





'TIS *the* Season TO GIVE

How spas can give back
this holiday season

By Caroline Canetti

The holiday season is a great time to help your clients de-stress, unwind and pamper themselves. It's also an opportunity to show your clients that you care about them, the community, and causes near and dear to your heart by giving back.

"It's about goodwill," says Kim Knapp, owner of Skin Apeel Day Spa in Boca Raton, Fla. "Your clients like to see you're supporting the community and not just opening your spa doors for your own financial benefit."

Here is how some spas are teaming with charities and non-profit organizations to give back to the community and promote their spa and holiday treatments...

CIRCUIT FOR A CAUSE

Skin Apeel Day Spa is hosting the beauty-themed in-spa event, "Circuit for a Cause," to benefit Boca Raton Regional Hospital's "MammoVan," which provides mammograms and preventative care to underprivileged women.

The \$50 ticket includes healthy light bites, green tea "mocktails," raffles, swag bags with donated products from the event's vendors and local businesses, and beauty stations featuring some of the spa's vendors giving out 20-minute treatments. The treatments include a five-minute facelift with micro-current, pre-holiday makeup makeovers, and eye and hand treatments. Raffle tickets will be sold the entire month of the event, as well as the night of, with 100 percent of the proceeds benefiting the charity. The raffle prizes include spa packages and beauty gifts from their sponsors.

"This event is a great fit as our spa mission of all we offer must meet the criteria of beauty through wellness philosophy," says Knapp, who promoted the event via an email blast, social media, and by depositing invitation cards in clients' bags when they check out. "We're one of the few fortunate to be busy all year, and as karma would have it, our involvement to lend a hand to worthwhile causes and to support our clients' charitable passions, fuels our own prosperity."



THANKING MILITARY MOMS

Tamara Friedman, owner of Tamara Spa + Wellness in Farmington Hills, Mich., has been working with the non-profit organization, Michigan Military Moms, since 2008 to treat mothers of military men and women to a day of pampering during the holidays.

"Being from Russia, I have a great appreciation for the freedom we have here in the U.S. and for the sacrifices that military families make to keep us safe and protected," says Friedman. "We know it's hard for them to be away from their children during the holidays so we do this to thank them and let them know how much we support and appreciate them."

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Friedman lets MMM choose about 25 local military moms to enjoy a full day of pampering at the spa. Last year, the day included a Cranberry Facial, Peppermint Manicure and Pedicure, and Eggnog Massage, as well as a holiday-themed group lunch (i.e., turkey and all the fixings), a goodie bag with skin care products donated from their vendors and a lifelong gift card for 30 percent off "anything, and anytime."

While the spa receives a lot of local press coverage for this every year, the best feedback is from the moms. "They just can't thank us enough. One mom even wrote a thank you poem to me, which was really touching. But they also help spread the word about the spa by sharing their photos from the event on their Facebook," adds Friedman.

PAMPERING THE ELDERLY

One of the way many ways VIVO Hair Salon & Day Spa in Harpers Ferry, West Va., gives back at the holidays is by helping the elderly in their community unwind, relax, and be cared for with their annual "It's all about you! Dear Mee-Maa" promotion.

"We cater this to grandparents and our clients' elderly neighbor or friend because they are always taking care of their families, but often forget themselves," says president Vi Vo Nguyen. "I truly want them to understand their health and well-being is important, and the value of taking care themselves is first and foremost. They deserve to be pampered as much as they pamper their families. It's also a great way to introduce this loving, caring generation to the benefits of the spa world nowadays."

VIVO starts spreading the word about the campaign at Thanksgiving through word-of-mouth with their clients, as well as via Facebook and the local newspaper. "We ask people to nominate an elderly woman or man

by sending us a little story of why that person deserves to be pampered. We read through all of the stories and choose the ones that touch our hearts the most," she explains.

The chosen ones, usually between 10-30 women and men, receive a body massage, a facial, or a pedicure. "It's also our way to thank the community for being so good to us and keeping us in great business," Friedman adds. "I truly believe our company has grown so much over the past 11 years because of our close relationship with the community, our loyal beloved customers, our charity events, and different ways we share back has a lot to do with that. To give is to receive."

COAT DRIVE FOR THE HOMELESS

Oasis Day Spa, which has locations in New York City and Westchester, N.Y., has a very simple, but effective way of

spreading goodwill during the holiday season. While the spa donates \$20 spa vouchers to various charities and community organizations throughout the year, they also participate in a coat drive for the homeless.

The spa joins in their building's annual coat drive by inviting their clients via email and in-spa signage (last year's was an image of the Statue of Liberty wearing a coat shivering) to donate their lightly used coats for those in need. For every coat donated, the spa gives them 10 percent off their next full-price service.

"It's first and foremost about doing good for the community," says Bruce Schoenberg, owner of Oasis Day Spa, "but it's also good business. You want to be a company that people feel good about spending their money at. So it spreads goodwill, puts you in a good light, and it feels good to give back. It's important to us." ■

