



Your winter whine

My circulation has a short circuit.

Division Street Russian and Turkish Baths

Sweat in a hot room, jump in a cold pool, repeat, repeat, repeat. That's the routine steeped in centuries of Eastern European tradition at this all-male bathhouse (separate female facilities will open in a month or so). A brief self-dunking in the impossibly icy bath follows multiple sittings in the pleasant dry heat of the hot room (or *banya*) to provide a cure for winter lethargy. While massages and oak branch scrubbing are available, it was the enveloping steam and ice-water submersion that shocked my viscous blood into pumping again, cleared up my clogged sinuses and had me sleeping like a pampered member of the *politburo* that evening. *\$20 admission.*—Patrick Wasser

Herbal wrap at Thousand Waves Spa

Per the spa's suggestion, I'd arrived 20 minutes before my appointment to work up a sweat—the better to absorb the qualities of the herbs—in the cedar-scented sauna and steam room. By the time I stripped and hit the bed in the treatment room, I was drenched in sweat; the aesthetician deftly bundled me, head to toe, in two sheets steamed in a bath of detoxifying, calming herbs like chamomile, rosehip and orange peel, topped with blankets and towels. For a moment I felt claustrophobic, but after wriggling my arms to get comfortable, I rested peacefully for 20 minutes in solitude. Post-treatment, I was unshakably Zen, glowing from within. *45 minutes for \$60.*—Jessica Herman

Hydrotherapy bath at Spacio

When I first slipped into this body-length tub, the 77 jets drilling my body from my heels to my shoulder blades put my stiff muscles at ease. That is, until the spa attendant jacked up the intensity of the jets and I was suddenly bobbing around like a potato in a boiling pot. Since one-person Jacuzzis aren't very exciting, this toasty half-hour bath got old quickly. Yet, the bath could help turn muscles to mush prior to a deep rubdown on marathon-weary legs or cramped calves, and the treatment did pump up my poor circulation: My toes felt less like Popsicles, even if just for the rest of the day. *30 minutes for \$55.*—Brenna O'Leary

Reflexology massage at the spa at the Four Seasons Hotel

This treatment, basically a fancy foot massage, purports to “enhance circulation and help balance body and mind.” With my general malaise, sleepiness and cold feet this time of year, I'll take all the balancing I can get. While working on my tootsies, my therapist told me reflexology stems from

TEA COZY After you've gotten your blood moving with the Four Seasons reflexology massage, chill out in the plush relaxation room.



DIY TLC | cold feet

The winter weather zaps all feeling from your hands and feet, which tend to suffer circulation problems when temperatures drop. Fortunately, **L'Occitane's Crushed Grape Polish** (which is essentially a body exfoliator) manages to put warmth back into your body. The vitamins and essential fatty acids in the grapes revitalize the skin, reaching below the surface to keep your blood pumping—and your toes and fingers working. Bonus: It smells so good you could (almost) eat it. *Available at L'Occitane, 900 N Michigan Ave (312-202-0906, loccitane.com).* *\$26.*—DB

the idea that every body part has a corresponding point on the feet, and if you activate those pressure points, you're “working from the inside out” to restore balance. Afterward, I was led to a relaxation room to recline on silk pillows and feast on Champagne and chocolate-covered strawberries. There's no question I felt relaxed and had warmer feet; all I want to know is, when can I move in? *25 minutes for \$65.*—Gretchen Kalwinski





Your winter whine

Death Valley's got nothing on my parched skin.

Olive oil body glow at Red Door Spa

The first part of this service was so basic, so obvious that I'm embarrassed I never thought to do it to myself. My therapist rubbed a mixture of olive oil and salt into my scaly skin, paying particular attention to the superdry areas—namely the elbows, knees and feet. The salt acts as an exfoliant, rubbing away dry skin cells, while the olive oil seeps into the fresh layer of skin. But just when I was ready to slap myself for paying so much, my therapist warned me *not* to attempt it at home—apparently she's heard about people overdoing it with the olive oil and becoming a slippery mess. After I was all oiled up, I hit the shower to wash it off. Then my therapist wiped me down with a towel and applied a layer of cucumber lotion to perk me up and seal in the oils. When I left the spa, my skin felt so smooth and hydrated, it somehow seemed thicker. *50 minutes for \$95.—DB*

Hydrating herbal body wrap at Chicago Male

My skin gets dry and itchy in the winter, and lotion doesn't seem to help. Aesthetician Matt Leyes wasn't surprised. He said I could slather myself with a whole bottle of Jergens, but without exfoliating first I'm just moisturizing dead skin cells. I lay on the table as he rubbed down my entire body with exfoliating gloves, then drizzled on a mixture of sesame and jojoba oils (he said they're closest to the skin's natural oils). Once I was fully saturated, he wrapped me in cotton sheets; while I was cocooned, he gave me a lymphatic-drainage facial massage, focusing on the lymph vessels to help push toxins down toward my lymph nodes (and out of my face). Leyes told me this detox would help lessen the dark circles under my eyes. It was the most relaxing hour I'd had in weeks, and my skin was in mint condition for days. *60 minutes for \$80.—Kris Vire*

