

New Town Therapy – go on and pamper yourself

Enjoy a little discount on TLC at New Town Therapy on us!

New Town Therapy is a hidden gem in Edinburgh's city centre – nestled in the basement of a Dundas Street tenement the salon's frontage is unassuming and minimal. Indeed, you would be forgiven if, like me, you missed it the first time.



For the spa-savvy among us, NTT doesn't have the superficial 'luxury' we might expect from a centre-of-town Spa – there's no plush velvet or fluffy carpets or glasses of bubbles on arrival. No breathy-voiced receptionist in a lab coat, nor the signatory chiming music that usually hails ones entry into the spa. But don't be put off by the lack of glitzy aesthetic when you walk through the doors: instead, note the considerate staff; greeting you with a welcoming smile and a genuine interest in your well-being. There is something much more substantial – and valuable – on offer here.

Intrigued? Ever the willing guinea-pig I went for a full-on pamper day to find out what makes NTT stand out from the crowd.



Within minutes of my arrival I was sat on a comfortable couch, a cup of herbal tea in hand, and my therapist, Barbara, in front of me; pen and client information form at the ready! I was asked about any existing health concerns, medications and my reasons for being there. Most importantly – I was asked what I wanted to achieve from my treatments. All too often a spa treatment is a quick pick-me-up with not too much thought or consideration for the individual going on. Barbara

instantly made it clear that it was her job to make sure the treatments were going to benefit me in a substantial and measurable way that were specific to me. This was a proper therapist-client consultation, make no mistake.

From my personal preferences to my genetic code – Barbara took a genuine and passionate interest in my health. It got me thinking about it too: what about that twinge down my leg that's been bothering me? And those knotted shoulders? And that rough bit of skin on my cheek? Would Barbara know how to tackle it all?

We kicked off with a manicure as Barbara was keen to test out her new Vinylux polishes. I also sampled some of her own home-made body butter which was massaged into my hands and arms (bliss) leaving them soft and hydrated. Miracle no.1.

I opted for a clear pink with a hint of sparkle at Barbara's suggestion, which she skilfully applied. Then it was straight into the footbath. Hot bubbling water with magnesium salts eased the sore spots and softened up the skin a treat before another go at Vinylux; this time a deep, sassy red. Et Voila! An absolutely flawless application (and the best I've had yet). As we were there for the long-haul I came prepared: a fifteen minute break to put my feet up with a magazine and a top-up of herbal tea allowed time for the polish to set whilst I chomped on some lunch (Costa's gluten free festive Wrap – not bad!) I also caught up with NTT's owner, Merelle Aydim, sports massage therapist and lash extension guru. Merelle filled me in on NTT's ethos – essentially she wanted to set up a business that provided everything under one roof. Here you will find massage, skincare, pilates, yoga and all the usual beauty treatments you would expect, to name but a few. Merelle looks to take on therapists who are madly passionate about what they do – it's no surprise that in its short 8 months it has grown its client base substantially.



After lunch it was on to the fun part (or is that the science part?) as Barbara asked me to stick my head in a strange sci-fi-esque tube complete with little black curtains and a bundle of flashy bulbs. The purpose of this machine (the *Observe 520*) is to look at different levels of your skin which it does by using different wavelengths. The most pronounced photo revealed the UV damage in my skin. Being a very pale redhead with freckles (thanks universe) I expected to see a fair bit of damage but I was still totally shocked. Barbara showed me photos of her own skin and her colleagues beforehand so the comparison was pretty stark. I take good care of my skin – I try to eat right, drink right and protect with an SPF50 in the summer, so seeing my be-speckled, avatar face, has really motivated me to start doing more for my skin. I now have a whole new SPF regime recommended to use vigilantly for summer and winter!

Next up I was taken to the treatment room to get cosy for my facial and massage. Dermaiduals is the skincare range of her choice. She has worked for twenty years in this industry and it has taken her a long time to find a range she really believes in (she also uses Environ). The products are coined as 'skin-similar' having a 'sheet-like' structure, much like our own skin.

After my facial I could see why Dermaiduals is the choice range. Since my facial I have converted to Dermaiduals after 16 years of faithfully using the same high-end skin-care range. The steps she used were: cleansing with DMS cleansing milk; exfoliating with a mixture of the enzyme peel (papaya extract) and Dermaiduals treatment gel (salicylic acid based) to gently break down the bonds between the dead skin cells on the surface. She then applied a blend of various nanoparticles to suit my dry, sensitive skin, mixed together with a vitamin A based gel. The penetration was enhanced using sonophoresis – gentle sound waves from a metal appliance which create microscopic indentations in the skin's surface – allowing

molecules to pass through the surface of the skin. A strangely tingling feeling spread over my skin and made my ears buzz – but it was not unpleasant.

Then a thick layer of Vitamin serum mask was applied over the gel blend, which was for additional hydration and nourishment. The treatment concluded with a deeply relaxing facial massage using the DMS massage cream.

It all sounds a bit technical, and I have to admit to having studied a bioscience degree myself a long time ago and having worked in top-end skincare, so I knew that she was hitting the nail on the head. Barbara took a genuine and passionate interest in the science of my skin – and how else would she know which products it really needs? For the skin nerds among us it's a relief to know you are in such capable hands. Barbara writes a [blog](#) all about skin science which is definitely worth a look.

To top off my blissful day I had a body massage with a blend of essential oils which boost immunity and get the energy going. As I'm asthmatic, some targeted massage along my lung meridian (what's that you say?) was applied. A little bit of reiki was also included – Barbara is trained in these therapies and so she sometimes chooses to include a little with her massages. I found it to be deeply relaxing and I felt very peaceful following the treatment, so I'm glad she did. I'm looking forward to my next visit already.

*[tweet_box design="default"]The **Edinburgh Reporter** readers can take advantage of a special discount.*

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One hour Dermaividuals Prescriptive facial for £35 (usually £60), valid until 31 January 2015.

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New Town Therapy: <http://www.newtowntherapyedinburgh.com/>