



Beauty and the bath

Your skin is your body's first line of defence against infection, but only when it is kept scrupulously clean. Your first attack strategy—for which there is no substitute—is regular bathing with soap and water. Regular bathing twice a day—depending on the weather—with soap and water is the best method of cleansing the skin. Refine the skin with top to toe exfoliation and a custom, blended body mask. A 50 minute massage can restore energy flow. Follow this regime at least twice a week, because skin thins with age, resulting in a drier, duller surface with rough flaky patches.

At 30, signs of past sun damage may begin to show up in the form of freckles and spots. Shoo away the dots by talking to your dermatologist about it.

Hormonal changes in the 20s and above expand the facial pores, leaving a coarse complexion. Use oil blotting papers and toners to swell the skin around the pores and make them look less significant.

BEAUTY

Zarin Saleh Hussain

When you are in the bath, why not keep fit, as well as clean?

How hot or cool you prefer the water in your bath to be can have an effect on your fitness. One reason for the relaxation effect of a hot tub is that tired, heavy limbs become more buoyant in water, relieving muscles and removing body tension. A comfortably hot bath lowers blood pressure by dilating blood vessels on the skin's surface and making the body lose heat. This causes a drop in over all blood flow, and corresponding fall in pressure.

A very hot water bath is not relaxing. To make the most of your tub time, choose carefully what you put into your bath. Just a few drops of the right essential oil in your bath can help soothe and relax you. For example, rose petals/water, neem leaves, lime water. For dry skin, you can use honey and olive oil. Application of turmeric paste on the skin daily during your bath, improves the complexion. A weekly body mask will suck out impurities. Two tablespoons of mustard powder dissolved in the bath water, does wonders for rheumatic pains, and will help melt away the 'spare tyres' of unwanted extra inches. For cracks under your feet, apply a thick paste of turmeric and castor oil daily before taking your bath. To remove dead skin from the face, apply a mixture of glycerine, lime-juice and sugar and rub gently, before taking your bath. To get rid of dryness, use a paste of besan for bathing, instead of soap.

For dark underarms or any other part: To decolourise the area, exfoliate your underarms (or any other part) with a mixture of wheat bran, gram flour and a pinch of turmeric mixed with raw milk. To lighten the dark area, apply lemon-juice to the area, after your bath.

For hair: In case your hair assumes a dull appearance, it would be advisable to make use of lemon-juice in your rinsing water after a shampoo to restore your hair's original hue, and lend it shining glints and glamour.

To develop long and lustrous hair, wash your hair daily with a mixture of Bengal-gram flour (besan) and curd.

Home made whitening lotion: Take one tablespoon of cucumber juice. Stir in a few drops of lime-juice and a dash of turmeric powder. Mix well and apply over your face and neck. Leave it on for half an hour and then remove during your bath. This lotion makes an excellent whitener for all types of skin.

Feet: To prevent your feet from smelling, soak them alternately in hot and cold saline water for 20 minutes daily or during your bath. Olive oil is excellent for preventing cracking of the skin of the feet due to severe heat or cold. Soak feet in warm soapy water, wash clean and rub with brush and pumice stone to remove rough, scaly skin.

Sticky, smelly feet can be helped by using cotton socks and leather shoes—which will allow the feet to breathe. Avoid nylon socks (or tight) or plastic shoes. Although you cannot stop feet from sweating, you can minimise the stickiness if you wash your feet regularly with soap and water, dry them very thoroughly and dust them with talcum powder.

Remember:
 ♦ Devote a few minutes for exercise (before your bath) to help you to lead an active day, maintaining your beauty and elegance without feeling the strain. Or take long brisk walks in the morning and make sure that you walk straight.

♦ Facials are effective and improve skin texture and circulation.
 ♦ Exfoliating helps break up cellulite and remove the outer layer of 'dead' skin, giving your skin a healthier, shinier appearance.
 ♦ Singing in the bath does you more good than you realise.
 ♦ Using a strong sunblock every two to three hours helps prevent the UV rays from darkening the skin.
 ♦ Never use a deodorant without washing first, as this could irritate your skin.
 ♦ Avoid the use of perfume as a substitute for soap and water.

