

# THERAPY

**Adele Rosi finds Ayurvedic medicine an eye-opener.**

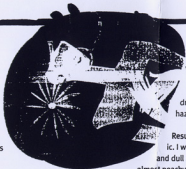
**Where:** Beaute Par Zai, Suite 1005, Queen's Place, 74 Queen's Road Central (tel: 2524-1272). A selection of treatments is on offer, from waxing to massage to slimming therapies.

**What:** Meaning "science of life" (from *ayur*, the Sanskrit word for life, and *veda*, which translates as knowledge), holistic, Ayurvedic medicine balances the body's life energies (*doshas*). Although Ayurvedic treatments are being touted in the West as the "latest" things in health and beauty, India has been onto them for about 5,000 years. *Neeriti dhara* is an Ayurvedic facial therapy that concentrates on rejuvenating the eyes. Salon owner Nilgar Qureshi suggested combining it with an oxy-essential treatment (essential oils and oxygen are inhaled through a mask).

**Who:** Ayurvedic treatments are second-nature to Qureshi, who grew up in Pakistan where they are considered everyday essentials. She also has a background in anatomy and physiology and more than 15 years' experience as a therapist.

**Why:** Pollution, age and late nights are all reflected in the eyes. *Neeriti dhara* helps smooth crow's feet and facial lines, and reduces puffiness and eye-bags.

**How:** Qureshi massaged my neck and shoulders with rosemary and lavender oils to help me relax. She massaged my eye sockets, temples and sinus area to drain any congestion, and applied a vitamin-E cream and an anti-wrinkle cream, made of plant extracts, around my eyes. She wafted a lighted herbal stick of camomile, bergamot and euphrasia a few centimetres from my face. It gave off a little heat and an aroma Qureshi encouraged me to inhale. Cool green-tea and camomile compresses were placed over my eyes, then a porous ginseng mask was applied to my face. When the ginseng was half-dry Qureshi put the oxygen mask (like those in aircraft) over my nose and mouth and told me to breathe deeply. Twenty minutes later it



was off with both masks and on with what she called a "pond" round each eye: rolls of flour dough into which she dropped an infusion of witch hazel, neroli and frankincense.

**Results:** The change was dramatic. I went in with sore, red eyes and dull skin and came out with an almost peachy complexion and wider eyes that were clearer than they have been in years. They felt cool and "peppermint fresh". Although I had been wary of the witch hazel drops they didn't sting. I was addicted to the oxy-essential mask, which made me feel like I was breathing mountain air. Relaxing? I dozed off and was woken by the sound of my snoring.

**Bottom line:** *Neeriti dhara*: \$450 an hour; oxy-essential mask: \$200 for 20 minutes. One of the oldest beauty salons in Hong Kong, Beaute Par Zai is celebrating its 25th anniversary and is offering discounts on all treatments.

**Verdict:** Can I have some more, please? [adele@scmp.com](mailto:adele@scmp.com)