

By Ryan Zaharako

Tiny Bubbles

A tranquil tub treatment bathes our columnist in hyperoxygenated water.

NEARLY TWO YEARS AGO, THIS MAGAZINE SENT ME TO A spa for the first time in my life. Before then, I assumed it was a secret sanctuary where only women went to unwind. Since then, I've been massaged, waxed, peeled, pedicured, wrapped, exfoliated and kneaded. However—like most guys—I still find it difficult to relinquish the stress of everyday life during spa sessions.

With this in mind, I booked an appointment for NanoSpa Immersion Therapy (60 min./\$130) at LeSpa (lespala.com) at Sofitel LA in Los Angeles. My intention was to fully submit to a relaxing treatment designed to remove pore-clogging debris, soften and hydrate the skin, as well as boost the metabolism. The intimate environment would give me a chance to sit in a tub of oxygen-infused water with nothing to occupy my mind but my own thoughts.

LeSpa is a luxury facility that caters to privacy. When I arrived for my appointment, I met with manager Kory Keith. She explained the uniqueness of the treatment I was about to receive: It's a patented process that injects nano-sized oxygen bubbles into a hydrotherapeutic bath featuring color therapy. The treated water has an oxygen density five times greater than normal H₂O. Soaking in it stimulates circulation and cellular respiration.

The therapy also replenishes skin cells and speeds up the body's own healing process. I was particularly interested in this aspect of the treatment since

I recently had shoulder surgery. "We're the only spa in the United States that has the NanoSpa generator," Keith told me. Until now, the technology had only been available in Japan's most exclusive spas and medical facilities.

Keith led me through the warm and inviting espresso-colored interior of the spa. I changed in a plush locker room and then made my way to the V.I.P. spa suite. Excited to have some much-needed alone time, I hopped into the illuminated bathtub and allowed my body to adjust to the soothing, hyperoxygenated water.

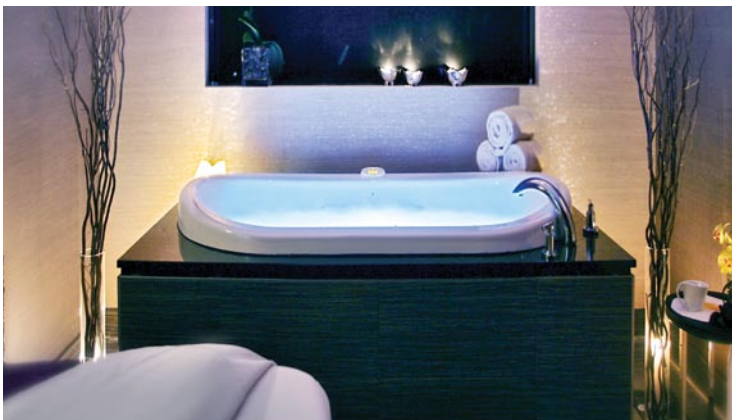
At first, the feeling of tiny bubbles hitting my skin was unnerving. Once I adjusted to the tingling sensation, it felt nice. I tried to relax as the soft hues of multicolored mood lights glowed hypnotically beneath the warm water, shifting from red to purple to pink to blue. But my mind soon began to wander as thoughts of deadlines, errands, appointments and other distractions returned to my consciousness.

"Why can't I relax in this perfect setting?" I asked myself. After a few exasperating minutes, I closed my eyes and began to meditate. "Just be in the moment," I repeated to myself. As I began to relax, I let my body slip to the bottom of the tub so the oxygen-rich microbubbles could work their magic.

For the last half of my treatment, my mind was at ease, and I'd finally reached a state of tranquility. As my body temperature rose, I turned on the faucet and allowed a refreshing, cool blast of water to mix in with the warm soak. I never imagined taking a bath could be so rejuvenating.

When the session was over, I noticed that my skin looked radiant, the eczema under my eyes had disappeared, and I was completely relaxed for the first time in weeks. Most of all, I had finally submitted to the spa experience like never before. ●

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