

Just *for* me

A BIT OF PAMPERING GOES A LONG WAY, ESPECIALLY WITH (GRUMBLE) WINTER ON ITS WAY

By Melody Wren

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BURNED OUT, worn to the bone, depleted and fed up. Done in, wiped out, fatigued and used up. For every way you can say “tired,” there is a way to recharge those batteries, and it all falls under a heading we rarely use — “pampering.”

Remember, a long time ago, when it was all about you? Well, even though now it is so *not*, it is important to remember that you are a better friend, wife, mother, sister, and daughter when you take care of yourself.

There are several spas in our area, of course, offering a range of relaxing services, but what follows is an assortment of self-pampering ideas. This is by no means a definitive list; just consider it a starting point for creating your own pampered style.

Above all, remember — practice makes perfect!

THE NEW YOU

Makeover: Who wouldn't want advice on how to put a fresh face forward? Here are some options:

- Shoppers Drug Mart: Call specific locations to book an appointment for a makeover in which you choose the colours and learn how to apply products. The makeover can be with the store's beauty

adviser/consultant. It is recommended that you purchase two products, which would cost approximately \$70, depending on what you buy. You can also request an appointment with an artist from a specific line such as Elizabeth Arden or Smashbox. There is a fee for an appointment with these artists, but it is redeemable if you purchase products.

- Sears at Stone Road Mall: All of the beauty counters offer a free consultation focusing on one area, such as eyes or lips. For a complete makeover, an appointment is recommended. Call 519-822-3280 and ask for the beauty counter of your choice: Biotherm, Clinique, Clarins, Elizabeth Arden, Estee Lauder, Lancôme or Shiseido. A makeover would take 30 to 45 minutes.

Transform your hairstyle: We often dream of having a completely new hairstyle, but don't take the time or energy to explore the possibilities.

I am not about to recommend a stylist — fortunately, we have many quality salons from which to choose.

Ask friends who have great hair for recommendations. When you make your appointment, let the salon know you need time for a consultation. Take pictures from magazines to help describe the look you have in mind, but also be open to the stylist's suggestions.

HOMESTYLE

Plan ahead for this one, especially prescribed for snowy, blowy days. Put your favourite clean, pressed sheets on a bed heaped high with extra pillows. Get into your favourite pyjamas.

Then pile the night table with decadent magazines you would only buy as a rare treat. Add a thermal carafe of tea, hot chocolate or a latte, and a selection of indulgent snacks such as home-baked cookies or squares from any of our fabulous bakeries.

Mute the phone and snuggle up for a few hours — or the day — to read, sip, savour and doze.

What could be more delightful when the weather outside is frightful? This might not work for everyone, but it certainly works for me!

PAMPERED PAIRINGS

Treat yourself to a gift of time so you can wander and read in a fabulous bookstore, followed by lunch with a favourite friend whose chats you miss.

Or skip the friend, buy one of the big-city newspapers and curl up with a steaming cup of whatever you fancy. Allow yourself a couple of hours dedicated to savouring the newspaper sections — with no one around to nick them! If the bookstore doesn't have a café, explore something

nearby. Here are some suggestions:

- Bookshelf, 41 Quebec St., 519-821-3311 and the attached Artisinal Café.
- Chapters, Stone Road Mall, 519-766-9122 and Starbucks.
- Macondo Books, 18 Wilson St., 519-836-0430. At this shop, you can purchase a used bestseller or a book on a hobby you want to revisit, then walk down the street to the eclectic Cornerstore Café, Wyndham and Carden streets, for coffee and melt-in-your-mouth home baking.
- Roxanne's Reflections Book and Card Shop, 152 St. Andrew St. W., Fergus, 519-843-4391. After you buy your paper or magazine, head to Van Gali's Café, 180 St. Andrew St. E., for delicious home baking and a serene atmosphere.

ANTIQUING

Browsing antique or secondhand stores can be a creative excursion, especially when you allow lots of time. The Aberfoyle Antique Market (www.aberfoyle-antiques.com) is closed until spring, but here are some other possibilities:

- Brooks Antiques, 32A Wilson St., 519-763-7300.
- Days Gone By Antiques, 52 Brock Rd. S., Guelph, 519-763-0933.
- Family Thrift Store, 152 Wyndham St., N., 519-824-0779.
- Galleries La Finesse, 20 Macdonnell St., 519-821-5850.
- What's in the Pantry, Speedvale Mall, 519-763-9004.

