

Simplified Speech #192 – Visiting the spa or sauna (ad free)

Episode description

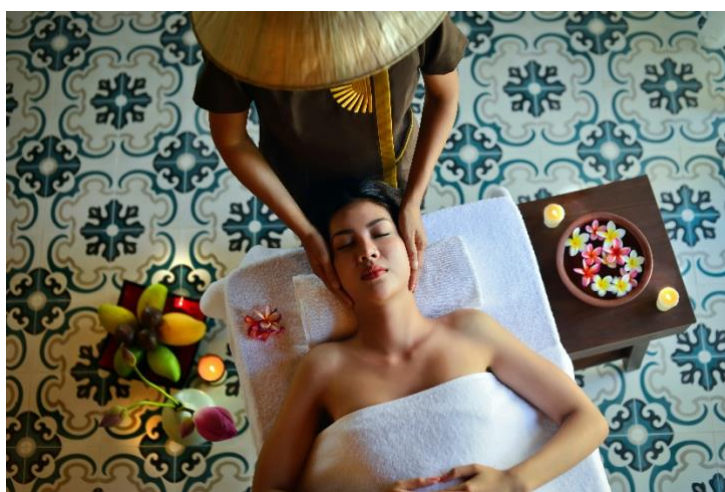
The theme for this episode is a relaxing one - saunas and spas! Andrew and Kassy discuss the difference between these two places meant for guests to calm down and unwind. They also talk about their own experiences going to bathhouses and hot springs in Canada, Korea, and Thailand. Finally, Andrew shares a story about visiting Finland - the country with the most saunas per capita in the world!

Fun fact

Tampere, Finland is the sauna capital of the world. It is a city of 250,000 people with over 60 public saunas. The whole country of Finland is estimated to have more than 3 million saunas!

Expressions included in the study guide

- All-inclusive
- To sweat [something] out
- To be pampered
- To be catered towards
- Fancy-schmancy
- A shock to one's system



Transcript

Note: The words and expressions that appear in **bold text** within the transcript are discussed in more detail in the Detailed Explanations section that follows the transcript. The transcript has been edited for clarity.

Andrew: Simplified Speech episode 192, "Visiting the spa or sauna." Featuring Andrew and Kassy. So, Kassy we have a fun episode I think today, something a little bit different because today we're going to talk about spas, saunas, bathing, and relaxing. OK? A lot of water.

Kassy: Sounds nice.

Andrew: Yeah, it does sound nice, and this episode was suggested to us by Edit, one of our awesome Culips members and an active user of our Discord server. And in fact, Edit left us the suggestion on our Discord server because we have a channel there where you can easily suggest topics to us, guys. So, if you have something that you'd like Kassy and me to discuss on Simplified Speech that is the best way to let us know. And yeah, today we're going to be talking about spas and saunas. OK Kassy, we can jump in and get started with this episode. And I think we should start by clarifying some of the different things that we'll talk about in this episode because to be honest listeners Kassy and I had to do this before we started recording. We were like "OK what are the differences between all of these things? We want to make sure that we're clear about it as well." So why don't we do that then Kassy, let's clear it up. First of all, we're going to be talking mainly I think today about spas and saunas and what are the differences between those two things? How are they different?

Kassy: I think a spa is more **all-inclusive** and is really focused on relaxation and it offers a lot of services. So, at a spa you could get facials or massages or like a meditation clinic or a mud bath or yeah lots of different services. But saunas are usually more simple. They're just hot rooms where you can go to **sweat out the toxins** and you can find them a

lot more regularly and they're usually a lot cheaper or even free depending on gyms that you go to or clubs that you're a part of.

Andrew: Mm-hmm, yeah. So, a sauna is more just like this really hot room. It's usually made out of wood and sometimes it's heated by having some really hot rocks that you pour water over top of the rocks, and it creates steam in the room. There are also infrared saunas and electric saunas. To be honest I'm not a sauna expert but I have seen those different kinds before. Whereas a spa, to me I always think they're pretty fancy. They're usually a little expensive to enter, and maybe because of that, you know guys, I've actually never been to a spa like the one that Kassy was describing earlier. I've seen a lot of them on TV and movies and they always have that upscale feeling to them. Kassy have you ever visited one of those kinds of spas?