Remineralizing and moisturizing marine algae wrap at Allyu

Unless I moisturize fiendishly during winter, my legs turn crocodile-esque, so I hoped this wrap would make up for all those times I jumped out of the shower and skipped body lotion. In the treatment room, the aesthetician dry-brushed my body with a rough loofah; applied an alpha-hydroxy and seaweed mixture to “draw out toxins”; and wrapped me in foil while she zapped zits using a “Tesla current” wand (surely Nikola Tesla never imagined his invention would be used for pimple popping, but the painless procedure did result in a clearer complexion). I felt relaxed afterward, sure, but was unconvinced my skin's moisture level had improved. True, my man noticed my smooth legs, but that was

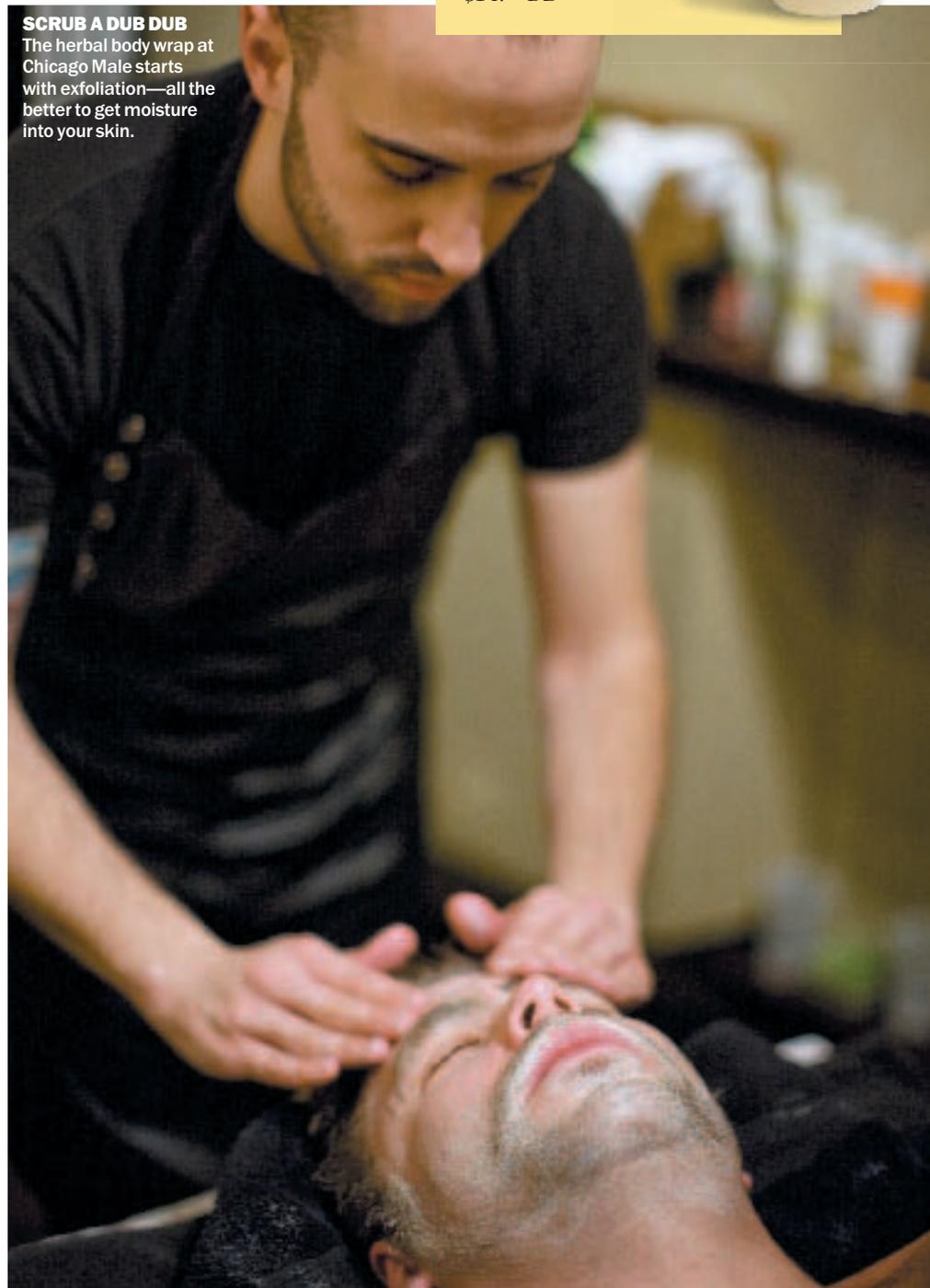
just because I shaved (another thing I don't usually bother with during winter). *60 minutes for \$100.—GK*

