

# in touch

a look at the latest products, treatments, and trends

## menu

As the definition of "spa" expands and evolves in the United States, so do treatment menus. Here, we explore some of the alternative modalities that are on the rise.

## energy surge

**acupuncture** An alternative therapy that is becoming increasingly popular, acupuncture originated in China more than 5,000 years ago. Licensed acupuncturists treat conditions like fatigue, stress, headaches, anxiety, skin problems, and more. Based on Traditional Chinese Medicine, the practice of acupuncture in the United States is regulated on a state-by-state basis. Regulating agencies and licensing boards in individual states determine who is allowed to practice acupuncture and the training required. According to Troy Petenbrink, spokesperson for the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM), 39 states and the District of Columbia have licensing boards that allow the practice of acupuncture by non-physicians. Other states allow only licensed medical physicians to practice or have yet to even recognize acupuncture as a medical treatment. Legislation remains pending in many states. In those states that allow acupuncture by non-physicians, most require practitioners

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react differently from treatment to treatment based on what's going on in their lives." Guests at the Lake Austin Spa Resort usually stay three to five days, and they'll generally get one type of treatment once and then try others. Says Metzger: "We get an amazing percentage of return guests, and they are getting the craniosacral treatments again and requesting the same therapists year after year. In this type of treatment, the client develops a stronger bond with his or her therapist." Metzger considers craniosacral treatments a form of energy balancing and refers to it as "spring cleaning of the emotions." He says that he's seen an increase of these types of treatments over the years and attributes it to the growing popularity of Eastern modalities.



Melissa Murphy, lead therapist at the resort, says that guests love the way they feel after a treatment. "It's just like bliss," she says. "It puts you in a very relaxed, deep, meditative state. It helps get rid of stress out of the body. Physically, it's excellent for migraines and headaches and anything from vertigo to a number of things. It also works on your emotions. Some people will have healing responses either during the session or afterwards." Ten massage therapists at the resort are trained in craniosacral.

Mariann Roberts, assistant spa director at **The Spa at The Sagamore** (Bolton Landing, NY) says that their craniosacral treatment, which costs \$95 plus 18 percent service charge for 50 minutes, is becoming more popular. Roberts says that the clients who ask for this treatment come with a knowledge of it. The Spa's menu describes the treatment as "a gentle non-invasive technique that balances the rhythm of the craniosacral system and facilitates the release of soft tissue or structural restrictions." After learning that they would be losing the two spa therapists who were certified, Roberts said that they decided to pay half the cost of schooling at the **Upledger Institute** for interested staff members. "Last year we sent about six therapists," Roberts says. "It's not in our top three treatment requests, but it's up there. We wanted to keep it on our menu. The guests who have had it are amazed at the results because there was barely any touching, and the moves were so slight. Sometimes lighter is better."—*Julie Sinclair*

**magnetic therapy** Intended to speed the healing process and ease pain, Magnetic Therapy at **Cal-a-Vie Spa** (Vista, CA) is purported to increase circulation and bring blood to the tissues. With the guest lying face down on a magnetic mattress and pillow, the treatment begins with the therapist placing negatively charged magnetic pads from Nikken, a company specializing in advanced magnetic technology, on the client's midline or chakra areas. According to spa manager Karen Sevene, blood has a magnetic component that is attracted by the magnets. The magnets help increase blood flow as does a magnetic roller that is run along pressure points. The treatment also involves some shiatsu and energy work to assist in the movement of energy. The spa recommends this \$95, 50-minute therapy to those suffering from chronic pain or

muscle soreness. According to Sevene, it's a treatment that is generally chosen by those guests who are looking for something a little different or as a complement to more traditional treatments. —*H.M.*

**polarity** The culmination of a lifetime of work and study by osteopath, naturopath, and chiropractor Dr. Randolph Stone (1890–1981), Polarity Therapy combines Eastern and Western philosophies into an energy-based healing modality.

Polarity Therapy consists of four primary areas of emphasis—energetic contact, diet, exercise, and lifestyle awareness. The American Polarity Therapy Association recognizes two levels of certification: An Associate Polarity Practitioner (APP) goes through 155 hours of training, and a Registered Polarity Practitioner (RPP) completes 675 hours.

Christie Carson, spa therapy manager at **The Spa at Vista Clara Ranch** (Santa Fe, NM) says that she recommends a polarity session for guests who need a more subtle adjustment. The Spa at Vista Clara Ranch is a destination spa with three-, five-, and seven-day stays, and one treatment is included per day in the cost. To make arrangements before their arrival, Carson speaks with guests beforehand and helps them choose the treatments that will best serve their individual intentions for coming to the spa. "I'll get a feel for where they're at. If there's been trauma or a lot of stress, I'll know they need some other form of therapy," she says. "I describe Polarity as one of our energy treatments like craniosacral and raindrop therapy, which we just added. It's not body work, it's subtle energetic adjustment." The Polarity treatment is \$90 for 50 minutes or \$135 for 75 minutes. Carson's goal is to help her guests get grounded and balanced in their everyday lives and believes that energy is part of the equation. "Everything goes hand-in-hand. When you work on the body, you're also working on the spirit and the emotions. Craniosacral and Polarity can address this. Some clients will fall deeply asleep. Others will have cathartic emotional releases," she says.

**The Spa at Grandover Resort and Conference Center** (Greensboro, NC) offers a \$75, 50-minute Polarity treatment that's described on the menu as "a gentle healing technique that strengthens and balances energy and removes blocks in its flow to promote feelings of deep peace, relaxation, and well-being." Spa director Shelly Spear says that Polarity has been on the menu the entire three years the spa has been open. "Since it's different, it's energy work, and you keep your clothes on, it's not as popular as a full-body massage," she says. "But it does bring in a few people every once in a while."

