

Mud Baths ...or “Move Over, Porky!”

When I first ran across this cover, I thought I'd be doing this article from a “Are there any even left?” perspective...but then I did a search on the net and got *161,000 entries!!* So...

The mud bath tradition goes way back into history. Cleopatra used Dead Sea black mud, and the therapy seems to pop up all over the world, wherever hot springs and volcanic ash appear together: including New Zealand, Iceland, Italy and...yes..the US. In fact, it turns out that one of the biggest mud bath centers in the world is right by me, in California's wine country! One ad states. “With Mother Nature supplying the ingredients, it's no wonder Calistoga, California, is the state's mud bath capitol. About eight million years ago, nearby Mt. Konocti erupted, blanketing the area with rich, volcanic ash and leaving cracks in the earth's crust that allowed geysers and hot springs to form, including one of only three regularly-erupting geysers in the world. Native Wappo Indians used volcanic ash and warm spring water to make a kind of mud bath, and Calistoga's founder Sam Brannan was the first to commercialize the idea.

Is there any hard core scientific evidence that mud baths have any real medicinal values?...No! But, over and over again, people's vanity has proven to be worth a fortune to others, so why should mud baths be any different? The most proven reason to take a mud bath is that it's relaxing. “Being cocooned and buoyed up in the warm, soft mixture simply sucks all the stress out. The temperature makes you perspire, which cleans the pores.” [http://gocalifornia.about.com/od/canapacalisspas/a/mud_bath.htm] Although, it should be noted that the American Cancer Society warns that such baths can raise body temperatures to dangerous levels.

So...what's the moral here?...*Hogs aren't the only ones who enjoy mud!*

