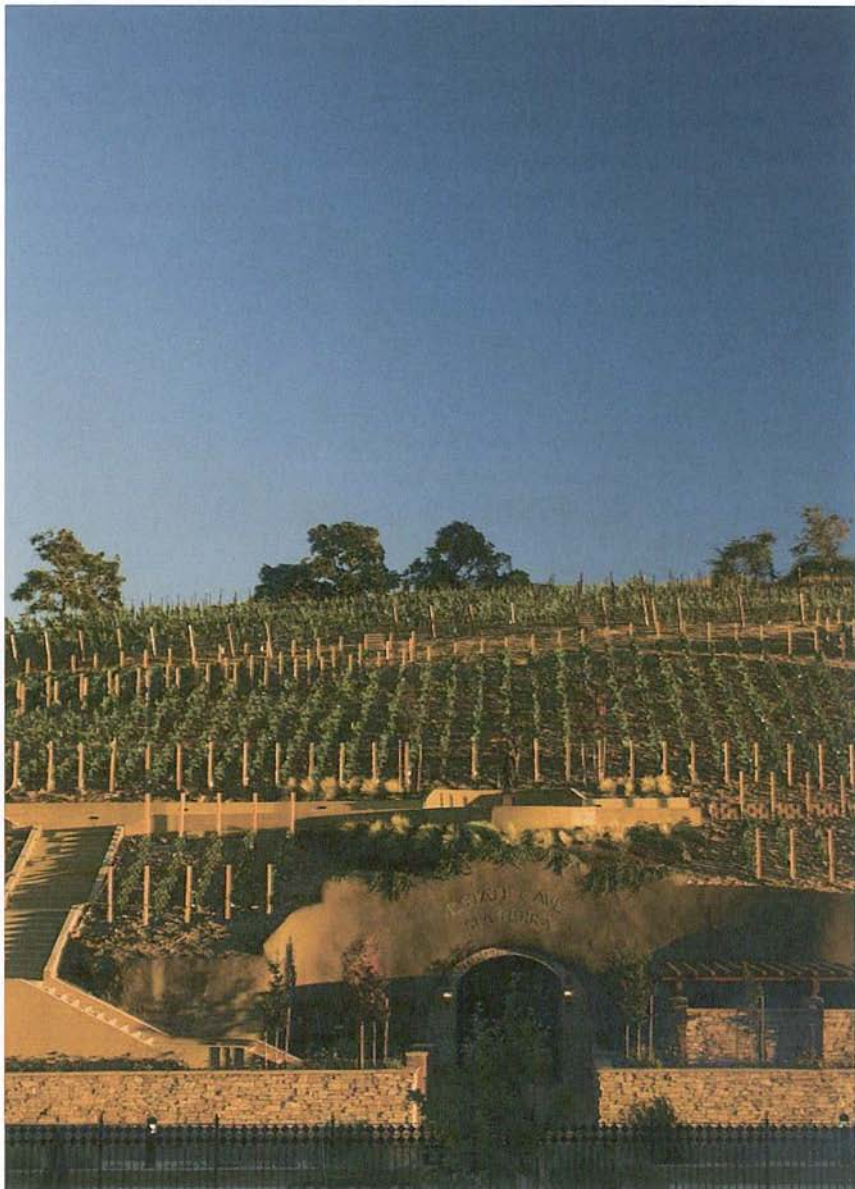
Below: Le Vin wine therapy cream from Olavie brings the healing properties of wine to skin. **Right:** The vineyard at Spa Terra at Meritage Resort in Napa, Calif., adds to the wine experience.

Heng's foray into the world of wine-based skin and body care products came as a natural combination of things he was already interested in. "I used to live in San Francisco and would go into Napa and Sonoma and do wine tastings," he said. "I knew the benefits of wine for drinking." He also harbored an interest in skin care products. One day a friend had a wine-based lip balm, and a light went on

in Heng's head. "It was really just combining everything," he said. Olavie launched in 2003, with the Le Vin organic line following in 2007.

