

Horse and Rider Spa Treatments

Do-it-Yourself Spa Treatments for You and Your Horse

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Your horse works hard. You work hard. Don't you both deserve a little pampering and stress relief?

A day at the spa could be just the ticket. Spas have been bastions of human relaxation for centuries. Horse spas now offer the same sorts of pampering for our four-legged partners. All at a cost, of course.

But what if money's a little tight? No matter! Most things you and your horse can find at a spa can also be done at home and the barn for a fraction of the cost.

Here are some of the horse/human treats you'll find at a spa. With a little ingenuity, you can incorporate these into your barn or home and get all the benefits of going to a spa without the big expense.

Hair Care

For your horse: If the weather's warm enough, bathe your horse with the most luxurious equine shampoo and conditioner you can find. When dry, your horse will smell great, look stunning and be the envy of the barn or neighborhood (until he rolls).

For you: Splurge on a lavish shampoo and conditioner. Wash, rinse, repeat. Then apply the conditioner and wrap a soft towel around your head. Read *Horse Illustrated* while your hair soaks up the nourishment. Rinse.

Massage

For your horse: Invest in some good massage therapy books and start massaging your horse. He won't care if you're not a pro (but mind the bone structure and keep away from inflamed areas and recent injuries).

For you: Check to see if your city has a massage therapy school. You can often get a superb massage from the students at a great price. Or, indulge yourself and hire a professional. It will be worth every penny.

Chiropractic

For your horse: Ask for recommendations from your vet, farrier or riding buddies for a chiropractor certified by the American Veterinary Chiropractic Association.

For you: Some AVCA-certified chiropractors also work on humans. Round up several fellow horse owners and schedule appointments at the barn on a single day. You may even get a group discount.

Stretching

For your horse: Good equine massage therapy books often have detailed instructions on stretches. Pick a couple stretches and do them after you ride. Your horse will love you (even more) for it. Watch a video of stretches for horses [here](#).

For you: Check out books for equestrian-related stretches. A few are *Fitness, Performance and the Female Equestrian* (Howell Book House, 1996); *Yoga for Equestrians* (Trafalgar Square, 2000); and *The New Total Rider* (Half Halt Pr, 2001).

Acupressure

For your horse: Study an equine acupressure book (one is *Equine Acupressure: A Working Manual* (Equine Acupressure Inc., 1999) to become familiar with the acupoints. Practice on your horse.

For you: Find a human acupressure book. Gather your riding buddies and have an acupressure session at someone's home, followed by an evening of equine videos and a potluck.

Gourmet Treats



For your horse: Core and slice one apple. Cut a carrot into bite-sized chunks. Moisten a couple handfuls of raw oatmeal with water. Drizzle all with molasses. Serve to a deserving horse after a quiet massage. Get recipes for homemade horse treats here.

For you: Pick one: slice of cheesecake; chocolate truffle; premium ice-cream bar. Top with your choice of exotic fruit. Savor and enjoy, then head for bed with freshly laundered sheets, of course.

The author is continually exploring ways to spend time with Final Edition PR, her agreeable Arabian gelding.