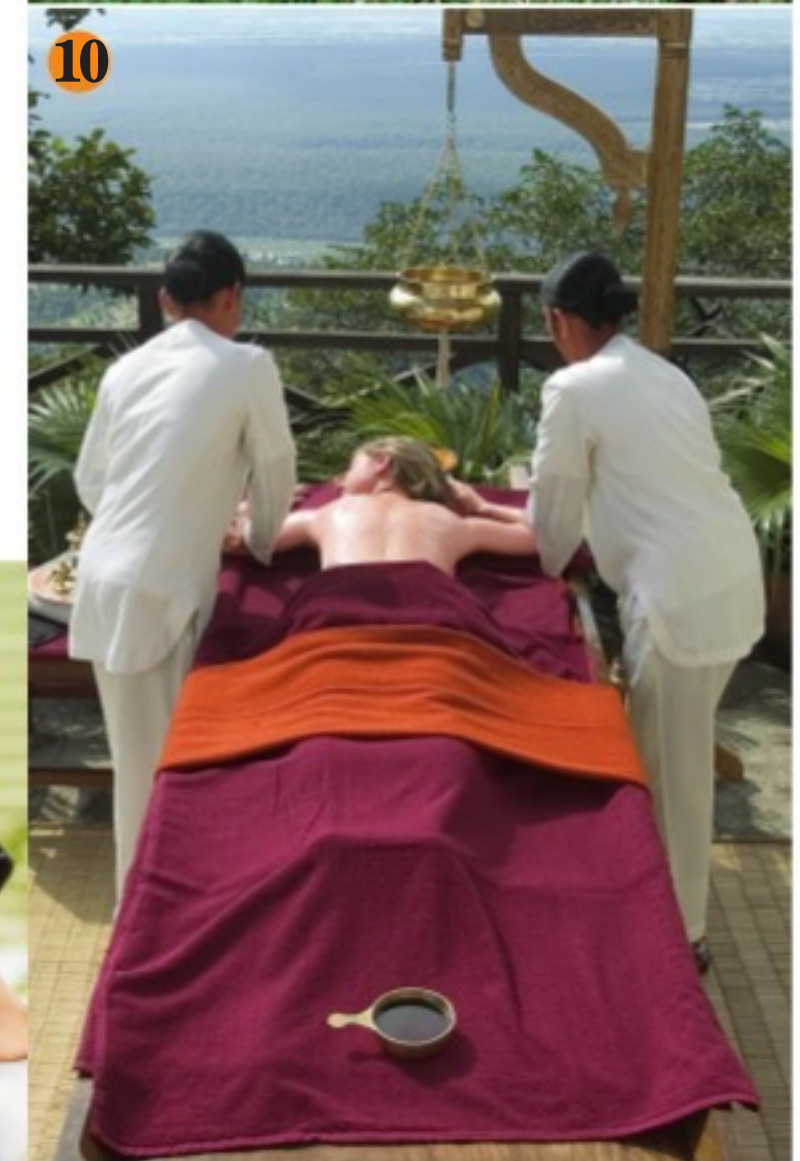




Luxury in the lap of NATURE

We look at how the age-old science of ayurveda has taken a luxurious route, with more consumers taking to it for a holistic experience. By Simi Kuriakose



THE mention of ayurveda conjures images of a fragrant, oily massage in a no-frills space. But over the past few years, the science of ayurveda has donned a swanky avatar. From effective beauty products to detoxifying treatments, this ancient science is now a part of the therapeutic regimen of the swish set. Consumers not only in India, but from all over the world are taking to it when they want a holistic balance of health, body and mind, and an escape from their cumbersome city life. We take a look at how this natural science has taken a luxe approach in domains such as wellness and beauty.

HOLISTIC APPROACH FOR THE AFFLUENT
While the age-old science of ayurveda was targeted to everyday living, it has now become a detox mantra for the affluent. This is also why there are new places coming up to offer seen some of the best wellness retreats—Ananda in the Himalayas and Naad Wellness, among others. We asked Mahesh Natarajan, Senior VP, Sales, Business Devel-

opment & Marketing, IHHR Hospitality Ltd. of Ananda In the Himalayas about how this science is now updated to suit the holistic needs of the luxury consumer. He says, “Ayurveda is actually a 5000-year-old science. The West ignored our traditional approaches for many years, till the time research showed them the actual benefits of ayurvedic medicine and the way of life that it propagates. Even functional medicine is loosely based on the principles of ayurveda. Now, more people are benefitted by simple lifestyle changes, how they eat (for example turmeric lattes), what and when they eat, sleep management, etc., and this is why ayurveda is so popular. That apart, many Indian brands are also coming up with natural beauty products upfront, with inspiration from ayurvedic roots, which has helped this boom.”
Dr. Sreelakshmi K, Ayurveda Consultant of Naad Wellness has yet another point of view. She says, “Authentic ayurvedic therapies in India were limited only to ayurvedic hospitals and rustic wellness centres. There was a huge gap between premium wellness destinations and such centres, which is changing now.” How does ayurveda benefit a per-

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When it comes to beauty, ayurveda offers solutions to address the root cause rather than masking the symptoms. ASTHA KRIPLANI Head, Shankara India

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son? She adds, “Ayurveda emphasises on a 360-degree approach to a person’s health — an amalgamation of therapies, *kriyas*, cuisine, yoga and mindfulness/meditation.”

NATURAL GOODNESS FOR SKIN
Not just as part of wellness, ayurveda is also a main element in the beauty industry. In fact, there’s been a surge in luxury ayurvedic beauty companies in India. Forest Essentials by Mira Kulkarni started out as a handmade soap company. But in no time it has turned into one of India’s primary brands in the luxury ayurveda segment, revolutionising traditional ayurveda. “When it comes to luxury beauty, customers today are concerned about what goes into the making of the products they use and high-quality standards. Ayurveda intrinsically suggests a slow and diligent approach to beauty, as opposed to momentary instant results. Slow beauty is about allowing routines to be the same for long enough that you start to see a positive change in the way you look and feel,” says Neha Rawla, Brand Communications, Forest Essentials. That said, how does

ayurveda, a term that literally means ‘science of life’, translate to beauty? “To simplistically decode, ayurvedic beauty—it is to use only fresh, pure, seasonal ingredients in your food and your skin and hair, as well as have a serene and compassionate nature,” adds Rawla.
Another market leader in this segment is Shankara. A company that started in Texas in 2001, the luxury ayurveda brand launched in India in 2018. Astha Kriplani, head, Shankara Ayurveda India, talks about the growing popularity of ayurvedic beauty in the country, “As the world goes green, so does our lifestyles and the demand for ayurvedic and natural cosmetics. There is a growing concern over the side-effects of chemical-based products. Ayurveda offers solutions to address the root cause rather than masking the symptoms. It states what one cannot eat, and what should not be put on the skin. And this is leading to consumers gravitating towards specialised ayurvedic skincare products that assure one’s well-being both inside as well as outside.”

- 1, 2, 4&10 Ananda In the Himalayas
- 3, 7-9 Naad Wellness
- 5 Ayurvedic beauty products from Shankara
- 6 Ayurvedic beauty product from Forest Essentials