Diane Trieste, director of spa and product development for **Canyon Ranch**, says that they've been offering Polarity for the past ten years. How many people are getting sessions? "Enough to keep [Polarity] in the service guide," Trieste says. "We evaluate the services regularly. When things aren't being booked, we take it off. When something is on the menu, it means it's requested weekly or at least monthly." Listed under "balancing therapies" in their *continued on page 36*

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program book, it's described as "a combination of ancient Eastern and modern Western healing systems. Polarity therapists view the entire body as an energy field with positive, negative, and neutral currents. The bodywork techniques used range from gentle touch to pressure point work, rhythmic rocking, passive unwinding, and resonance-of-energy work. The therapist aims to restore balance to the body's energy field, bringing about deep relaxation and emotional calming." Trieste says that it's a lovely treatment for people who are not familiar with body treatments. "It embraces many techniques into one," she says. "It can be very interactive and yet very peaceful. And it can be less-interactive from a guest's standpoint." A Polarity treatment is \$95 for 50 minutes and \$190 for 100 minutes.—J.S.



**reiki** Reiki (pronounced RAY-key) was developed from ancient Japanese teachings by Dr Mikao Usui (1865–1926) after many years of study, research, and meditation. The name comes from two Japanese words, "Rei" and "Ki," that together mean "spiritually guided life energy" and that are commonly known as Universal Life Energy. A Reiki practitioner channels Universal Life Energy to the recipient. A Reiki session helps to harmonize body, mind, and spirit. To do Reiki on another person, one must be trained by a Reiki Master.

Tammie Baker, owner of the **Tyler Mason Salon Spa** (Indianapolis) has been offering a \$35, 30-minute Reiki session for two years. "I'm not a massage therapist myself, and before I got into this business I was skeptical of these types of treatments," she says. "Then I experienced it." Baker now has two massage therapists who are trained in Reiki. In the past three months, the spa has given nine Reiki sessions to clients. "We do not promote it much. Reiki is not in our packages, so people must have [specifically requested] the treatments," says Baker.

Sal Ornelas, spa director at **Spa Pura** (Chicago), says that they have had eight requests for Reiki in the past month and have offered it since they opened the day spa in November of 2001. "We wanted to offer unique services here," Ornelas says. "It's definitely something we're going to keep." Their Reiki treatment is \$85 for a 60-minute session.

Combining Reiki with hypnotherapy, **Noelle Spa** (Stanford, CT) offers a \$150, 70-minute treatment called *The Journey of Intention*. Jo Ann Wolff, director of the health and healing center, says that the idea for the treatment began during a discussion between Nancy Klase (who's a trained hypnotist) and herself on how to enhance the experience for clients. The two decided to work together. *The Journey* begins by the client coming in with an intention—whether it be as simple as adding more joy in their lives or as serious as dealing with chemotherapy. "We ask them questions about their lives and what they would like to experience differently," says Wolff. "Nancy then starts guided imagery as the client lies on the table and works with the client's unconscious mind, bringing them into a state of relaxation. She asks questions that help unlock unconscious

memories that might be the source of the client's pain or problem. During this time, I administer Reiki." Wolff says that the treatment can even focus on future projections. "It's about discovering your soul's purpose," says Wolff. Noelle Spa has been offering the *Journey of Intention* for three years and has approximately one client experiencing it per week. "It's popular during holiday time," says Wolff. "And wives get it for the husbands after they've experienced it."

The **Wilderness Adventure Spa** at Spring Creek Ranch (Jackson Hole, WY) offers Reiki on Horseback. The sessions cost \$225 for 90 minutes and have been offered since the spa opened this past August. "The therapist who does it is a Reiki Master and is very skilled in working with horses and therapies," notes spa director Grace Mahoney. "She will either put the person on the horse and sit behind them, or she'll lead a group and do a Reiki circle on horseback." Mahoney says that doing the Reiki with a horse adds to the strength of the energy. The treatment begins with a silent, meditative walk into the wilderness. "Then you get off the horse and connect with it," Mahoney says. "You can actually see the horse closing it's eyes as it's relaxing; it knows the energy work is going on." Then the participants get back on the horses for more Reiki and do a silent meditative walk back from the wilderness. Says Mahoney, "It's dead silent out there, so it makes it easy to concentrate on the energy circle. It's a really powerful treatment."—J.S. ✨

## for more information

- **ACUPUNCTURE:** National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM), 11 Canal Center Plaza, Suite 300, Alexandria, VA 22314; (703) 548-9004; [www.nccaom.org](http://www.nccaom.org)
- **COLOR AND LIGHT THERAPY:** Light Therapy Institute, 1055 W. College Avenue #107, Santa Rosa, CA 95401; (707) 525-4747
- **CRANIOSACRAL:** Upledger Institute, 11211 Prosperity Farms Road, D-235, Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33410; (800) 233-5880 ext. 51326; [www.upledger.com](http://www.upledger.com)
- **MAGNETIC THERAPY:** Bio-Electro-Magnetics Institute, 2490 West Moana Lane, Reno, NV 89509; (702) 827-9099
- **POLARITY:** American Polarity Therapy Association (APTA), P.O. Box 19858, Boulder, CO 80308; (303) 545-2080; [www.polaritytherapy.org](http://www.polaritytherapy.org)
- **REIKI:** International Association of Reiki Professionals, P.O. Box 481, Winchester, MA 01890, (781) 729-3530; [www.iarp.org](http://www.iarp.org)