



My top of the pots

Mairead Robinson lists her ten best products for 2011 and tries two spas in Kerry and Mayo.

I am a firm believer that beauty products, treatments and pampering experiences are not just the preserve of the young and gorgeous. The mature and beautiful can get great pleasure and benefit from them too! I am finding more and more products that suit the 50+ so now I am nominating my top ten products that I discovered in 2011. Here they are, not in any specific order:



1. LANCOME VISIONNAIRE Advanced Skin Corrector - a good serum is vital under your moisturiser, and this one is great.

2. VICHY Aqualia Thermal Sensitive Skin Mask - do treat yourself to a good face mask regularly.

3. L'OREAL Age Re-Perfect Restoring Cream, great for treating those wrinkles and contours.

4. ROGER & GALLET Huile Sublime

Orange Oil, a dry oil for moisturising hair, face and body.

5. LA ROCHE-POSAY Thermal Spring Water, a natural antioxidant that soothes and softens skin.

6. THE HANDMADE SOAP COMPANY Moisturising Cream for dry skin - really rich and good all-round moisturiser.

7. CARTER BEAUTY - All White Teeth whitening Pen - a great tool for the handbag!

8. YVES SAN LAURENT - Softening eye shadow, one of the smoothest products with a great colour range.

9. VOYA Seaweed bath, and Eye Cream - in fact all VOYA organic products.

10. GIORGIO ARMANI Regenesence products - particularly the wonderfully soothing cool Eye Rejuvenating Serum.

Now if you did not receive any good products or treatments for Christmas, perhaps it is time to get some for yourself! People are always recommending good spa treatments to me, and last year while staying at the **Castlecourt Hotel** in **Westport** I enjoyed a fabulous circulation-boosting hot poultice treatment at **Spa Sula**. Many of you will know The **Westport Plaza** and **Castlecourt Hotels** as their Golden Breaks are very popular. The next time you visit, I recommend checking out **Spa Sula**, the treatments are excellent, the therapists are very friendly and

professional and the prices are very good too. The poultice is a muslin cloth filled with natural herbs which is steamed hot and massaged onto the body. It brings a deeper muscle release than even the hot stone massage. Next time you book your break, treat yourself to one of these deeply relaxing treatments at **Spa Sula**.

Another hotel very popular with our readers is **Ballygarry House Hotel & Spa** in Tralee. They are currently offering a great **Golden Years** package including three nights B & B, two dinners, trips to the Museum, Dancing and one mini Spa treatment for just €199 .

Their Nadur Spa is really lovely, and somewhere you would always feel comfortable with very friendly staff and super cosy relaxation room. Last time I visited I had the Seaweed Peat Wrap with a conditioning hair treatment and a mini Facial. The whole treatment was one and half hours of pure bliss - I nearly fell asleep during it! - and they are currently offering the full package

together with lunch at the hotel as their Spa Special of the Month for March at just €120. They use a lot of the organic Voya products, which as regular readers of this column will know, I am a great fan of. They are very nourishing, natural and of course they come from a family owned Irish company based in Sligo.

If you were fortunate to receive a Spa Voucher for Christmas, make sure you use it before it expires, and enjoy some excellent pampering. It is a real shame that vouchers received as presents are sometimes left unused, forgotten about and put away in a drawer for months or even years. So do make sure you use yours now.

And finally recently I have come across some very interesting products derived from that "Queen of Flowers" - the Rose. Rose Oil has been known since ancient times for its anti-inflammatory and anti-allergic action promoting regeneration of aging tissue.

Catherine Morgan and her husband John have set up **Biofresh Skin Care** in Drogheda importing rose oil products from Bulgaria. The pure rose oil is the most precious and non-toxic essential oil available in nature and is derived from the world famous Bulgarian Damask Rose. I am trying out their Anti-Age Serum, which has received some great accolades recently. They also have an age control hand cream, and of course a full range of creams and facial products. At the same time

I also came across some Rose Butter products from Ziaja which once again promises great results in the area of anti-ageing. I will be testing these Rose Oil and Rose Butter products in the coming weeks, and will be covering them in detail in the next issue.

Once again, do use any vouchers you might have received over the Christmas period, and don't let them expire. And if you did not get any, then you should certainly treat yourself. There are great products and treatments available these days, and Spas have never been such good value. Check out the two mentioned above if you are in either Kerry or **Mayo** in the coming months.

www.castlecourthotel.ie and
www.ballygarryhouse.com