FUN WITH FOOD

There's nothing quite like a great meal, and when you have the skills — and time — cooking can be a rewarding experience. Improve or change your cooking style at these courses, and have fun while you are at it:

- Thyme to Cook, Kortright-Zehrs Plaza, 160 Kortright Rd. W., 519-837-2665, www.thymetocook.ca.
- Bistro Six, 35 Harvard Rd., 519-837-5754.



- Drew House, 120 Mill St. E., Elora, 519-846-2226, www.drewhouse.com.
- Log Cabin Heaven, 7384 Middlebrook Rd., Elora, 519-846-9439, www.logcabin-heaven.com.

Or how about combining food and an interesting outing?

- Theatre in the Trees at University of Guelph's Arboretum offers dinner theatre on several dates in November and December. Call 519-824-4120, ext. 54110, or check

out www.uoguelph.ca/arboretum.

- Or hop aboard the Guelph Junction Express for a relaxing two-hour dinner excursion from John Galt Park, adjacent to the River Run Centre, to the Campbellville area and back (519-823-9799 or www.guelphjunctionexpress.ca).

The views are wonderful, and the dining car offers three meal choices prepared by Platters Catering & Events.

CREATIVE EXPLORATIONS

When you are feeling depleted, you need to refill your energy resources. A creative class or exercise can do just that. Maybe there's something you've always wanted to try, or perhaps you can get back to a hobby or activity you loved in your youth. ▶

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► The Upper Grand District School Board's Continuing Education offers evening classes on a variety of themes, such as yoga, fitness and several dance classes, including ballroom and line dancing. For more information and to register, call 519-836-7280 or check out www.ugdsb.on.ca, and click on the Continuing Education link.

There is nothing like good dance music to paste a smile on my face and make me feel more energized. Why not take a class in tap dancing again, or maybe you should salsa the night away in downtown Guelph! (The E-Bar at the Bookshelf on Quebec Street has a salsa night.)

From belly dancing to ballroom, there are numerous classes for adults including:

- Ballroom Dancing With Ivy, 75 Cardigan St., 519-837-0230.
- Fergus-Elora Academy of Dance, 737 St. Andrew St.W., Fergus, 519-766-2462.
- Grand River Dance Academy, 380 St. Andrew St.W., Fergus, 519-843-5040.
- Guelph Academy of Dance, 511 Edinburgh Rd. S., 519-822-2697.
- Highland Dancing School, Willow West Mall, 519-766-3226.
- Holly Hughes Dance Academy, 251 Edinburgh Rd. N., 519-836-7402.
- Just Dance School of Dance, 340 Woodlawn Rd.W., 519-763-5188.
- Performance Dance Academy, 340 Southgate Dr., 519-829-2525.
- Rakasseh School of Dance Arts and Belly Dance, 103 Wyndham St. N., 519-780-2945.
- Royal City School of Ballet, 128 Woolwich St., 519-836-8971.
- Strictly Rhythm Dance Academy, 23 Victoria Rd. N., 519-829-2104.
- Temple Studios, 42 Quebec St., 519-837-2746.

WELLNESS

Meditation: With so much going on in our minds and around us, meditation can help de-clutter the noise within:

- Kalpa Bhadra Buddhist Centre, 42 Quebec St., 519-837-8077, www.kalpabhadra.ca.
- Yoga and Meditation for Healing with

Jacqueline and Ken, Living Yoga and Health, 105 Wyndham St., 519-767-1041, or e-mail: info@livingyoga.ca.

Energy workshops or treatments restore balance and energy in a variety of ways. There's an impressive number of people locally who will work with your energy. Among them:

- Barbara McKell of Soul Connections, 519-823-2162, www.soulconnection.ca.
 - Linda Fairburn, 10 Stuart St., 519-766-1400, www.lindafairburn.com.
 - Patrick Whitney, 519-836-4047, e-mail: firechi@rogers.com.
 - Sandra Loytomaki, 519-826-9944, e-mail: wochange@albedo.net.
 - Eagles and Auracles, 519-829-4097, 10 Paisley St. (Royal Plaza), offers workshops in energy and other practices.
- Yoga** is a gentle physical workout and restores energy in a soul-satisfying way. Classes are offered in many locations, including:
- Kristin Honey Yoga, 519-826-0620.
 - Living Yoga and Health, 105 Wyndham St. N., Floor 2, 519-767-1041.
 - Pilates in Guelph, 109 Surrey St. E., 519-829-2928.
 - Santosha Yoga and Pilates, 843 Watson Rd. S., 519-767-5554.
 - Sharon Burke's Yoga, 230 Hillside Dr., Fergus, 519-787-2311.
 - Yoga with Carolyn Weatherson, 340 Southgate Dr., 519-824-8369.