Kassy: I've never been to an all-day spa, but I have gone to one or two spa like experiences. I went to a spa for a specific purpose for a few hours and then I left.

Andrew: And then Kassy and I at the start we are also talking about like public baths as well. A lot of different countries have bath houses which I guess are not really too common where we're from. At least in Canada they're not too, too common. Are they common in the USA?

Kassy: No, I was really surprised by my first bath house experience in Korea. I was like everybody's naked that never happens in the US. I think outdoor hot pools are pretty common in the west coast. So yeah, like natural pools but not man-made bath houses.

Andrew: Yeah, in Korea where I live now and where Kassy lived for a long time there are these places called *jjimjilbang* and if you go to a *jjimjilbang* it's kind of like a public bath. So, they're gender segregated so it's not everybody naked at the same time together. Although I've heard that those kinds of places exist in Europe which seems even more like a culture shock to me, I think. But yeah so, the first step when you go to one of these

places is there's like baths and different pools for different temperatures. And you can shower and bathe in these pools and then after you put on some clothes, you put on this little like suit that they give you, right? And then you can go into a main area where everybody is back together and there are different saunas there and you can even eat snacks. They sell snacks. Famous snack is the hard-boiled egg to eat, and you can relax you can sleep there are lots of different activities you can do. So, it's a place where you can bathe and yeah sweat it out in the hot room but also socialize or relax. So that kind of place is very I think unique to Korea.

Kassy: Yeah, I think they have them in Japan too, but I will say that those kind of places are kind of like spas in the US but cheaper where everybody can access them and they do have extra services that you could pay for on top of just going to the bathhouse. For example, I haven't been too many times, but one of my favorite things to do there is to get something called a *saeshin* which is when you go into a room, and you lay on like it almost feels like an operating table like it's not comfortable. It's like a metal table and you have this old Korean grandma lady come out and she just scrubs your entire body as hard as she can, and it removes all of the dead skin. And it's kind of a weird experience but your skin feels so smooth and fresh afterwards and every time I've done it I've loved it. Have you done that Andrew?

Andrew: I haven't had that experience Kassy, I haven't had the confidence. Maybe one day I'll build up to that step, but for now I haven't. But I'm glad to hear that you had a good experience with that and I'll add it to my list of things to do in the future.

Kassy: You definitely should even if it's just once.

Andrew: And I have to say also that you're absolutely correct about the hot springs on the west coast, at least for Canada I'm not sure about the states but of course I'm from the western part of Canada and we have lots of hot springs. And often... there are some that are outside. Last time I visited Canada I went with my brother to a hot spring. It was really

awesome there are like these pools outside and it's not like really wild like you might imagine that you're out in the forest in the mountains and there's just this hot water bubbling out of the ground and creating these pools and you sit in those pools. Now, there are some hot springs like that. And my brother was telling me about some that he's been to, but they require you to like hike into the woods for six or seven hours or something and they're really remote. There's also one he was telling me about that's on the coast, like right on the coast, on the beach. So, the waves from the ocean come in and mix with the extremely hot water that's coming out of the ground and he said like the cold ocean water and the hot spring water mix, and it creates just this perfect temperature to sit in. So that one sounds pretty cool as well, but we didn't have time to do any big adventures like that, so we just went to this hot spring where yeah, the water that's filling up the pools is from the ground and is naturally hot. But it's like you're in a swimming pool, essentially. Like it just feels like you're in an outdoor swimming pool except the water is really hot instead of just warm.

Kassy: Were there a lot of people when you were there?

Andrew: Yeah, there were quite a few people, but it wasn't like overcrowded or anything. So yeah, it was a good experience and it's really relaxing. Even though we went in the summer it was nice like I don't know there's something in the water I think you know like some kind of chemical or salt or something I'm not sure what it is.

Kassy: The minerals?

Andrew: Minerals! Yeah, some minerals in the water that just make you feel good after so that's a really good experience if you can ever try that I highly recommend it.