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They say you are never really alive, or get the true sense of being so, unless you have tasted fear. That rush of adrenaline through your blood, the prickle at the nape of your neck, and the goose bumps breaking out on every available space on the skin gives you a very different perspective of life and is worth every bit of the botheration. Whatever I am narrating here is not first hand wisdom. Far from it. People have been doing really bizarre things like bungee jumping and playing Russian roulette just for this very purpose. The sense of well-being after the danger is past is unbelievable. I am in the wrong gender to get into action at a bull fight. Nor do I particularly care to be confined to a pit with crawling, hissing snakes. In fact, I do get my dose of therapeutic fear without the need for contact with any disgusting animal, reptile or insect. Twice a month, with mouth drying, gut clenching inevitability, I surrender to fear. This fear stems from the same source—my mind-numbing inability to write anything even remotely interesting for my column. What begins with a vague uneasiness, slowly ascends to the level of pure, unalloyed terror. I clamp on my headphones and am assaulted by jabbering RJs and mindless Bollywood music. I ponder which is worse, and realise I hardly have the luxury of pondering on those issues when reams and reams of pristine white paper, as blank as my mind, are staring up at me in wordless accusation.

I was seated like this, sunk in gloom, long after my usual office hours, wondering if a recent, guilty binge consisting of nutrition-starved junk food was responsible for my addled brains, when suddenly, a playful Spring breeze swept in without so much as a by your leave, and scattered my blank pages. They just flew off my table like a flock of doves flapping their wings in startled flight. And then, in a moment of pure epiphany, I realised Spring was telling me, "What are you waiting for? Can't you see I'm here? Write about me. This is what is wrong with self-proclaimed intellectuals like you. You don't see what is right under



April rhapsody

3rd eye

Indrani Raimedhi

your nose! So, go on, write. I have better things to do than blow off papers from your desk." And then, as if on cue, my headphones filled with the rousing beats of a Bihu song, and I felt fear ebbing away like a retreating wave. I was yet to begin writing, and yet, I was sure of the journey with words, plotting the way with little detours, letting the mind take over, drawing on memory and experience.

On hindsight, I realise that Spring has already wreaked havoc on my structured life. Every evening, I venture out for an hour's walk. Usually, I prefer the quiet bylanes as they are less polluted. But, rising instances of young goons on bikes making a swipe at jewellery, handbags and cell phones made short shrift of this. I have begun to stick to the main road, but recently, Nature has played spoilsport to this beloved solitary activity. Every evening, as I venture out, flashes of lightning, intimidating peals of thunder, lights going off, and sudden pelting showers have done their best to

discourage my innocent pastime. But, I am made of sterner stuff. With an umbrella, waterproof shoes, and even a heavy, old fashioned torch (the kind with which you can whack goons out cold), I have grimly, resolutely, stuck to my evening constitutional, and am truly proud of my refusal to bow down to my adversary. My husband refuses to endorse this glowing testimonial. He calls me plain stubborn. You know men. This Nature defying act has gone on like a cat and mouse game every evening. It is a battle of wits, and I return home drenched, almost blinded by lightning, my umbrella blown inside out, but feeling very smug, pleased as Punch with myself, and just in the mood to snuggle on the couch with coffee and another hilarious episode of *Two and a Half Men*.

April may be the cruellest month for poet TS Eliot, but for me, it invokes a season of blessings. My father and my two sons were born in April. When poets wax eloquent about newborn lambs frolicking in green meadows, I think of my sons in my arms, and the sleepy, puzzled way they looked up at me. I remember their thin, quavering wails in the night, and their gap-toothed smiles. Just as Spring is the promise of new beginnings, for me, they embody a new turn in my life. Along with one's offspring, a newer being emerges from within you, a being that looks at the world through the eyes of your children, and is filled with the anticipation of even greater joys in the future.

So, we are in the thick of Spring, surrounded by glorious sunshine, brilliant blue skies, playful, skittering breezes, and a perfumed profusion of flowers which show what God can do to a drab and dirty world. If you have never been thrilled to the very edges of your soul by a flower in Spring bloom,

maybe your soul has never been in bloom. And it is said that an optimist is the human personification of Spring. He may be in the autumn of life, his body may be as infirm as that of a battle scarred veteran, but in the shadows of the darkest night, he will see the faint blush of dawn. He will believe even the worst things happen for a reason, and because of this, there will be a freshness in his aura, an energy that will touch others around him.

