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METROWEST

MAGAZINE

JUNE 2007



One stop for a healthy body and soul



By Kristen Grieco

IF YOU EVER FIND IT DIFFICULT TO GET IN A WORKOUT without some reward at the end of it (ice cream, perhaps?), Ten Spa in Natick might be a good 'and healthier' choice for you.

Ten Spa, which is housed in the former Fitness Etcetera building on Route 9, has two faces: a serious, no-nonsense gym and fitness center that will whip your body into shape, and a funky, soothing spa that will relax it. The company's motto—"Come vacation with us for the day"—reflects owners Courtney and Corey Nappa's desire to bring the unique spa experience, which they say is usually reserved for a resort in Arizona, to customers' daily lives.

The Nappas, a married couple who met at Bentley College, cannot pinpoint exactly when the idea to open Ten Spa took shape. "I've been in fitness my entire life," says Corey, a personal trainer who has also written a diet and nutrition book that will be used for fitness programs at Ten Spa. Corey has been a trainer and nutritional advisor for over 10 years.

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Courtney took a different path after college: corporate America. It only took her a few years to decide that the career path she was on was not the right one for her. “My dream was always to own my own business—specifically, a spa,” Courtney says. Despite raised eyebrows from family members, she made the decision to leave her job and enroll in cosmetology school to learn more about the industry to which she was so drawn.

“You can’t understand what people are going through without doing it [yourself],” says Courtney. Her decision to enroll, however, had as much to do with business as to relating to her employees. “I didn’t want to have to turn away clients,” she adds.

While Courtney is the beauty advisor, Corey handles the wellness end of the business. Though they both have business degrees, Corey says, their managerial strengths lie in complementary areas. And so, Courtney and Corey put their dreams together. Self-proclaimed opposites, they began finding investors for the multifaceted health and fitness experience they wanted to create.

They searched for sites all over the Boston area, knowing that while there were gyms that had outsourced spa service on site, they had a unique concept in melding the two under the same ownership. Eventually, they found the Natick Fitness Etcetera location.

The couple understands the dynamics of the area. Courtney is from Holliston and Corey from Needham; the couple now resides in Franklin. “Natick is emerging,” says Corey of the decision to locate in Metrowest. “They call this the Golden Mile. There’s definitely a clientele that wants to enjoy this type of living.” Plus, in Natick, Ten Spa would stand out as unique, where on Newbury Street they would have been thrown into competition with countless spas and salons.

The Nappas bought the all-women’s gym, which had 500 members at the time, and began the \$1 million renovation to create the spa side of it. The gym side, which houses cardio equipment, a weight-training area and a large, open aerobics studio where 35 classes per week take place, has remained women-only, although the spa will be open to men.

“We thought, ‘What better place to open a spa than an all-women’s gym?’” says Corey, who adds that they were expecting a drop in

The Nappas stress convenience and innovation in both the gym and the spa. As an all-in-one spot for taking care of your body, Ten Spa has a registered dietician on staff and a group of trainers, all of whom are available for both private sessions and open times in the weight training area, called “10 Express,” where a trainer is available to set members up with a 10-minute strength training session.

Corey expects to employ 50 employees when everything is fully operational, many of

whom will be staffing the spa that has what he calls “all the latest gadgets.” It’s a sophisticated, calming relief from the “no nonsense” feeling of the gym, where members get down to business. In the spa, sleek black manicure booths look almost like diner booths and patrons sit at the color bar while waiting for their highlights to set. It looks like a real bar and carries one of a bar’s benefits: complimentary wine service while you wait.

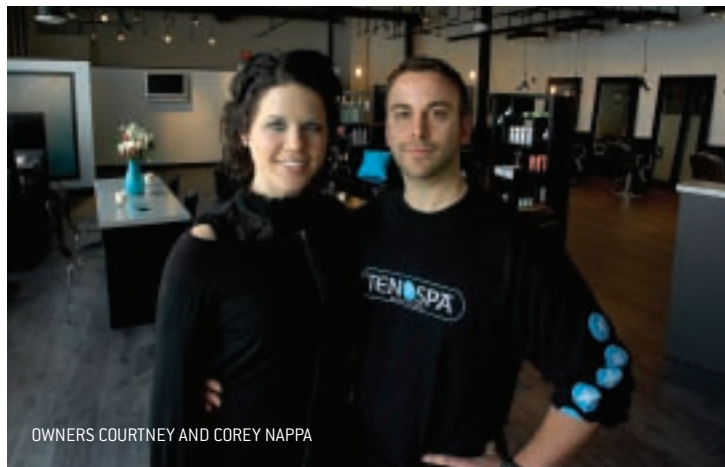
Blow dryers hang from the ceiling over each hairdresser’s chair (pull them down and they turn on) and small rooms out back offer privacy for waxing or cosmetic application. Spa-goers can even partake in oxygen, touted for reducing stress and increasing energy, either after a workout while relaxing on a

couch or while waiting for your nails to dry. Gym members receive a discount at the spa.

“We’re bringing Newbury Street to Natick,” says Corey of the amenities available.

The Nappas hope that long-term, they will open nine more Ten Spas in the Boston area. “We don’t want people to just get memberships and be members,” Corey says. “We are committed to the type of customer service and care it takes to help people achieve their fitness and weight loss goals.” ▲

*Ten Spa, 1400 Worcester Road (Route 9), Natick. Phone: 508 875-2290
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OWNERS COURTNEY AND COREY NAPPA

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enrollment once they changed ownership.

Instead, enrollment has increased from 500 to 600 members, even before the spa has opened. The couple says they have not lost any members based on the ownership change and cite that accomplishment as one of their proudest. Courtney attributes the retention to the fact that they are visible owner-operators. “Come in whenever you want,” says Corey to an interview request. “I’m here basically all the time.”

“We’re directly involved in this business every single day,” she says. “This whole process has been thought through extremely well. We haven’t had any big surprises that would upset anyone.”