

For the month of love

Treat yourself and experience a couples massage



Paul Colletti
Turning Leaf Massage and Day Spa owner
Amy Jo Soeken.

BY LESLIE KLIPSCH

There is no denying that love has a way of lingering in the air this month, so if you're hoping to romance a special loved one, look no further than a couples massage and dinner for two at Turning Leaf Massage and Day Spa in Moline.

Billed the "Turning Leaf Signature Package," spa owner and certified massage therapist Amy Jo Soeken offers couples a unique, romantic experience that includes a massage for each participant in a tranquil, fireplace-lit room, followed by dinner catered by Johnny's Italian Steakhouse and served in a charming adjoining nook. My husband, Jake, and I recently sampled the package and are still reveling in the lovely evening of incredible pampering.

After noticing how little time couples tend to make for one another, Ms. Soeken, who has been a massage therapist for 17 years, started offering couples massage followed by a dinner experience as a way to encourage people to connect. The studio is located at 1531 19th Ave., near the intersection with 16th Street, in Moline.

"I got interested in really focusing on couples massage and the relational aspects of massage when I started the dinner package. When you're relaxed after a massage, it's nice to be able to get up and then have private time together. It's really neat," she said.

Not only did we enjoy the massage and dinner for two, but Jake and I also relished the anticipation of the evening, realizing that carving out time for one another is

integral, though sometimes difficult, in our action-packed life together. Ms. Soeken, who opened Turning Leaf Massage and Day Spa in 2010, believes relationships need nurturing.

“It’s important to plan time for each other,” she wisely said. “In addition to relaxing together, preparing ahead of time and then looking forward to special time together is part of the pleasure.”

As we made arrangements for our romantic evening, the detail-conscious Ms. Soeken asked what song my husband and I had danced to at our wedding. As it played mid-dinner, Jake and I locked eyes and smiled. The song is called “The Luckiest” and it’s recorded by Ben Folds. The slowed-down moment in which we sat face-to-face with nothing to distract us provided the precious

opportunity to gratefully remember how the words — a decade later — still ring true.

Our favorite part of the Turning Leaf Signature Package

From the time we said goodbye to our three children and their baby sitter to the moment we pulled back into our dark garage at the end of the evening, Jake and I were giddy. His favorite part of the night was the stress-relieving rubdown; mine was the first sip of wine after sitting down at the small, candle-lit table.

Any tension that I’d been harboring had been massaged from my body, the room was splendidly quiet, and our phones were turned off and tucked away. The moment, as well as the rest of the evening, was completely lavish.



Paul Colletti
Side by side massage tables, and a dinner table set for a meal afterwards, are set up for a couple at Turning Leaf Massage and Day Spa in Moline.



Leslie Klipsch

Ms. Soeken's favorite part of the spa's Signature Package

She loves to see people relax and enjoy quality time together. "I think of the massage as 'prep time' for a relaxing dinner," she says. "I love romance. When I get the chance to set up our space for someone to dance after dinner and provide that extra special little touch, it makes me smile." I whole-heartedly echo her apt summary of the experience: "Massage ... private, candle-lit dinner and dancing for two ... What's not to love?"

Why you should visit Turning Leaf

Couples massage is a great way to

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introduce massage to a loved one who may have never experienced it before. By enjoying the massage together, someone unfamiliar with the practice will be put at ease. Also, the vibe at Turning Leaf is cozy and completely unthreatening. The dimly lit room is bathed in earth tones and the hosts/massage therapists are welcoming and benevolent. The playlist, which ranged from Norah Jones to Michael Bublé to Ben Harper adds to the calm, genial atmosphere. Beyond Valentine's Day, the Signature Package is an enchanting way to celebrate a birthday, anniversary or special date night.

The details

The Turning Leaf Signature Package (\$235 per couple) includes a massage for each partner and dinner catered by Johnny's Italian Steakhouse. Dinner includes a basket of fresh-baked, warm focaccia bread; two house salads; two select entrees from the Johnny's menu (salmon, spinach, and artichoke cavatappi pasta for me and parmesan-crusted sirloin for him); one appetizer or two

desserts; and a beverage. Jake and I brought our own bottle of wine to open and enjoy during dinner.

Other services offered at Turning Leaf include exfoliating treatments, pedicure and a variety of specialized massage. All spa services are by appointment only and can be made by calling 309-757-1111. Be sure to let Ms. Soeken know if you are not fond of dogs, as the beloved Soeken pet poodles — one of which is known as the spa's chief of security — will likely make an appearance if not otherwise notified. Learn more about Turning Leaf Massage and Day Spa by visiting turningleafmassage.net or the spa's Facebook page.

Each month in The Gold Standard, Leslie Klipsch, a freelance writer and editor based in Davenport, shines a spotlight on the gems of the Quad-Cities area — for Gold Book readers. She enjoys reading, cooking, spending time with her husband and three young children and exploring all that the Quad-Cities has to offer.



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