

March 2005

Spa food has come a long way since John Harvey Kellogg served his wheat flakes to guests at Battle Creek Sanitarium in Michigan. Today, spa chefs know that what's good for the body can also be good for the taste buds.

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### Pear and Spice Bisque

Total time: 35 minutes; active time: 10 minutes

From *The Spa at Norwich Inn*,  
Norwich, Connecticut

Executive chef Daniel Chong-Jimenez

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 medium yellow onion, chopped medium
- 5 ripe Bosc pears, peeled, cored, and chunked
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped fine
- 1 teaspoon ground cardamom
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 4 1/2 cups vegetable or chicken broth
- 1/3 cup full-bodied white wine, such as Riesling or Sauvignon Blanc

In a stockpot over moderately high heat, add olive oil and sauté the next six ingredients. Cook, stirring frequently, until the pears and onion brown lightly, about 15 minutes. Add salt, broth, and wine and bring to a simmer. Cook until pears are soft, another 10 minutes. Remove from heat. Remove bay leaf from the mixture and discard. Carefully puree broth in a blender or food processor. Return to pot and adjust seasoning to taste. Reheat, if needed, before serving.

*Yield: 6 cups, about 8 servings*

Per serving: 132 calories, 38% calories from fat, 6 g fat, 1 g saturated fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 2 g protein, 19 g carbohydrate, 3 g fiber, 854 mg sodium



*Some precautions: before using any new skin product, do a patch test. Apply a small amount to the inside of your forearm, wait 20 minutes, then rinse it off. Any redness or bumps can indicate an allergic reaction. Also, when applying facial treatments, always avoid the eye area.*

**A** FRAGRANT BATH IS ONE OF the easiest ways to create a spa experience at home. In the relaxing Rosemary Salt Bath, using fresh rosemary is key—the dried herb just doesn't release the same scent or essential oil. Meanwhile, the magnesium in the Epsom salts is thought to relax muscles by reducing inflammation.

In the Simple Mint Cleanser, milk is used to gently clean, tone, and moisturize (remember, Cleopatra bathed in the stuff). And the mint "provides a refreshing antidote to post-winter sluggishness," says Norwich Inn spa director Betty Loiacono. Plus, it leaves you smelling minty as opposed to milky.

*Treatments from The Spa at Norwich Inn, Norwich, Connecticut*

### Rosemary Salt Bath

- 1/4 cup fresh rosemary
- Cheesecloth
- String
- 1 cup Epsom salts

Put rosemary in a square of cheesecloth and tie it with a length of string. Add Epsom salts and the rosemary pouch to warm bath water, climb in, and soak. After bath, apply body lotion to damp skin.

### Simple Mint Cleanser

- 2 1/4 cups whole milk
- 4 tablespoons fresh mint (any kind), washed and dried

Blend milk and mint in a blender or food processor. Leave it to infuse in the refrigerator about 12 hours. Soak a washcloth or loofah in the cleanser and rub it over your skin instead of soap. It's particularly good for delicate skin. Store the remaining cleanser in the refrigerator.