



At Sothys Spa in New York City, Arlene Baldasare-Colannino softens the skin with oil before waxing.

(Continued from page 122) efficiently ripped away strip after strip. Call us self-centered, but knowing we weren't hurting the planet did nothing to offset our physical discomfort. We walked out more red than green—but satisfied. After all, that's the nature of a bikini wax. Bikini Wax, \$36.

McLEAN, VA
Estée Lauder Spa at Bloomingdale's Tysons Corner

Rosario Gonzalez
 1961 Chain Bridge Rd.
 703-556-4651

After 13 years in the waxing business, Gonzalez has an easy touch and a quiet demeanor—both of which made lying with our knees butterflyed for nearly half an hour as comfortable as such an experience can be. She smoothed on the soft blue wax and pulled it off so rapidly that we merely gasped, rather than our usual howls. After a tweeze

and a sprinkle of powder, we were perfectly tidy and barely red. It isn't always easy to get an appointment with Gonzalez, but we're going to be scheduling a series of dates for all of bathing-suit season. Custom Bikini Wax, \$60.

ATLANTA
Ageless Remedies

Jigna Naik
 2990 Grandview Ave.
 404-495-9099

Some spas attempt to offset waxing anxiety with dimly lit rooms and soft music. At

this medical spa, the setting is clinical and extremely bright. Although the ambience didn't do much for our jitters, Naik's repartee did—we found her chattiness to be a pleasant distraction, and her technique of pulling our skin taut with each rip and pressing it immediately afterward minimized the pain we felt. Before we knew it, it was all over, and we left pleased with our thorough but not surgically bare results. Bikini Wax, \$30 and up.

MIAMI BEACH
Rio II SoBe Salon

Neuza Monteiro
 233 1 St.
 305-538-8830

Scheduling an appointment with Monteiro gave us our first clue that she's different from other waxers we've visited. The Brazilian-born 32-year industry veteran requests at least 45 minutes for initial appointments to allow her time to survey the area before she begins. We shed our clothes in the closet-size treatment room, slipped on a pair of disposable skivvies, and waited. A solid 40 minutes of waxing, shaping, and tweezing (complete with magnifying goggles!) later, we emerged happy. Our

remaining strip was perfectly proportioned, and there wasn't a stray hair in sight. Bikini Wax, \$40 and up.

BIRMINGHAM, MI

Carol Lewis Day Spa

Ellen Glen
 386 E. Maple Rd.
 248-642-1570

It is a rare woman who can take our mind off the fact that we're nearly naked below the waist; Glen is just such a waxer. She's known for giving one of the best Brazilians in town, but we felt shy and asked for a standard bikini version. Glen waxed rapidly, and just as we were mentally chastising ourselves for being prudish, she asked if we wanted a little more off—and we ended up with a modified Brazilian at no extra charge. She tweezed the strays without so much as a muffled cry from us. And on our way out, she gave us a card for 50 percent off a facial with her. Brazilian Wax, \$50.

CHICAGO
Skincare by Karen Brody

1579 North Milwaukee Ave.
 773-368-5567

We used to think anxiety was the only natural thing about a bikini wax, but Brody changed all that. She warmly welcomed us into her quaint studio, then swiftly did away with our most stubborn hairs using a honey-based wax. Brody wasn't pushing the Brazilian, so we didn't perform any gymnastics. We left with our dignity intact and completely stubble-free. Upper Leg and Bikini Wax, \$70 and up.



Sugar-and-lemon-juice-based wax from Shobha SoHo in New York City