

# African Living Spa



African Living Spa Newsletter, Winter 2010, Vol 1: No 1

## Integrated Medicine & Spa Trends for 2010

**We celebrate 40 years** since Margaret and Jim Gibb opened their farm-house doors to safari travelers visiting Ngorongoro Crater and the Serengeti National Park.

The Gibb's concerned themselves with the ecological responsibility of the farm soon after they started to manage it in 1948. Concerned not only as stewards of the land and estate, but for the community and wildlife as well.

Margaret tells the story of her efforts to assist with community health in the early 1950's, sharing simple home remedies with villagers asking for help. Today the Osero Forest Clinic is an extension of this sense of responsibility.



The African Living Spa is underpinned by the science-based integrated medicine offered at the Osero Forest Clinic, Garah for Life. In the local language of I raqw, Garah means forest - a fitting reminder of the Living Spa's source of health. The team (above) is supported by consulting MD, Sociologist, Bio & phyto chemists, ethnobotanist and others.

Established as the first integrated health clinic in Tanzania, we set out to document scientific evidence of the curative powers for local phyto (plant) medicines used along side conventional medicines.

Concerned with the preventive emphasis of indigenous wellness systems our western and traditional healers collaborate in consultations and remedies.

The traveler's access the clinic through The African Living Spa. This inaugural newsletter is for those interested in our wellness community. We start with highlights of our healers their medicine, and how world spa trends happened to be so well aligned with our ways.

[www.gibbsfarm.net](http://www.gibbsfarm.net)  
[reservations@gibbsfarm.net](mailto:reservations@gibbsfarm.net)  
[osero@gibbsfarm.net](mailto:osero@gibbsfarm.net)



# Integrated Medicine



## ENJANI ENGUSERO, (Maasai) or NEEM, *Azadirachta indica*

Brought to East Africa centuries ago by the first Indian immigrants the Neem tree is called *mwarobaini* in Swahili meaning 'of forty' and relates to the traditional belief that the plant can cure forty different diseases. Well known painkillers like ibuprofen and aspirin work by blocking COX-2 enzymes (cyclooxy-genase-2). Neem contains the chemical *scopoletin* with the same effect.

## ELEMURRAN (Maasai), *Ocimum suave*

The dried leaves and stems of this plant growing in the Ngorongoro Forest and other cool, shady mountain areas throughout Maasai land belongs to the *Labiatae* (mint) family. Its Maa name literally means 'of the warriors', reflecting the young men's fondness for chewing it to ward off bad breath. It contains *stigmasterol*, a plant sterol, which lowers blood cholesterol levels. Margarine and health drinks enriched with plant sterols are already being marketed in the UK, under the trade name Benecol®, as products that to the same.

## OLOISUKI (Maasai) *Zanthoxylum chalybeum*

The Oloisuki tree belongs to the Rutaceae (citrus) family, which includes familiar well loved fruits such as orange, lemon, grapefruit and mandarin. Other members of this family include the medicinal herbs rue and fennel. For good reason Oloisuki remains one of the most popular Maasai medicines as it contains the powerful active ingredient *skimmianine*, which can be helpful in the prevention and/or treatment of allergies, loss of appetite for children, stomach problems, high blood pressure, infections and other conditions. *Skimmianine* is thought to contain *linalool*, the active compound in lavender oil – used in aromatherapy to reduce anxiety, stress and promotes restful sleep.

## Since 2007 Osero Clinic has been documenting scientific validation

of the phyto (plant) medicine used in our integrated medicine. About a dozen materials have been fully documented, another six will be added to the resources this season. We highlight three on the right, some of which are available for sale in the Gift Shop. Botanical illustrations are on-going by SANAA artist-in-residence Riziki Kateya and available for sale through the website.

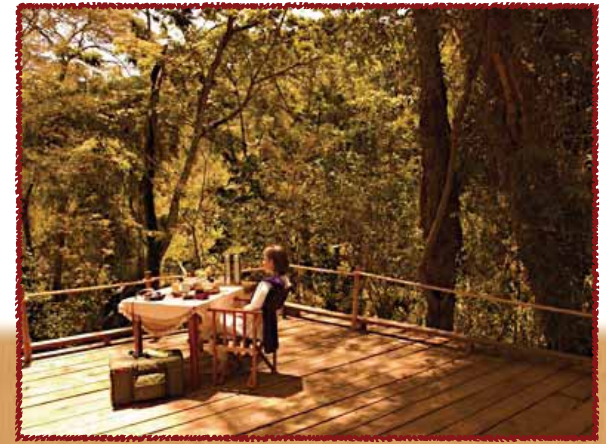
Traditional healers Labiki and Lesikar collaborate with Beatrice during consultations with staff and travelers. As this is a first for Tanzania we have two guides to assist. Gemma Burford, (ethnobotanist, anthropologist and biochemist) and Dr Manga, MD who is associated with the state medical establishment and the National Herbarium of Tanzania.

(L) Labiki Menyengera, Indigenous Healer & co-founder -

(M) Lesika Mekupori, Indigenous Healer, Assistant -

(R) Beatrice Emmanuel, Medical Officer, Allopathic Healer - specialty in pediatric and family medicine.





## Spa Trends for 2010

World spa trends happened to be well aligned with our ways.

Ten compelling spa trends for 2010 were recently put forward\* by the president of SpaFinders, Susie Ellis. In our conversation with Susie closing out 2009 she recognized that the African Living Spa® was incredibly aligned in satisfying these emerging trends.

After five years since we began this project we now know why those we have touched are so moved and overwhelmed by their healing results.

In future newsletter issues we will share the remaining seven world spa trends. We start with three.

\*[www.spafinder.com/about/press\\_release.jsp?relId=184](http://www.spafinder.com/about/press_release.jsp?relId=184)

### ① The Price Is (Still) Right

*Looking for an equal exchange: experience and value.*

COWS, COWS, COWS. We have no set fees. At the African Living Spa, according to Maasai Land tradition, payment is offered at the conclusion of the treatment. The patient offers payment in the form of cows according to how satisfied they are with the service and the results they experience. In this way pricing will forever remain of value.

### ② Wellness Tourism Wows

*Make room for "wellness tourism," a new term describing travel across borders for preventive services, diagnostics, spa and well-being vacations. The concept dramatically broadens the appeal of the medical tourism model (which has suffered from its narrow association with plastic surgery).*

At the The African Living Spa an extraordinary alternative medicine option is under development called Personal Journey. In various ways it rivals the better known existing wellness systems of South Asia, China, South East Asia, the Pacific. The goal is go beyond basic rest and recuperation and engage in a journey back to restorative and stress-relieving encounters with indigenously-based medicinal and wellness treatments in a wide variety of settings.

### ③ Stillness is a growing craving

*In response to an unprecedented amount of sensory overload, noise, and media stimulation we crave stillness. We're wired to the gills, spending nearly all waking hours in front of computer screens—bombed, texting, tweeting, clattering away—now even on airplanes. From totally silent massages/treatments or using white noise and subtle nature sounds instead of music; to silent walks, hikes, and dinners to an upswing in meditation offerings and programs, spas will help clients move from busy-ness and overload to quiet, to stillness. "Sounds" awfully good.*

Silence is an important part of the African Living Spa wellness system. Modern technology is never used, but if present is not seen. Solitude with natural sounds, aromas, and energy preclude any need for it. Indigenous wellness systems integrate only what is naturally present: the sound of wind, birds chirping or branches rustling, even the distant cow bell or bleating goat.