Kassy: Yeah, there's some really good ones in California and Oregon as well probably Washington too all along that western coast.

Andrew: Kassy what about in Thailand do they have any kind of spas or saunas or public baths that you know of there?

Kassy: Yeah, I think Thailand is pretty famous for their affordable and abundant massage parlors and spas and yeah relaxation amenities. There's also a lot of Japanese-style *onsen* bath houses here as well because there's such a large Japanese population. I am... I don't love to be touched by strangers, so I haven't gone to massages too often but I did go to a new experience recently it was called a sleep spa. And yeah, I thought I would talk about that here today in this episode.

Andrew: You have piqued my interest. Go on. What... what is this sleep spa that you're talking about?

Kassy: Yeah, I think it's a bit of a new trend like in the last year or so. Again, I'm not an expert so I'm not sure. But a sleep spa is where you go, and the objective is to get like a really deep hair wash and be in a dark room silent and the focus is to like get your hair washed and have a bit of like a neck and head massage but then also be so relaxed that you fall asleep.

Andrew: OK.

Kassy: I did not sleep. However, I really, I don't like to be touched like massage way everywhere else, but I love a good like head scratch and like neck massage, so this was a perfect spa/massage opportunity for me specifically. Yeah, they had a lot of cool oils, and they had a steamer, and they had this cool hair jet thing that they could control the temperature so you could have hot water or warm or cold. And they had little stars star lights along the ceiling for atmosphere.

Andrew: OK so you go in there and are you lying down or sitting down?

Kassy: First, I felt very **pampered** they introduced you to the building and they give you these special slippers and an outfit and then they give you a drink choice that you would like, like these really fancy teas. And then, they take you upstairs and you're lying down and then they pretty much do this like hair treatment and neck massage for quite a while, I would say 90 minutes or so. Wow. Yeah, and then after that when you're fully relaxed and immersed in the experience they'll take you out of the room and you get a full blowout, or they'll dry your hair and give you whatever hairdo you want. I mean not like whatever you want, but you can either get it straightened or curled.

Andrew: Wow, OK. At first when you brought this place up the sleep spot, I thought maybe I have to visit sounds interesting and now I'm thinking it might not be that good of a fit for me.

Kassy: Yeah, I think it's popular with like younger women, but I don't think it's too popular with anybody else.

Andrew: OK I want to rewind just a little bit and go back to that word that you just used Kassy because I think it's a really good word to know when you're talking about spas specifically. The word is "pampered". Pampered. You said that you felt really pampered. What does that mean exactly?

Kassy: It means when you feel like you're taken care of, and the person is doing whatever you want.

Andrew: It's like you're getting the VIP treatment, right? You're getting treated really, really well. And all of your needs are taken care of. Pampered, exactly. Cool! So, I have a story that I can share about my best sauna experience ever I don't think I've ever talked about this on Culips.

Kassy: A new story this is a rare... rarity everyone. Buckle up!

Andrew: A rarity! I hope not... I may have, you know sometimes, we've been doing Culips for many years now and sometimes I forget exactly what I have said and haven't said so if I am repeating myself everyone, I'm sorry. But, this happened a while ago when my wife and I visited Finland I believe that was in 2019, so yeah almost wow it must have been about four or five years ago before the pandemic so let's say 2019. And actually, the main purpose of that trip was to go to Spain that was where we spent most of our time, but we had a stopover in Finland because we took Finnair which was great, and you could plan the stopover to be multiple days. So, I think you could choose between like one to three days for the stopover time that you wanted. And we were there for the maximum time. I think we spent two nights in Finland.

Kassy: That's a win-win honestly right because your ticket might have been slightly cheaper but also, you're adding money to the Finland's economy it's pretty great.

Andrew: It's cool and it's also like you get to check out another place and another culture. And yeah, it was fantastic. So, we stayed in Helsinki for two nights and while we were there, this was the wintertime, so it was very snowy, very wintery. I was in my element as a Canadian, it was great. And one of the things that is recommended for tourists to do when you visit Finland is go to a sauna because it's like sauna capital of the world. All of the Nordic countries I think are really famous for having a strong Sauna culture. And yeah, for being famous for their saunas. So, we went to the sauna in Helsinki that was called the Löyly Sauna and it was amazing! It was definitely one of the highlights of the whole trip and the best sauna experience of my life. You go in and there were multiple different saunas with different heat levels, really cool, really relaxing, really nice. There weren't that many people there, maybe because it was the winter. I think this facility specifically was more **catered towards** tourists, there were a lot of tourists there.

