In Partnership with philosophy

STRESS VS SKINCARE

Stress can take a heavy toll on your skin – here's how you can undo the damage while also making the most of London's most relaxing activities

You know the drill. We're all living increasingly busy lives, and as the lines between work and play grow ever more blurred, lots of people are battling stress. However, what you might not be realised is that stress isn't just a tax on your mental health – it's also a total nightmare for your skin.

High levels of anxiety can impair the body's ability to produce hyaluronic acid, which accounts for that dry, dull look your skin has when you're under stress. Cortisol release is another physical response to stress, which in turn damages collagen production, your body's in-house skin-smoothing system. And then there's the disturbed sleep, and the dark puffy eyes you get the morning after...

Fortunately, you can help keep your complexion in peak condition thanks to philosophy's new anti-wrinkle miracle cocktail – the miracle. A collection of clever moisturisers and eye creams, the new range uses a powerful formula of peptides, hyaluronic acid and vitamin C to help counteract the effect of stress on your skin.

Want some more inspiration on how to lower your stress levels in London? Read on for our edit of the most soothing stuff going on in the capital...

SHOP THE COLLECTION

Escape to the wetlands

Barnes already feels like a village inside the city, but a day trip to the London Wetland Centre is like a jaunt to the countryside. Still not quite soothing enough for you? Well, if you time your visit for either 11.15am or 2pm, and you can watch the family of otters being fed. What's that? You don't like otters? Get out. Now, please.

Gaze at landscapes

Tate Modern's Pierre Bonnard retrospective is the first major showcase of the French artist's work for 25 years. Bonnard's use of colour is a sight to behold, and there's a burst of landscape canvasses to lose yourself in. The gallery recommends taking your time with this one, with special 'slow looking' tours running over the coming weeks.

Eat in a secret garden

The Garden Museum is one of London's lesser known attractions, but if it's a quiet, gentle afternoon you're after, it absolutely fits the bill. Best of all is the museum's tea-side restaurant, a lovely airy space that opens out onto a courtyard garden. It's still flying under the radar, but the food is incoming, so treat yourself before the secret is out.

Relax at a concert

If you want to unwind London, St James' Church Piccadilly is one of the capital's hands-break destinations. A peaceful spot away from the mayhem of Piccadilly, the church hosts lunchtime recitals on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 1.15pm. Admission is free and recitals last for around 30 minutes, so you shouldn't be late back to your desk.

Draw a furry friend

Drawing is a terrific way to practice mindfulness, and Wild Life Drawing lets you use your skills on some natural models. Yes, you get to draw animals, from pygmy goats to parrots. We've got our eye on the Dominant Females class on 18 March at Carousel in Marylebone, where you'll meet (and draw) a friendly skunk. Hooray.

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