

Face up to a chemical-free future

Snooze your way through an all-natural pampering treat

IF YOU EAT A SALAD, AS OPPOSED to something processed, you feel light," says Suzi Gibson, therapist at Edinburgh's Anthyllis. "This facial works in a similar way."

There's no better analogy for this salon's hour-long Live Nurture treatments, which I'm testing out. They are performed using organic, enzyme-rich products from a Scottish company, Live Native, which produces its potions on Skye. Set up by raw-foodist, vegan and qualified homeopath Vicky Ewbank, these green goodies are a left-of-centre alternative to the usual chemical-heavy mixtures we slather onto our skins. Wonderful, for if anyone needs to give their complexion a break from "scientific" creams, it's me.

However, it takes a while for Gibson, who's also a qualified Dr Hauschka therapist, to work her way to my face, as this treatment starts with a calming foot soak.

I dip my toes into a bowl of warm water mixed with Himalayan salts, rhassoul clay and a dollop of Live Native's Essential Woman rose and frangipani moisturiser. Catching a whiff of the exotic aromas as they gradually evaporate, while resting my soles against the pebbles at the bottom of



the dish (which were gathered on Skye by Ewbank herself) feels very soothing. In a dwam, I would've happily lingered.

However, feet towel dried, it's time to move on to the treatment bed, for a foot, lower leg and arm rub with Everybody Everyday cream, which contains aloe vera

and shea butter. I'd like to call this part of the therapy a massage, but for the extremely gentle pressure that Gibson uses. Her light touch had an incredibly soporific effect on me, meaning I had to keep snapping my drifting consciousness back like a rubber band.

It was also a struggle to stay awake throughout the facial element of this treatment. It's a bit of a blur, but I can recall a malty note (which Gibson explained was the oats), when a dollop of Essential Earth Cleanser was used to strip off my make-up. Later, there was a whiff of cocoa, which must have been when the cooling scoop of Chocolate and Clay Mud Mask (which contains etherium gold, no less) was slicked on to my face.

Afterwards my complexion was glowing. I felt as chemical-free and virtuous as though I'd munched an entire lettuce, but with the warm feeling you get after scoffing a family-size bar of Galaxy. Perfect.

GABY SOUTAR

■ *Live Nurture by Live Native facial, one-hour treatment, £55 Anthyllis, 30 Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh (0131-313 2001, www.anthyllis.co.uk).*