Kassy: So, maybe in the summer it would have been busier.

Andrew: Yeah so, I'm thinking in the summer it may have been busier, but this is why it was so awesome is that it was on the Baltic Sea. So, you go in the sauna you get really, really hot really, really sweaty and like the hottest sauna there. Almost to the point where you feel like I'm gonna pass out. Then you open the door, and you can go outside and there's a path from the sauna all the way to the ocean, which is maybe like 30 meters or so, it's not that far. I don't think anybody was wearing any flip-flops or boots or anything, you just walk in the snow. And they cut this big hole in the ocean and then you can jump in the ocean.

Kassy: Wow that is so cool!

Andrew: Yeah, when I say they cut a hole in the ocean it's because it was frozen over.

Kassy: It must have been freezing.

Andrew: Yeah, it's such a shock because you go from this super-hot sauna room to like freezing cold ocean. And then, yeah, it's like as soon as you hit that water everything goes blank, right? Like your mind is blank, your ears are almost like *biiiiiing!* It's so cold and then you just have to make sure that you get out of the water. Get out of the water and then scurry back inside back to the sauna heat up and do it again. I think I did it two or three times so that was awesome. And then, what's even better is they have like a little bar inside the sauna, so I bought a beer after and my wife I think had a tea or something a juice. So, there's like this little lounge you can hang out and have a drink. And then, yeah once you're finished with that you feel like a million bucks you feel amazing, like you're a brand-new human all over again.

Kassy: I want to go try that one seriously I have to plan my trip to Finland now.

Andrew: Yeah, no! Next time you go to Sweden because I know you go there often you should definitely check out Finland and check out that sauna, which makes me think of

your time in Sweden. Have you ever been to a sauna or a place like that while you were there?

Kassy: I haven't but what is it called ice swimming? Winter swimming? Is super common there and my uncle, he's not Swedish but he, you know, tries to fit in with the natives, and he swims every morning all year round. Doesn't matter how cold it is.

Andrew: Really?

Kassy: Mm-hmm.

Andrew: In the ocean or like a lake or?

Kassy: In a big lake right near their house and he has a group that he goes with, and I heard that they said the health benefits of swimming in this you know freezing water is just so good for you and your circulation.

Andrew: Yeah, it's a huge trend these days actually to go to saunas and also to take ice baths and there's a lot of new research coming out about how both of these things are really healthy. And a lot of people on YouTube and podcasts, you know, because I'm into running I listen to running podcasts and I listen to different health podcasts, and they always are singing the praises of saunas and ice baths to the point where I even looked at how much it would cost to install a little sauna in my house.

Kassy: Not the ice bath?

Andrew: The ice bath I was like I can take a shower or just a cold shower. Surprisingly saunas are not expensive as I thought. They're still expensive and I'm not going to install one in my house, but I was surprised to learn that they're not as expensive as I originally thought they would be.

Kassy: Yeah, I think the cool thing about everything we've talked about today, the natural hot springs, the saunas, the spas. The one cool thing that they all have in common is that they're all about embracing your relaxation and you know getting some peace and rest. And I think that's a great business model and it's a great thing to try to participate in every once in a while. Like you said spas can be really expensive and fancy, but you can also find experiences like the natural hot springs or the bath houses in your local neighborhood that offer maybe not the **fancy-schmancy** experience, but they still offer this relaxing communal experience. And I think that all of us should try to get out more often and give ourselves a treat. To pamper ourselves every once in a while.

