

RESTORE YOUR SOLES

Neat treats for the feet include a luxurious pedicure and relaxing reflexology

By **Kristin Vukovic**

They take us everywhere, but don't get nearly enough credit. Now that it's flip-flop season, it's time to give your feet the love they deserve, starting with holistic reflexology and a pampering pedicure.

STRESS AND THE FEET

Our feet have more than 14,000 nerve endings that connect to different parts of our bodies. Every gland, organ, and body part is reflected on our soles. Foot work practices have existed from ancient Egypt to China to Japan—but modern reflexology is rooted in Europe and Russia, dating back approximately 125 years.

Angel Feet Reflexology is the first storefront reflexology salon in New York City. After experiencing reflexology more than 20 years ago, owners Barbara Morrison and Patricia Coleine wanted to share their experiences with others.

"Stress is one of the leading causes of many illnesses," says Chantel C. Lucier, an ARCB certified reflexologist and manager of Angel Feet Reflexology. "Reflexology is a safe and very relaxing practice that can help us to reduce the stress and dis-ease in our system."

At Angel Feet, the treatment begins with a foot bath of peach leaves with lavender and grapefruit. The therapist then applies unscented cream and uses a specific thumb and finger walking technique to target reflex points that correspond to every part of the body. "The technique works much like a light switch," Lucier said. "We turn the light on and a message



is sent through a certain circuitry, creating a current flow that sparks the target area. In reflexology terms, we are pressing on a point that sends a message through the nervous system to stimulate blood flow, increase circulation, and relax the corresponding area." A witch hazel and peppermint essential oil spray wrap-up leave your feet tingling and happy.

"Research shows that a single reflexology session can create relaxation, reduce anxiety, diminish pain, improve blood flow, and decrease high blood pressure," said Deborah Flanagan, a New York City-based certified reflexologist, hypnotist, and Reiki Master. "It's an all-encompassing treatment."

Flanagan, who has been a featured expert on The Dr. Oz Show, believes balance equals true health. "Reflexology enhances the body's ability to heal itself, and balances both body and soul," Flanagan said. "By focusing on any areas of imbalance, the body can move immediately toward homeostasis."

CITRUS PEDICURE

To combat calluses and sweeten your feet, indulge in a Lemon Vodka Pedicure at Sweet Lily Natural Nails in New York City, where you'll dip your digits into a cocktail of freshly sliced lemons with a splash of Voli Lemon Vodka. Lemon juice contains malic and citric acid that helps slough off dead skin cells, and vodka is a natural anti-septic that helps cleanse feet.

"Vodka is a great solvent for removing

dirt and grime—something we commonly see in clients who wear flip-flops and sandals," said Donna Perillo, president and spa director of Sweet Lily. "Summer citrus fruits are great natural alpha-hydroxy acids that help remove dry, flakey skin. And granulated sugar is a great natural exfoliant to further remove dead skin cells."



Stride Right

"Our feet are our connection to the earth."
—Dr. Andrew Weil

Trade in your flimsy flip-flops for a cute pair of Dr. Weil's Orthaheel sandals, designed by Australian podiatrist and Orthaheel founder Phillip Vasyli. The sandals help restore the foot's natural alignment by providing bio-mechanical support and stability along the three planes of motion: frontal, sagittal and transverse. By reducing pronation—the rolling over of the foot and ankle—the sandals not only help improve your walk, but they can also help prevent injuries. The new "Restore" sandals come in five stylish colors. \$89.95, Dr. Weil Restore sandals; weilbeing.com