Body wrap at Spa Space

I climbed under the covers of the heated table, and the therapist rubbed my winter-weary skin with vanilla body butter. Next, he painted (literally—he used a paintbrush) my body with a liquid wax. With every stroke, I felt a little warmer and cozier. Then, he wrapped a blanket around me and massaged my scalp while the oils from the paraffin seeped into my skin. He took the wax off with a hot towel, and then gave me a fantastic massage. After he rubbed in a final layer of lotion, my skin was bursting with moisture. It felt like I'd just emerged from a wonderful hot shower for the rest of the day. *90 minutes for \$170.—DB*

SCRUB A DUB DUB

The herbal body wrap at Chicago Male starts with exfoliation—all the better to get moisture into your skin.

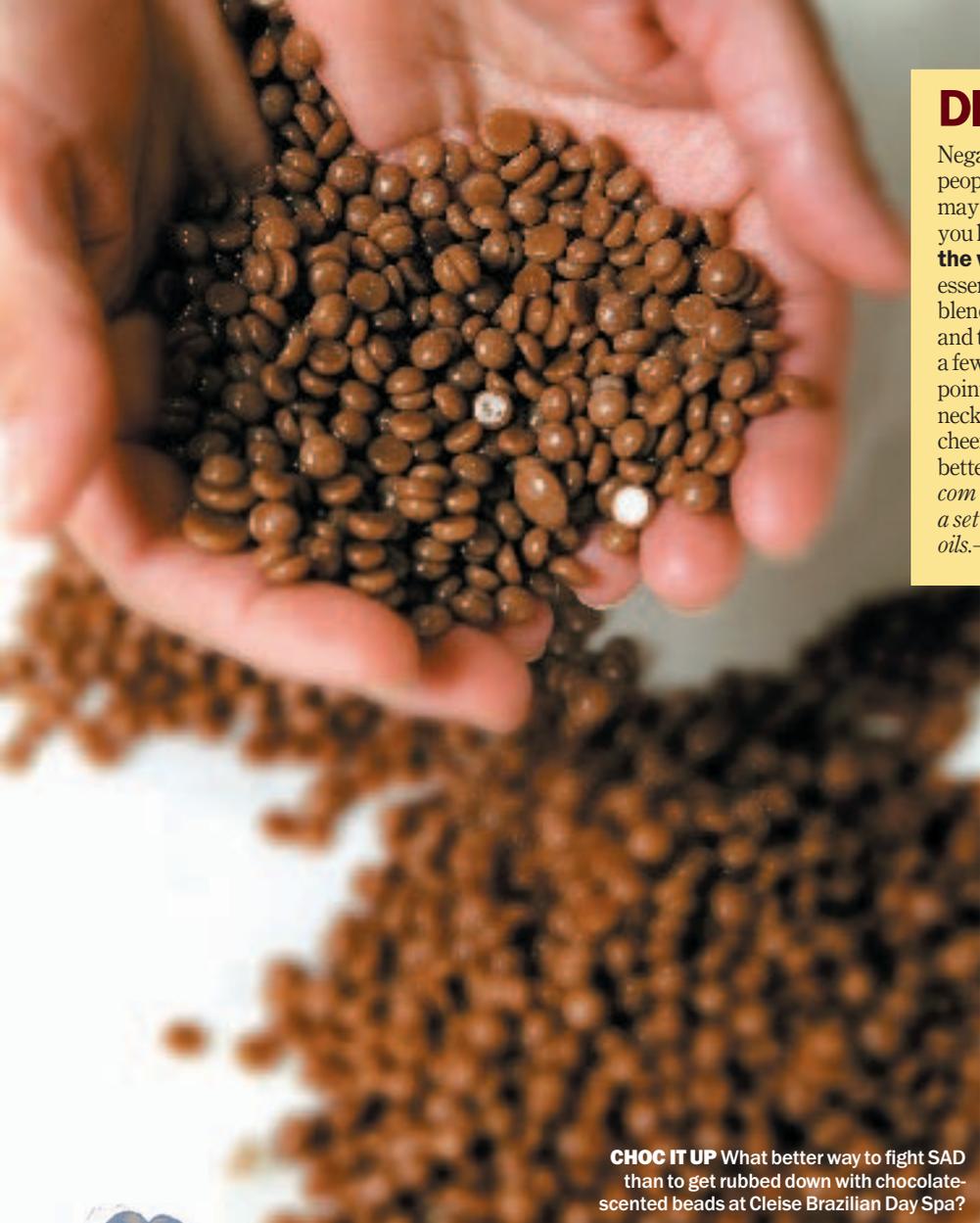


DIY TLC | dry skin

The ultra-moisturizing **H2O+ hydrating body gloss** will turn your skin from scaly and peeling to moisturized and shiny. The jojoba oils will keep your skin smooth and soft, while the green tea, Paraguay tea and gotu kola extract are believed to protect your skin from the environment. And God knows we need all the protection we can get while we wait for the damn bus.