No piece on Spring is complete without a word on love. Our lusty Bihu songs capture the ardour and impatience of lovers seeking reunion with gusto. The demure lass, a rosy blush on her cheeks, and blossoms in her hair, waiting by some solitary river bank for her secret love, is an image cherished by every true blue Assamese. And yet, the innocence and true passion of the past have been replaced by artifice and big money changing hands for Bihu gigs. Bihu in the arclights is a carefully orchestrated affair, and the dancers are not youth enraptured by love, but blase professionals making the best of a profitable season.

It is tragic that in this season of joy and youth, a murky drama is being played out on our television screens. We have a *menage a trois*, in which an overweight, bespectacled and embittered woman lashes out at a celebrity cricketer and a tennis player. The whole unholy circus, with its shameless playing to the gallery, its insinuation of betrayal and greed, has made a sham not only of love, but marriage, too. One possible fallout of this whole sorry episode could be that more young women will want to starve themselves to be accepted by their partners/boy-friends. On the upside, women will not take injustice lying down.

Whatever it is, I don't want to sit and watch this revolting circus. On this Spring evening, with the cool, balmy air, and the glow of the sunset still upon the land, it is time to venture out on my evening walk. And always watchful, the April storm lets out its first warning flash. Ah, the cat and mouse game begins...

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How to Train Your Dragon

Cast: Jay Baruchel, Gerard Butler, American Ferrara.
 Director: Dean DeBlois, Chris Sanders.



From the studio that brought you *Shrek*, *Madagascar*, and *Kung Fu Panda*, comes *How to Train Your Dragon*. Set in the mythical world of burly Vikings and wild dragons, and based on the book by Cressida Cowell, the action comedy tells the story of Hiccup, a Viking teenager, who doesn't exactly fit in with his tribe's longstanding tradition of heroic dragon slayers. Hiccup's world is turned upside down when he encounters a dragon that challenges him and his fellow Vikings to see the world from an entirely different point of view.

Hot Tub Time Machine

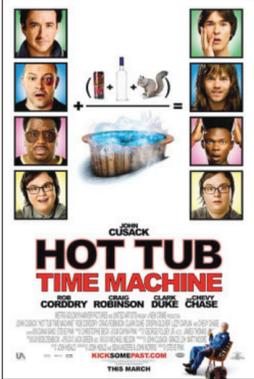
Cast: John Cusack, Rob Corddry, Craig Robinson.
 Director: Steve Pink.

MOVIE WATCH
 Vikram Barkataki

TOP 10 Hollywood

- How to Train Your Dragon
- Alice in Wonderland
- Hot Tub Time Machine
- The Bounty Hunter
- Diary of a Wimpy Kid
- She's Out of My League
- Green Zone
- Shutter Island
- Repo Men
- Our Family Wedding

Hot Tub Time Machine follows a group of best friends who've become bored with their adult lives: Adam (John Cusack) has been dumped by his girlfriend; Lou (Rob Corddry) is a party guy who can't find the party; Nick's (Craig Robinson) wife controls his every move; and video game-obsessed Jacob (Clark Duke) won't leave his basement. After a crazy night of drinking in a



ski resort hot tub, the men wake up, heads pounding, in the year 1986. This is their chance to kick some past and change their futures - one will find a new love life, one will learn to stand up for himself with the ladies, one will find his mojo, and one will make sure he still exists!



"Married more than 25 years, but I never really knew you until we became Facebook friends!"



"Of course I don't share my feelings with you. I don't even share them with ME!"



"Love makes the world go around, but we're both trying to spin it in different directions!"



"With this carpet pattern, you can leave your socks on the floor and your wife will never notice!"

FORECAST

APRIL 12- APRIL 18, 2010

ARIES (MAR 21-APR 19)
 On Monday and Tuesday, you'll be boldly forging new trails and meeting new people everywhere you go. Expect that action to subside by Wednesday and Thursday as obstacles and obligations crop up to block your path. On Friday and on through the weekend, you'll be quickly flipping through phone calls, e-mails and other electronically enabled messages. On Sunday, get something off your chest.

TAURUS (APR 20-MAY 20)
 Slow down on Monday and Tuesday! On Wednesday and Thursday, you'll come back into your own -- and how! All of your best traits -- especially your persistence, practicality and energetic stamina -- will be magnified, and others will be amazed in your presence. Starting this Friday and till the weekend, you'll find yourself in an uncharacteristic rush again, only this time that mental quickness will just help you communicate your feelings more clearly.