Andrew: OK Kassy, we have some bonus questions here to keep our conversation going for a little bit longer for all of our wonderful Culips members. Question number one for you. We were talking earlier about *jjimjilbang* and going to them. And I guess everyone is different, but the ones that I've been to you sort of come out of the locker room area and then there's a room with different pools. And the pools range in size and also in temperature. Personally, I like going into the cold pool. I like the cold plunge, it's like **a real shock to your system**. And then maybe after you can go into a hotter area. But what about you do you prefer to go into a hot tub first or a cold pool first?

Kassy: I am a bit of a weenie which is like a scaredy cat, so I prefer a warm pool and then a hot pool and then a cold pool.

Andrew: OK interesting everybody's different I love it. OK. Next, if you could choose between, you know, going to like a nice spa would you prefer to have a morning meditation in a relaxing garden as a part of the spa or an evening relaxation session on a rooftop sauna?

Kassy: If I was on vacation for a special trip, I think I'd pick the morning meditation one because I'd be more in the early morning wake-up mood, I'm not much of a morning person. But if it was like a you know just a weekend thing in my city, I would definitely

choose the evening relaxation rooftop sauna. I think it would be you know not too much effort but an easy way to get some relaxation in during my everyday routine. How about you?

Andrew: Yeah, I wish I could sort of switch it up and I would like to do a morning rooftop sauna, because I'm a morning person and yeah meditation is good, but the sauna sounds more intriguing to me, but I'd rather do it in the morning than the evening. But yeah, yeah, I will go for the sauna session even if it's in the evening that would be my choice. Alright final rapid-fire question in this episode a little bit earlier on, I talked about going to a bar in the sauna when I was in Helsinki. And I had a beer and my wife had something else I can't remember, but it wasn't a beer. Let's say you're in a spa and they have a place to get not, not an alcoholic beverage but maybe they have tea, or they have juice what kind of drink are you gonna go for to help you relax are you like an herbal tea person are you a fruit juice person?

Kassy: Yeah, that's a tough one too because if I was mostly in the hot tubs or the sauna, I think I would pick the juice so that I could you know get back some of those electrolytes that I lost. But if it was more of a meditation place where I wasn't there very long, then maybe a nice hot tea would be nice. So yeah, it depends on on the session that I went to. Longer term juice, shorter tea.

Andrew: OK, interesting. I think in the morning... if I'm there in the morning I'm going juice, if I'm there in the evening I'm going herbal tea. Depends on the time of the day. There's too many variables in these questions here that make them difficult to answer.

Kassy: That's true however it's up to me I think some spas or bath houses have the best soups like if you go to a bath house in Korea and you wanted to get like one of these cool ramens or these spicy seafood soups, they're so good! I would love to try it out in Japan see what their food is like in their hot spring spas as well.

Andrew: Yeah, me too that's something that's on my bucket list is to go to a hot spring in Japan. And listeners we should say that when you are eating soup in the *jjimjilbang* in Korea it's not like you're sitting in the tub eating the soup. It's a very separate eating area.

Kassy: Yeah.

Andrew: Alright, I think this is a good place to wrap things up take care of everybody and we'll talk to you next time. Bye.

Kassy: See ya.

Andrew: That brings us to the end of this lesson. Talk to you next time, bye!

Detailed Explanations

All-inclusive Adjective

Kassy and Andrew begin their chat by explaining the difference between saunas and spas. Kassy says that saunas are just hot rooms for you to relax in, but spas can be **all-inclusive** facilities that offer many different treatments like massages, mud baths, and facials.

In the world of hotels, spas, and trips, **all-inclusive** means a complete package that comes with many services or features for one set price. This could include accommodation, meals, drinks, activities, and sometimes even the cost of flying or transportation.

For example, at **all-inclusive** resorts, guests can enjoy a relaxed experience where they can have as much food, drinks, and fun activities as they want without needing to carry money or think about extra costs. This idea is good for travelers who want things to be simple and don't want to do a lot of planning.

Spas sometimes offer **all-inclusive** day passes or multi-day stays with food, drinks, and access to different treatments. However, spas usually also offer bookings for a single session of a treatment like a massage. You don't always have to spend all day at the spa!

Be careful – if a business or a facility advertises themselves as “**inclusive**,” they mean that they accept and welcome people of all different backgrounds, races, religions, etc. If you're looking for a package, the key word to look out for is **ALL-inclusive**.

