



# Trends-In-Sight: U.S. Spa Market Activity

By Amy Marks-McGee

According to the International Spa Association (ISPA), the U.S. spa market generated approximately \$14 billion in revenue in 2012, a 4.7% increase from 2011. Natural treatments inspired from animal by-products, niche service bars, mobile spa services and Do-It-Yourself (DIY) at-home beauty devices are the latest activity happening in the U.S. market.

## Birds, Mollusks, and Insects...Oh My!

In the beauty and spa industry, R&D specialists and marketers alike look to nature for product inspiration. The newest spa treatments are inspired by birds, mollusks and insects! The Shizuka Spa in New York City offers "The Geisha Facial," also known as a "Bird Poop Facial," which is a Japanese treatment made with Asian Nightingale excrement and rice bran. It is believed that the bird waste contains a natural enzyme from its seed diet and this enzyme is said to smooth and soften the skin.

Not in the U.S. yet, another odd animal inspired treatment from Japan is the snail facial. This approach to the strong trend to achieve beautiful skin features snails that crawl on a customer's face while secreting mucus. Racked.com interviewed U.S. dermatologist Dr. Ariel Ostad on the effectiveness of the snail facial. Interestingly, Dr. Ostad confirmed that the snails' secretion contains hyaluronic acid, which is the chemical injected into the face to plump up lines and is also an active ingredient formulated in products such as Juvéderm® and Restylane. However, Dr. Ostad does not believe the new treatment is medically or scientifically sound and the hyaluronic acid from the snails will not penetrate the skin. Recent work on enzymatically cleaved hyaluronic acid shows that oligomers of the material can indeed penetrate the skin and deliver products topically.

For plumping and tightening the skin, bee venom is the latest buzz. Suddenly Slimmer MedSpa in Phoenix, AZ was one of the first U.S. spas to offer a Bee Sting Facial treatment while Connecticut-based Bee Well Therapy services the North American market with at-home Bee Venom Therapy (BVT) treatments and training. BeeVinity by Ellie Lobel features an All Natural Bee Venom Face Cream made in the U.S.A. Heaven Skincare USA by Deborah Mitchell is known for its Signature Bee Venom Mask, which is said to "tighten, lift, and firm skin to help banish frown lines and wrinkles." It is also available in the Black Label, a highly-concentrated formula.

## At Your Service

Niche service bars that focus on one treatment are the latest in spa trends. Blow dry bars, wax bars, make up and nail services are gaining popularity.

Blow dry bars are in style and Blow pioneered the blow dry bar trend when it launched in 2005 in New York City. In 2012, Blow partnered with Nordstrom, a high-end department store, and introduced two of its signature Blow bars in California locations with additional openings expected in select stores. Macy's Herald Square department store in New York City launched a "blow-pod dry-styling post" in the fall 2013. Founded in 2010 in the U.S., Drybar is a blow dry bar with locations in California, New York City, Texas, Georgia, Arizona, Washington DC, Boston and Chicago; all specialize in blow outs for \$40.00. According to a New York magazine October 2013 article, the company had \$19 million in sales in 2012.

Stript Wax Bar is "a boutique dedicated to the art of waxing" with seven California locations. The company received attention when it introduced the "Vajacial" also known as a "Peach Smoothie," which is "a facial for the vagina." The four step spa treatment is meant to be performed a week after a women's waxing. Boom Boom Brow Bar in New York City specializes in waxing eye brows and does "500 a month (over 20,000 in 2012)." Benefit, the kitsch makeup brand, similarly offers waxing, tinting and lash services at its Brow Bars.

Nails and makeup play a significant role in the beauty market and new twists on these spa services are appearing. Manicube delivers a 15 minute manicure performed at your office in the New York City and Boston areas. Rouge New York is a new makeup bar with six makeup artists founded by actress Stephanie March and makeup artist Rebecca Perkins from the U.S. Law & Order SVU television show.

For a full spa experience, MobileSpa delivers facials, massages, manicures and pedicures to customers in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, New York City, Washington, D.C. and Los Angeles. The Red Door by Elizabeth Arden debuted a new Union Square New York City location, which features "speed services" such as blowouts, makeup applications, manicures and waxes and "signature services" including facials and massages.

## DIY At-Home Beauty Devices

With consumers' busy schedules and tighter pockets due to the staggering U.S. economy, some are opting for DIY spa treatments with the use of at-home beauty devices. Beauty devices range from facial cleansers to acne elimination; to fine line and wrinkle reduction and skin firming; to hair removal. A tell-tale sign of the importance of at-home beauty devices is L'Oréal's recent 2011 acquisition of Pacific Bioscience Laboratories, Inc., the marketer of Clarisonic devices. According to Kline & Company, Inc., a Parsippany, New Jersey based market research firm, the at-home beauty devices market has grown nearly 22% globally in 2012. In 2011, Kline estimated the U.S. market to be worth approximately \$1 billion at the retail level.

Clarisonic's newest skincare launch is Deep Pore Detoxifying Solution with Clarisonic's patented Deep Pore Brush Head used with the company's Mia 2 Sonic Skin Cleansing Brush, Deep Pore Daily Cleanser and Detoxifying Clay Mask. In October 2013, Clarisonic introduced the Pedi system for rough, dry heels and toes and includes the Pedi Sonic device, brush head, foot-smoothing and softening treatments and a foot-renewing peel. Bliss FatGirlSlim Lean Machine™ is the first power tool in the FatGirlSlim range with a vacuum massager paired with FatGirlSlim cream "to visibly reduce the appearance of cellulite and give legs, buttocks, and abs a more contoured look." The device won Harper's Bazaar Best Body Innovation, Beauty Hot 100 2013 and the 2013 U.S. Star Beauty Award. CandyLipz released a novel "instant lip-enhancement device" named the Xtreme Lip-Shaper® System, which uses a "3,500-year-old Chinese 'cupping' (suction)" method to create full, pouty lips.

No! No! Hair is a leading hair removal device promoted on Home Shopping Network (HSN) and was named "Most Innovative Product" by HSN in April 2013. The brand also entered 950 Bed Bath &

Beyond stores nationwide. Tria also offers hair removal systems, which are sold through QVC (Quality, Value, and Convenience), HSN's competitor. However, the newest device is Tria's Age-Defying Laser. The product employs "targeted beams of light [that] work below the skin's surface to accelerate collagen and elastin production for visibly younger and more radiant skin." Like other brands, Tria is expanding distribution and in October 2013, the company announced its partnership with Barneys New York, the first U.S. retailer to feature Tria's full portfolio of products in-store. For consumers with hair loss issues, there are at-home beauty devices that use laser light to stimulate hair growth, such as the HairMax LaserComb and the Grande HAIR Stimulating Laser Comb.

## The Future of Spa

International Spa Association (ISPA) reported the total number of U.S. spa visits increased to 160 million and the average guest spent \$87 per visit in 2012 compared to the previous year. As consumers "perpetually" seek eternal youth, and spas offer the latest treatments and technologies, their interest in spa services and products will continue to increase. Watch for new and unique natural treatments inspired from animal by-products, niche service bars, mobile spa services and DIY at-home beauty devices. ■



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