

**"Her Approach is Unique and the Results are
Nothing Short of Dramatic.
This is Feng Shui Taken to the Next Level."**

"With Reiko's help, good Feng Shui can be found in every aspect of our Soho spa -- the natural elements promoted in feng shui are present in the store interiors, and feng shui is even integrated into the spa treatments themselves. Reiko helped me develop an interactive questionnaire, in which customers select a unique spa treatment based on the healing properties of each Feng Shui element. Her approach is unique and the results are nothing short of dramatic. This is Feng Shui taken to the next level."

AmorePacific Spa Director Georgia Sturges

THE SPA PROFESSIONAL'S CHOICE
american spa

AmorePacific

A popular Asian skincare company makes its mark with the debut of its first U.S. spa.

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A cult favorite in Asia, AmorePacific skincare blends a rich history of tradition with a modern-day sensibility. The same can be said of AmorePacific Beauty Gallery and Spa (New York City), the global skincare company's first foray into the U.S. spa market. Located in the heart of Soho, one of the city's trendiest neighborhoods, the spa is a study in

contrasts. Nature and technology merge to create a unique space that is as warm and inviting as it is modern and practical.



Designed by Yabu Pushelberg, a Toronto-based architectural firm known for creating spaces that reflect harmony and balance, the spa's look is based on the five elements of nature considered in Chinese culture to represent life's essential energies: water, metal, earth, fire, and wood. The elements are symbolized throughout the spa in displays as well as in the various well-thought-out design details. For example, water energy appears in the form of images of moving

water projected onto a "living art" wall, metal energy is represented in the space's structural detail and product display area, earth energy is epitomized by a number of stone sculptures, fire energy is suggested by the spa's aromatherapy candles, and wood energy is conveyed by the visually dramatic arch of branches framing the reception area.

Not only do the five elements play a role in the design, but they also figure prominently in the spa's treatment menu. According to spa director Georgia Sturges, therapists at AmorePacific are taught five facial massage techniques that correspond to the varying elements. Water is the most calming and is recommended to soothe sensitive skin. Metal emphasizes compression and is effective in balancing the production of sebum and treating problem skin. Earth incorporates aspects of all five techniques and is ideal for all skin types. Fire is the most energizing of them all. Designed to release blocked energy, it's ideal for sluggish skin. Tree, which represents living wood energy, is uplifting without being too stimulating. It's recommended for dry or devitalized skin.

Before any treatment begins, therapists first determine the client's elemental disposition. This is accomplished during a consultation and thorough skin analysis. All treatments are then customized to the individual. From the music played and the essential oils used to the tea served afterwards, no detail is left to chance. An Asian Botanical Mixing Bar with unique and rare ingredients, such as bamboo sap and wild yam, is also available for estheticians to custom-blend masques at the time of treatment.



Although one might think busy time-pressed New Yorkers would be interested in shorter treatments, just the opposite is true. In fact, the spa recently extended the length of its facials to 120 minutes. "Once clients try the longer version, they don't go back," says Sturges.



With only two treatment rooms, the spa is able to provide detailed and attentive care. When fully booked, AmorePacific can handle up to 15 people a day, although that number varies based on the length of the treatments scheduled. "My biggest challenge is space issues," says Sturges. "We have two rooms, but I wish we had twenty." To accommodate more clients, Sturges recently expanded the spa's hours of operation. It is now open an hour later on Thursdays and Saturdays, and Sturges has plans to extend business hours on Tuesdays as well.

With virtually no staff turnover since opening, AmorePacific employs four estheticians and one massage therapist/reflexologist. According to Sturges, each had to do a hands-on demonstration before being hired and then undergo intensive in-house training. In hiring, Sturges looks at a number of factors. "[Those I hire] must have an innate sense of touch, warmth, and an ability to connect with people," says Sturges. "It's also important they be consistent."

Using only the AmorePacific skincare line, the spa's retail to service sales percentage is high. According to Sturges, spa treatments generate 35 percent of AmorePacific's U.S. sales while retail generates 65 percent. "Retail is very near and dear to us, because we manufacture our own products," says Sturges. The spa also boasts a high client retention rate. "Our ratio of repeat to new is seventy-five percent to twenty-five percent," says Sturges. It's no surprise when you consider the personal and attentive care each client receives. Says Sturges, "It's pure escapism coupled with amazing skincare."

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