Here are a few more examples with **all-inclusive**:

Jacob: We should start planning our vacation.

May: It's so much work to plan every detail of our itinerary. Can we just book an **all-inclusive** stay at a resort on the beach and keep it simple?

Jacob: That sounds good to me!

Liam: What did your husband get you for your anniversary?

Abby: He got me an **all-inclusive** day pass at my favorite spa.

Liam: What a thoughtful gift!

To sweat [something] out

Phrasal verb

To sweat something out comes up a couple times in this episode - Kassy describes saunas as places where you can “**sweat out** the toxins” in your body and Andrew explains that there are hot rooms in Korean bathhouses where you can “**sweat it out**.”

To sweat something out has two common usages – the first usage is literally about sweat (the salty moisture that covers your skin when you’re hot, exercising, or nervous) and the other is figurative.

The literal meaning of **to sweat something out** is to sweat a lot in order to feel better. Although there’s no scientific proof, people commonly believe that you can **sweat out a cold** (get rid of the cold faster) by sitting and sweating in a hot sauna or steam room. If you’re feeling stressed, you might go to the gym for a good workout session **to sweat it out** (get rid of your stress).

The figurative meaning of **to sweat something out** is to patiently deal with a difficult situation or to keep going when things are tough. It’s often used when someone is waiting nervously for something to happen, especially if it’s something important or stressful, like waiting for exam results. For example,

Some other synonyms for the figurative meaning of **to sweat it out** are “to tough it out” and “to weather the storm.”

Here are a couple more examples with **to sweat it out**:

Aurora: Work has been so hectic lately. I’m having trouble finding time to relax.

Jayden: Why don’t you come to the sauna with me this weekend?

Aurora: Do you think that will help?

Jayden: Absolutely. I always go to the sauna when I need **to sweat it out** after a busy week.

Harry: Mrs. Smith asked me to stay after class because she wants to talk to me about the broken window.

Julie: Uh-oh. Do you think you’ll be able to keep quiet about the fact that Tommy broke it?

Harry: I’m determined to **sweat it out** and make sure she doesn’t find out about it.

To be pampered

Verb

Andrew asks Kassy what kinds of spas there are in Thailand. Kassy introduces him to the trendy new “sleep spa,” where customers get such a relaxing hair wash and massage that they fall asleep. She said she felt very **pampered** when she visited one.

Pampered is an adjective that means being treated luxuriously and having all of your needs taken care of. It can also be used as a verb – **to pamper**. For instance, when you have a spa day, you might get **pampered** with massages, facials, and other beauty treatments to help you relax and feel refreshed. Similarly, staying at a fancy hotel might mean **being pampered** with things like soft robes and delicious meals brought to your room.

Pampered is very similar to the common adjective “spoiled,” but **pampered** has a positive meaning, and spoiled is negative. For instance, you would probably describe a child whose parents give him anything he wants as “spoiled,” not **pampered**. On the other hand, you would likely say that you felt **pampered** during your day at the spa, not “spoiled.”

Here are a couple more examples with **to be pampered**:

Naomi: What would your dream vacation be?

Joshua: Hmm... I always go on exciting and adventurous trips, but I think my dream vacation would actually be something much more relaxed.

Naomi: Like visiting a seaside resort?

Joshua: Something like that. I would really love to **be pampered**, massaged, and served tropical fruit juices all day long.

Naomi: I agree. That sounds like the perfect vacation.

Nathan: Happy birthday, darling! I brought you breakfast in bed.

Sophie: Wow, this looks great! Thank you so much.

Nathan: Get ready for a day of relaxation. I’m going **to pamper** you all day long. You don’t have to worry about a thing!

Sophie: That’s exactly what I need.

To be catered towards

Phrasal verb

Andrew tells Kassy about a few-day stopover he had in Finland five years ago. Finland is famous for its saunas, so he went to one in Helsinki that seemed **to be catered towards** tourists. He said it was actually the best sauna experience he has ever had.

To be catered towards is a phrasal verb that means to be made or arranged to fit the needs, likes, or interests of a particular group of people. This could be anything like food choices, services, or even entertainment.