GEMINI (MAY 21-JUN 21)
 You're a dynamo on Monday and Tuesday, able to communicate quickly and come up with new plans (with a little help from your friends, of course). Wednesday and Thursday, unexpected obstacles could block your way, but some patience and mental manoeuvring should see you through. On Friday and on through the weekend, expect to have amazing amounts of energy. You'll be doing what you love -- meeting lots of new people and trying lots of new things -- and the world will bend to your every whim.

CANCER (JUN 22-JUL 22)
 Monday and Tuesday could both present emotional challenges, thanks to your temporarily extra-sensitive intellect. If you can stay calm, cool and collected, though, you'll pull through fine. On Wednesday and Thursday, make plenty of time to socialise. Starting on Friday and on into the weekend, you'll find opportunities to break out of your shell. On Sunday, all eyes are on you.

LEO (JUL 23-AUG 22)
 The beginning of this week should provide more than a few opportunities to discover interesting people and downright amazing ideas -- and you'll even have some fun in the process. On Wednesday and Thursday, your focus will shift to big-picture thoughts on your reputation and career. On Friday and on into the weekend, you'll have the most fun in big groups -- lead the way. On Sunday afternoon and evening, others will be drawn to your natural warmth.

VIRGO (AUG 23-SEP 22)
 As the week begins, you'll be filled with an unusually assertive sense of purpose. Use this spirit and ambition to get things done on Monday and Tuesday, even if others are reluctant to help. On Wednesday and Thursday, take any opportunity to travel. On Friday and on through the weekend, expect to have a quick wit and super-sharp reason -- which could be a big help in taking care of or smoothing out any small details. On Sunday, spend time socialising.

LIBRA (SEPT 23-OCT 22)
 You'll be called on to make a compromise in a one-on-one partnership as the week begins -- but fortunately, striking a balance is your personal specialty. On Wednesday and Thursday, others will ask you to intervene in their own affairs. On Friday and on into the weekend, you'll find yourself filled with enthusiasm and plenty of intellectual energy. Have fun bating around big ideas with someone close. On Sunday, watch out for a disruption in your routine.

SCORPIO (OCT 23-NOV 21)
 You're filled with initiative and energy on Monday and Tuesday -- and it's a great time to start things -- but that assertiveness could bring you into conflict if you're not careful. On Wednesday and Thursday, focus on flexibility. On Friday and on into the weekend, exercise some care and caution. You might be tempted to take a risk, but you need to look before you leap. On Sunday, try not to cling to control.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV 22-DEC 21)
 Monday and Tuesday both find you filled with playful enthusiasm and an almost kid-like creativity, so put all that energy to good use. On Wednesday and Thursday, focus on the big picture. On Friday and all through the weekend, your mind is going into frenetic, intellectual overdrive. You'll be inspired to philosophise and seek out appropriately heady conversation. On Sunday, follow your mood.

CAPRICORN (DEC 22-JAN 19)
 On Monday and Tuesday, events are at odds with your desires and plans, but be patient -- you just need to show some perseverance. On Wednesday and Thursday, take at least some time off to relax, especially with friends and kids. On Friday and on into the weekend, you'll get unwelcome attention from flitting, flighty people. Force them to cut with the gabbing and cut to the chase. On Sunday, don't take anything personally.

AQUARIUS (JAN 20-FEB 18)
 On Monday and Tuesday, you'll find plenty of opportunities to lend a helping hand -- and what goes around will surely come around. On Wednesday and Thursday, boredom could get the best of you if you're not careful. Find creative ways to mix things up, even if it's just swapping strange stories with friends. Starting on Friday and on into the weekend, the spotlight is on you! You're positively magnetic right now. On Sunday, get focused and keep your cool.

PISCES (FEB 19-MARCH 20)
 Early week, proceed with caution. Wednesday and Thursday are better days for action. Your communication skills are unusually attuned, and others will swoon over your sweet, soft words. Starting on Friday and on into the weekend, you'll find yourself overwhelmed by details. Don't overreact like that -- and, in fact, don't make any big moves right now. Everything is about to change anyway. On Sunday, fun will find you.