

LS SUGGESTS

H O M E S P A

Your morning starts with you being dragged slowly and agonisingly through the long lines of traffic. The heat and humidity drains off your energy even before you get to work. Once you finally arrive at your workplace, you are bombarded with deadlines and your pending workload. After a day spent tackling office work, you come back home, tired and frustrated, to your growing pile of household chores.

It's very difficult to find new and invigorating ways of rewarding ourselves in a city like this. So we search for rewards in the simplest pleasures of life. These are the rewards that we desperately need, to bring harmony to our mind, body and soul. Something as simple as a long, hot bath can instantly lift up our spirits and leave us feeling well-rested and capable of coping with life's many stresses.

Hot baths have been proven to increase blood circulation and improve cardiovascular health. The steam from the hot water can open up your pores and draw out contaminants. At the same time, it will relieve muscle pain and lower blood sugar levels. And ultimately, all of these benefits will help you to de-stress and sleep better.

There are days when you will want to pass out on your bed with a face full of makeup. But that is never a good idea. The first step to detoxification is to clean off all the dirt and makeup on your face before they clog up your pores. Use a mild face wash which will not strip you of your skin's natural oils. Try out face brushes with vibrating and rotating heads; these will deep-clean your pores and remove dead cells from building up. But do not use them more than twice every week because they can be a bit harsh on your skin.

The next thing you can do is to put on a face mask. You can buy different 'uptaans' from stores or you can make them at home using natural ingredients like bananas, yoghurt and honey. A homemade mud mask with 'multani maati' can brighten up your skin like nothing else can.

While your face is soaking up all the goodness from the face mask, go ahead and put on some music. Anything that puts you in the mood for relaxation will work just fine. Make yourself some green tea or a cooling drink infused with mint and cucumber. The antioxidants will work to remove the free radicals you have accumulated throughout the day and repair your body cells. You can even use the cooled down tea bags or cucumber slices on top of your eyelids to get rid of puffiness.

Light some scented candles in your bathroom. Not only are you setting up the perfect ambiance, but you are also treating yourself to aromatherapy. This will help in improving your blood pressure, pain management and even depression. You can buy scented candles from DCC Markets, Dhali Super Store, Almas and Aarong.

You can also add essential oils and bath bombs to your water to amp up the aromatherapy treatment. Essential oils from lavender, tea tree and lemon will pick up your

mood and awaken your senses. You can find these essential oils in many online Facebook stores and pharmacies. Bath bombs contain baking soda and Epsom salt. Use them to make your bath water soft and more soothing to your skin. As soon as they hit the tub, they fizz up, create bubbles and turn the water to a beautiful colour. It's cheaper to make bath bombs at home, but you can also order them online. Lush is a brand which makes the best quality bath bombs.

While soaking in the tub, you can listen to audiobooks, read magazines or sip the drink you made earlier. Keep your books and magazines on a tray away from the bathtub to keep them dry.

If you're more of a shower person, just go for using soaps and shower gels. These are available in many super stores and come in all sorts of tantalising scents. Add a generous amount onto your loofah or wash sponge and lather up. You can also get handmade soaps from Jatra and Arannya. They are made from beeswax, honey and other essential oils which lock in moisture, and they are also gentler than commercially-made soaps.

Use this time to take care of the little details, like scrubbing your body and feet. You can buy body scrubs, or make them at home using oatmeal, oil and honey. These will exfoliate and smoothen your skin. Scrub your feet with a pumice stone and get rid of those dead skin cells. And

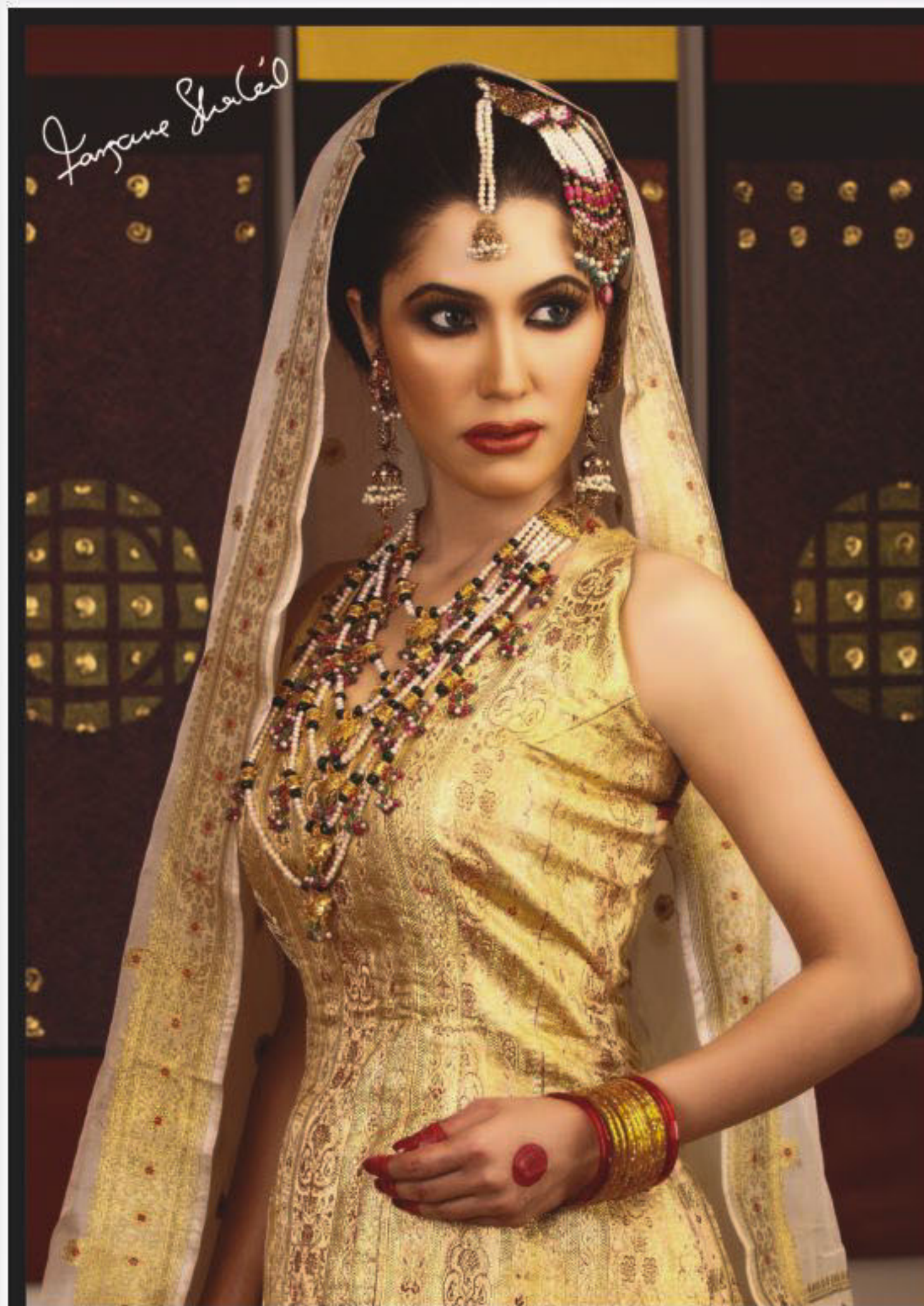


while you're at it, why not give yourself a full-fledged pedicure?

There are no rules to your pamper routine, except for the ones you make. It does not matter how many products you use as long as you relax and take care of yourself. So the next time a weekend comes along, go ahead and book yourself a personalised spa retreat at home.

By Antara Islam

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