PAMPERING A "DEUX"

What could be more of a pampered diversion than a weekend at a bed and breakfast or a country hotel?

- Check out Guelph-Wellington B & Bs at www.gabba.ca, or the Fergus Elora Bed and Breakfast Association at www.febba.ca.
- The Elora Mill is another possibility — 77 Mill Street W., Elora, 1-866-713-5672, www.eloramill.com.

CREATIVE OUTINGS

- **Walking tours:** Choose a sunny, crisp day and embrace winter with a self-guided walk in Elora and Fergus. Options include

a church tour, the A.J. Casson tour, Pierpoint/Glen Lamond tour, or a tour of historical houses or public and commercial buildings. Guided tours start again in spring. For more information, contact Elora and Fergus Tourism at 519-843-5140. On the web: www.elorafergus.ca and link through What to See.

The Guelph Arts Council offers a range of guided tours in the warmer months featuring homes and history. In the colder months, you can purchase a guidebook for \$5 and tour on your own. Call 519-836-3280 or check out <http://guelpharts.ca> and search for walking tours.

GROUP ACTIVITY

Tuck this idea away for spring.

A weekend at a cottage with a few friends already feels like group-pampering. One of my friends added this to the experience:

individual tubs full of hot, soapy water for each person to soak her feet. Add iPod speakers playing favourite tunes, a cosmopolitan in hand and idle banter among the group, and you have a recipe for group indulgence!

After we soaked our feet, it was on to foot files and exfoliating cream, followed by a rinse and a heavy coating of moisturizer. Simple and heavenly!

QUICK FIX PAMPER

Time is the essential ingredient in any of the recommendations here, but there are periods when extra time is simply elusive to us. When this is the case, pampering still needs to be made a priority, but maybe just for one hour. You will know when the timing is right because you'll find you're not getting as much done as you normally do.

Surely you can find an hour or more for yourself this week for any of the following:

- A deep bubbly bath, lights dimmed, aromatic candle lit, face mask on and a glass of wine beside you. Play music if that helps you relax; otherwise, silence is the key.
- Close the curtains in the bedroom, get into bed, set the alarm in case you doze off,

and read a delicious novel or juicy magazine with a cup of tea or glass of wine. To make this truly work, ditch the guilt!

- On a warm day, go to a park with a thermos of something luxurious — gourmet hot chocolate, perhaps, and a good read.
- Catch a film matinee at the cinema.
- Fill in your own idea here . . .

HOW DO OTHERS PAMPER THEMSELVES?

• **Sue Wakefield, owner of Wakefield House Bed & Breakfast (www.wakefield-house.ca),** says that because she deals with people all the time, to pamper herself she would find a nice place to eat, either With the Grain or the Artisanale Café, and have a nice long lunch by herself, followed by a visit to an art gallery or a leisurely browse through the library. The other option would be to take in a matinee at the Bookshelf cinema or at the River Run Centre.



To nourish herself, Sue has returned to taking art classes and this transports her completely — she admits she can think of nothing else while she is painting.

• **June Hofland, city councillor,** says "an indulgence would be to book a massage followed by catching up with girlfriends over a nice dinner — that part fills my soul."

• **Annette Blok, University of Guelph employee,** would go somewhere to have her meals made for a week — "truly pampered when you don't have to shop for the food, or cook it, and you would have homemade delicious meals lined up for a week."

At Supperworks, 1388 Gordon St. (519-822-7252, www.supperworks.com), the company does the planning, recipe prep work and cleanup; the customer does the assembly at the Supperworks location. For an extra charge, they will do the cooking. On the website, click on "pickup" option.

Other meal options: Portions Distinctive Meals and More Inc. (www.portionscanada.com); personal chef Orchard House Gourmet (www.orchard-housegourmet.com); the Miller's House (www.themillershouse.ca). 

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