

## The Self-Care Generation Wants Experience At Retail



Caroline Tell, CONTRIBUTOR  
FULL BIO ▾

Opinions expressed by Forbes Contributors are their own.

The first thing I noticed about Rescue Spa was the floors. Stunning chocolate brown hardwood that conjures up visions of a pre-war pied-à-terre in nearby Gramercy Park. I looked around and realized the flooring wasn't the only detail making me feel at home. Stark white walls, decadent moldings and black and white bathrooms that belong on a Pinterest Board. It was a space I wanted to stay in, linger at, possibly move into. The fact that it offers a reknown biolifting facial, hair and beauty services and a luxurious retail experience is precisely the point.



"The first thing that comes to mind is 'comfort,'" said Rescue Spa founder Danuta Mieloch. "Professional, beautiful, comfortable, relaxing. It's an escape. I didn't want the spa to look too sterile or medical. I wanted it to feel more elegant and chic, but yet able to accommodate all of the logistics of a professional skincare environment."

As I sat waiting for my service, I recalled old school spa experiences - where changing into a bath robe and sitting awkwardly in a "relaxation room" was part of the process. Rescue Spa is for the modern woman who is squeezing in "me time" between working out, meeting a deadline and picking up the kids. That it offers nearly the entire line up of the products it uses - think cult favorite Biologique Recherche, Valmont and 3Lab - makes self-care experience easier to obtain. "It isn't easy navigating the skincare world and we help to make that foolproof," Ms. Mieloch said. "I have done over 10,000 facials and this is really what sets us apart. Years of experience. We are like skincare coaches. We help people select and even eliminate products. We follow up with them."

Such is the new standard in beauty - the merging of retail and experience. It's not enough to be a store, nor does a traditional "spa" seem to serve on its own. Women today want one-stop pampering: a great facial followed up by a unique retail offering. The new [Onda Beauty](#) in Tribeca - where actress Naomi Watts is a partner - offers all natural products ranging from from Joanna Vargas to One Love Organics, while providings massage, facial and aromatherapy services. At CAP Beauty, a purveyor of beauty, supplements and products for the self-care junkie, one can receive any number of facial options, sugar hair removal, acupuncture and more.







Whiteroom  
Whiteroom's retail offerings

Elisabeth and Tommy Lovell are taking the same approach to haircare at the three-year-old [Whiteroom](#) salon in Brooklyn. The couple's pristine, all white space in trendy South Williamsburg features luxurious haircare labels like Christophe Robin, Sachajuan and R+Co as well as in-the-know skincare by Vitner's Daughter, Grown Alchemist and Verso. The assortment is as cool as the clientele. The couple opened Whiteroom with the intent to create a space that would merge the idea of a salon with a lifestyle-driven shop. "We specifically wanted to make the store very hair-focused," said Ms. Lovell. "There's something - especially with hair - where a lot of people going into retail stores unsure of they need. They don't understand how product works and it ends up living in a medicine cabinet forever. Here, we're guiding you through the process, styling your hair, explaining why you need one shampoo over another. We're getting people to be more informed."

But being a retailer isn't always easy. In addition to her round-the-clock coloring, Ms. Lovell says she's constantly on the hunt for new lines to carry. Her clients, and the general public seems to demand it. "It used to be that you'd go to a salon and it carried one line of products - it was a 'Nexus salon,' said Ms. Lovell. "You were getting what was there and it wasn't curated to your hair. Now people are looking for so much more in retail. It needs to have a story or a feeling or an experience attached to it, and we're hoping to provide that."