Some spas include wine to drink as well as wine-based treatments. "We have been using grape seed products for a long time, especially being in wine country," said Victoria Boscarino, spa director at

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Guests sample the wine at the Estate Wine Bar at Meritage Resort.

"I have always been a firm believer that one must take advantage of what is organically indigenous to the area in which one lives and operates out of."

Spa Terra at Meritage Resort in Napa, Calif. "I have always been a firm believer that one must take advantage of what is organically indigenous to the area in which one lives and operates out of, so it follows that our essential menu of services was designed and conceived using the most abundant crop of the valley: seed extract from grapes. In addition, because we are in wine country, we serve wine with most of our packages," she said. "We now know a lot more about the benefit of wine, especially red wine. Not only is it delicious, but it's recommended more and more by the medical establishment because of its benefits. People who drink red wine, in moderation, live longer, healthier, happier lives than people who don't, or people who drink beer or other alcoholic beverages."

Boscarino and Heng are both enthusiastic about the benefits of wine on the skin. The antioxidants boost collagen, elastin and amino acids, which are the building blocks of cell production and healthy skin. "These products decrease breakouts and dryness and even skin

complexion when used on a regular basis, and are effective with most skin types," said Boscarino. "So we use it externally to improve our skin and look better, and we take it internally for good health."

Coffee, Anyone?

As with wine, the world is full of coffee drinkers, although its health benefits are less acclaimed. But coffee also offers numerous skin care benefits when applied topically. Just ask the folks at BODYCOFFEE.

"The idea was born in a Russian bathhouse," explained COO Julie King, when company founder Stephanie Profitt was living in Moscow and paid a visit to a local spa. "All these Russian women were rubbing coffee grounds on themselves," King said. After moving to the United States, Profitt started using coffee grounds in her own showers, as she had seen firsthand its benefits, which extend well beyond the exfoliation provided by the grounds. "We created an entire brand that celebrates the benefits coffee has for

your skin," King said. In addition to gentle exfoliation when grounds are used, coffee neutralizes free radicals, helps clear skin blemishes and boosts UV defense, King said.

King attributes the company's success partly to coffee's already widespread

appeal. "People have such a personal relationship with coffee. Here's an ingredient that people are so familiar with and have such a warm fuzzy feeling about. And, it's gender neutral."

That doesn't mean you're going to smell like a Starbucks after using BODYCOFFEE's products, however. Other ingredients give the products a "natural,

fresh" scent. "We add something different, unique and special to the spa menu, and we try to remain uncomplicated," King added.

Not Just for Yoga

The spa lifestyle is practically built into such clothing lines as Tao Freedom of the Body and Sense Clothing. Using fabrics

Tao Freedom of the Body creates pieces like this top that are meant to be comfortable and versatile.



that are good for the skin and the planet with designs that multitask, these and other spa-centric clothing lines allow clients to extend the spa lifestyle into what they wear.

Tao Freedom of the Body clothes are meant to flow seamlessly from yoga class to the coffee shop to lunch with friends to walking the dog to dinner out. "They're pieces you can wear to the places within your life," said Clare Cook, director and co-founder. She works closely with Dorothy Szeto, the line's designer. "It's more than fashion, it's the lifestyle of the woman," said Szeto. Most can be worn several different ways, and wick moisture away from the body. The newest innovation is aloe vera infused right into the fabric. "It's something nurturing, and with a low

impact on the environment," noted Cook.

The company's philosophy of kindness to the planet combined with personal wellness made it a perfect fit for the spa industry. "We believe in the wellness and spa industry so much," said Szeto.

Robin Beachner at Sense Clothing adheres to a similar multi-functional philosophy. "It's nice to slip on something ultra soft and comfortable without zippers and buttons. We try to design styles that look perfect for day and night, yet you feel like you are wearing your pajamas."

These are just a sampling of the unique products and eco-conscious philosophies that work in harmony with the wellness world of spa. ■