



GET DIRTY

Indulge in a guilty pleasure with mud and seaweed treatments

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Back when playing in the mud was something done without a moment's hesitation, the activity was sure to inspire disapproving groans and frustrated sighs from moms and laundry veterans, but today, it's all the rage and not likely to raise an eyebrow at your favorite day spa. Mud and its messy cousin, seaweed, are popular forms of getting down to the nitty-gritty of exfoliation and detoxification treatments.

Despite a similar appearance to the gunk you might have splashed through years ago, spa mud is purer, often clay-based and made from exotic elements like volcanic ash. Used in scrubs, masks, body wraps and even complete body soaks, the new and improved versions are reportedly packed with nutrients and increase circulation, draw impurities from the skin and soothe away body aches.

Marine mud mixes the merits of mud with the mysteries of mineral-rich seaweed. Originating in Europe, where seaweed, algae, sea salts and sand are frequently used in treatments called thalassotherapies, the allure of seaweed in the United States stems from the intrigue of faraway sources such as the Dead Sea. Lore regarding its effectiveness at treating conditions like rheumatism has endured.

With concentrations of minerals ranging from iron, copper and zinc to manganese and boron 100,000 times more dense than seawater itself, seaweed is an ingredient commonly used to improve circulation, enhance metabolism, ease sprains and improve skin tone. Mixed with kelp, algae and heated seawater, various seaweed treatments are also applied for hydration, detox and stimulation of the metabolic system.

Getting muddy may not be on your list of fun things to do anymore, but even for the mess-averse, it may be a simple pleasure worth revisiting. 