



Bart Yablonsky, Owner Of Natural Body Spa And Shoppes On What Makes His Spas Natural And Green

Q: Can you tell us a little about your background and when you brought the Natural Body Spa & Shoppes to the Washington area?

A: My wife Paige and I opened our first Natural Body location in 2001. My background was in natural foods with Whole Foods market where I was a store team leader (aka store manager), Paige worked for Nordstrom as a department manager. We both are originally from Maryland but moved to Atlanta for Whole Foods, while there we came across Natural Body which was franchising at the time. After living in Atlanta for 2 years we decided to return to MD and open our first spa in Potomac, MD., we quickly outgrew that space and rebuilt right next door about 2 years later. Just over 4 years ago we opened our second location in Arlington. In November of 2006 we opened our Ashburn location, the first LEED spa. And our newest location opened at 24th and L St. in DC in December. That location has received a gold LEED certification from the US Green Building council.

Q: What do you think makes your spas stand out from the competition?

A: We are truly an all-natural spa. We use natural and organic products in our services and most of the product available in our retail shop are all-natural or organic including Jurlique, AVEDA, Dani, Natural Body, Bare Escentuals, and E.O.

We took this commitment to the next step when we built our two newest locations to meet the US Green Buildings LEED Standard. We are also active in our communities and try to educate our clients on the importance of being green. I am also on the Board of directors for ACE – Arlingtonians For A Cleaner Environment.

Obviously, our services are also great. We have a specific hiring practice and only hire licensed therapists and train them on our unique services.

Q: Are there any services at your spas that are especially unique or popular?

A: We take the extra step with all of our services. Our massages include aromatherapy inhalations, heated neck pillows, eye pillows and warm towels for your back.

Our pedicure is especially unique because we use a zero gravity chair. First you soak in a small bowl that is easily sanitized, then you recline for the remainder of the service

with a heated neck pillow and eye mask. Our pedicure includes exfoliation and massage from the knee down plus cutting, shaping and polishing of the nails.

And our signature facial uses all natural seaweed based products. Healthy skin comes from using healthy non abrasive products like seaweed.

Q: You also feature a large array of products at your retail shop connected to the spas-- what is new and exciting there?

A: Green is the new thing but not for us. Natural Body has been selling all natural products since its inception in 1989. There is definitely a move and a better understanding from clients that natural is important. Our skin is our largest living organ, what we put on the outside normally ends up inside. Our motto is "if you don't take care of your body, where are you going to live?" This relates not just to getting spa services to reduce stress but also to what we put on and in our bodies.

Q: You have brought the first "green" spas to the area--what can you tell us about it and how does it benefit your clients?

A: We opened the first LEED Spa in Loudoun County in 2006, at the time there was only one other business of any kind certified in Loudoun which was PNC bank. With the DC opening we now have 2 LEED spas. With a lot of "green washing" going on you need to be careful that what you think is green or natural really is. The good news is that the awareness has really increased in the past year. Our clients can rest assured that we are truly a green experience; we have the ingredient labels to prove it and the certification from the US Green Building council. And even our 2 older locations have many of the LEED requirements incorporated into their operations. We are also members of the Arlington Fresh Aire program.

Q: What do you want your clients to take away from their experience at Natural Body Spas and Shoppes?

A: They should leave feeling refreshed and rejuvenated. Hopefully they have also received some education on how to take better care of their bodies either through stretching, relaxation, or better quality products. We are here for our clients and our main goal is to give them a great experience and a break from their hectic lives. We strive to offer an even better experience than you would receive at a vacation resort spa, minus the outdoor pool and room service.

Natural Body Spa & Shoppes

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