Available at H2O+, 600 N Michigan Ave (312-397-1243, h2oplus.com). *\$14.—DB*





DIY TLC | bad mood

Negative temperatures make even the strongest people want to cry, but you may not have to shed a tear if you have **Philosophy's for the weepies oil**. The essential oils are made from a blend of orange, sweet almond and tangerine. Once you place a few drops on your pressure points (temples, wrists and neck), you'll feel a little cheerier and you'll smell a lot better. Available at *philosophy.com* (800-568-3151). \$25 for a set of sleepies and weepies oils.—DB



activated the detoxifying and hydrating properties in the mud and left my entire body feeling as soft as a baby's butt. *80 minutes for \$165.*—Amy Carr

Body chocolate glow at Cleise Brazilian Day Spa

During the darkest, coldest days of winter I medicate my depression with chocolate. What's one notch better? Being engulfed in chocolate at Cleise. To ready for my recipe for happiness, I stripped and put on a plastic thong (not for the naked-phobic), lay down in a body-shaped basin and got rubbed with a gritty chocolate-almond-mint exfoliant. After rinsing off, I lounged around in a robe and ate chocolate brownies while a chocolate-infused paraffin mixture was readied. Minutes later I came back to the basin and an aesthetician painted a layer of brown, highly chocolate-scented wax onto my entire body, and wrapped me in layers of foil. I sweated out impurities before the wax peeled right off. I felt fresh and rejuvenated, with serotonin and endorphins firing for the rest of the day. Plus, my skin was soft for a week after—and that put a smile on my face. *120 minutes for \$170.*—Madeline Nusser

CHOC IT UP What better way to fight SAD than to get rubbed down with chocolate-scented beads at Cleise Brazilian Day Spa?



Your winter whine This sunless, freezing weather is giving me a case of the grumps.

Meditation bath at Kaya Day Spa

I had high hopes for this treatment's ability to boost the serotonin levels that seasonal affective disorder depletes. It promises to "ground the mind and body" and "soak away the cares of the world" with the scents of sandalwood, pine and lavender. I was led into a private room with a huge bathtub, and crawled into the (already drawn) bath with 48 massaging water jets and colored lightbulbs that can be set to coordinate to your preferred mood: blue for serenity, red for creativity, etc. I chose orange (for energy) and I dug the idea until I started thinking I could easily create a similar experience for a lot less money in my own tub by plugging in colored Christmas

lights nearby. Also, the sides of the tub were very high and very vertical, which forced me to sit upright—not terribly comfy. But I did emerge from this aromatherapeutic treatment relaxed, if not a tiny bit giddy. *30 minutes for \$45.*—GK

Moor cocoon at Kiva Day Spa

Subzero wind chill. CTA delays. Salt stains on *all* of my boots. I'm not just SAD; I'm pissed. Though the thought of being wrapped in a tin-foil cocoon didn't immediately bring a smile to my face, I gave it a try for a chance to emerge as a beautiful, bitch-free butterfly. Kiva offers a 50-minute version of the service, but the exhilarating exfoliating massage in the extended cocoon was well worth the extra \$65. After being thoroughly exfoliated, I was placed on a sheet of Mylar and my naughty bits were strategically covered by a small hand towel while an aesthetician coated me from the neck down in a thick, green, algae-based mud (think *Wicked*). Baking in the foil and a heated blanket cocoon for 25 minutes

Acu-energetic therapy at exhale

Since I'm a SAD sufferer and get lethargic and cranky in winter, any treatment that claims to produce "a sense of wonderful expansiveness and a profound state of peace" has me at hello. When I entered exhale (freezing, pissed at public transit), the staff gave me a robe and chamomile tea while I waited in the quiet room for my acupuncturist. She asked about my food cravings and energy levels; since I complained of insomnia and stress, she told me that my adrenal gland—which helps to regulate stress-managing chemicals—was overtaxed. To fix this, she inserted 15 needles into my forehead, wrists and feet, then pressed vibrating tuning forks to those points to "align my chi." Outside, a friend waited in a warm car to drive me home. Who cares if it was the tea, quiet room, acupuncture or ride? At the end of the session, I truly felt happier. *60 minutes for \$150.*—GK