

VINEYARD *inspired*

Two Finger Lakes' Spas Harness the Anti-Aging Power of Grapes.

BY LISA EVANS

A glass of wine brightens even the gloomiest day; but a trip to the wine-producing region of The Finger Lakes, New York, also improves the skin. Located a four-hour drive southeast of Toronto, The Finger Lakes attracts Canadians who are curious to see the offerings from the vineyards of this world-class wine producer. While wine may be the main attraction, local spas also harness the anti-aging powers of grapes by offering wine-based spa treatments that leave our skin as satisfied as our palate.

Packed with some of the most potent antioxidants in the fruit kingdom, grapes are a natural choice for spa treatments in a region of vineyards. Grape seed extract contains oligomeric proanthocyanidins (OPCs), which have been found to protect the skin from sun damage and repair collagen, the protein responsible for holding our skin together. While I indulged in many a Riesling, Chardonnay and Gewürztraminer in my four-day trip, I found the best use of Finger Lakes' grapes in two of the local spas' treatment offerings.

1

THE GRAPE PASSION ANTI-OXIDANT FACIAL **Isabella Spa, Belhurst Castle** belhurst.com/isabella-spa.html

Despite being one of the most romantic places in New York State, Belhurst Castle has a not-so-dreamy past. The property was first owned by William Henry Burke, an embezzler who married his stepmother and immigrated to the United States from England under an assumed name. In 1885, Carrie M. Young Harrington bought the property, divorced her husband, married her manager, tore down the building and constructed the castle that exists today. The spa is a newer addition with a modern feel compared to the castle's wood panelling and stained glass windows. The private treatment rooms contain individual showers, lockers and modern art as décor.

The 50-minute grape passion antioxidant facial is the spa's signature treatment. The grape seed parfait mask by Rhonda Allison, which begins the facial, contains a high concentration of grape seed extracts. Finally, a blush wine gel with resveratrol, an anti-oxidant and anti-inflammatory praised for its anti-aging powers, left my skin as smooth as a naked grape.

COST: \$95



2

THE WINE TOUR Park West Hair Design and Spa parkwesthairdesignandspa.com

Overlooking Canandaigua Lake, the day spa, Park West Hair Design and Spa, offers the exquisite "Wine Tour" package that uses products from the Keyano Aromatics' vinatherapy line. The three-part "tour" promises to remove callouses from feet with a pedicure, hydrate everything in between with a body treatment and erase age spots from the face with a facial. I began my spa day with the grape mask pedicure. Red Muscadine grapes, which contain the highest concentration of antioxidants, zinc, iron and calcium than any other fruit, are blended with champagne oil to simultaneously hydrate and exfoliate. My pedicure is topped off with a pink champagne-coloured nail polish in keeping with the grape theme.

The next stop on the tour is a wine wrap. Gentle dry skin brushing prepares the skin for the warm wine mask and champagne oil that is subsequently brushed over my entire body. Together they remove dead skin cells, while also hydrating sun-damaged skin (which is perfect as my shoulders are still peeling after a holiday in Mexico). Next I'm wrapped in a warm blanket to promote absorption of the grapes' nutrients. The aroma of grapes fill the room. Knowing wine gets better with age, I'm in no hurry for this fermenting process to end. Alas, I'm unwrapped and showered by a set of overhead nozzles. I end my wine tour with a champagne facial and leave the Park West Spa feeling rejuvenated, but slightly disappointed that the wine tour didn't include actual wine.

COST: \$240 ☹