For example, a restaurant might offer lots of vegetarian dishes **to cater towards** people who don't eat meat. Similarly, a TV streaming service might have many scary movies to **cater towards** people who love horror films. The advertisements on social media are **catered towards** each individual user based on their search history data.

Catering towards a certain group doesn't exclude other groups – it just means that there is a target audience. A restaurant **catered towards** vegetarians doesn't refuse to serve people who eat meat.

Some synonyms for **to be catered towards** include "to be catered to," "to be geared towards," and "to be aimed at."

Here are a couple more examples with **to be catered towards**:

Ariana: I'm looking to join a fitness class that's **catered towards** beginners. Do you know of any?

Jamie: Come to my yoga class! There are students of all levels, and they offer blocks and straps to help beginners get into more difficult poses.

Ariana: That sounds great. I'll join you the next time you go!

Nick: Let's stop and get some coffee. Have you been to that new coffee shop called Java's?

Sarah: Oh, I have. It's really expensive, actually. It seems like it's **catered towards** people who are really knowledgeable about coffee and want gourmet roasts. I got a medium coffee there last week and it was eight dollars.

Nick: What?! I'm not spending eight dollars on a cup of coffee. Let's go somewhere else.

Fancy-schmancy

Adjective

You don't always have to have a **fancy-schmancy** day at the spa – Kassy says there are natural hot springs and cheaper, local saunas that can provide a spot for rest and relaxation.

Fancy-schmancy is a fun, casual adjective to describe something that's overly fancy or extravagant. Because it means TOO fancy, you usually use this word negatively or critically. For example, if you described your friend's wedding as **fancy schmancy**, it sounds like you thought it was a little too fancy for your taste and you would have preferred a simpler wedding. You can also use **fancy-schmancy** to describe places like restaurants or spas that have fancy decorations and high prices.

Since **fancy-schmancy** sounds a bit negative, you can use words like extravagant, luxurious, glamorous, or upscale to describe things that are fancy and expensive in a way you think is good. For instance, "I'd love to go to an upscale restaurant for my birthday."

There are lots of playful rhyming adjectives in English like **fancy-schmancy**. You may have heard "easy-peasy" before, which means very easy. You may have also heard "super-duper," which just means really super. There's no set rule about how to form these kinds of rhyming words, so if you'd like to learn more, look up "rhyming reduplication in English" online and see what fun new words you can find!

Here are a few more examples with **fancy-schmancy**:

Jeremy: Have you checked out that new French restaurant that opened downtown?

Courtney: I have. I actually went last week with my sister.

Jeremy: What did you think?

Courtney: It was a bit **fancy schmancy** for my taste. They have a strict dress code and I felt awkward about my table manners. Plus, the food was extremely expensive...

Rob: What do you think about this venue for our wedding? Here are some photos.

Anna: Wow, it's such a **fancy-schmancy** place! There's no way we could afford it.

Rob: Hmm, maybe you're right.

Anna: I think a smaller, more intimate venue would be more our style.

A shock to one's system

Expression

Andrew asks Kassy if she likes to go into the hot pool or the cold pool first when she's at the *jimjilbang* bathhouses in Korea. She says she prefers to take it slow and start warm, then go into a hot one, then finish with the cold pool. On the other hand, Andrew says he likes to go right into the cold plunge because it's such a **shock to his system**.

A shock to one's system is expression used to describe something that causes a sudden or unexpected disturbance to someone's body or mind. Often, it refers to big changes in one's life. For example, moving to a new country and experiencing a new culture and language might feel like **a shock to one's system** because everything is so different. Graduating from high school and moving out of your parents' house for the first time might feel like **a shock to the system**.

As for physical shocks, getting into a car accident often causes **a shock to one's system**. Leaving a sauna and jumping around in the snow can be **a shock to the system** as well. Generally, **a shock to one's system** sounds like a bad thing, but for thrill-seekers and people who like trying new things, it might be a good thing!

This expression sounds very dramatic, so use it for truly dramatic events! It sounds too overdramatic and unnatural to say something like, "My wife surprised me with a birthday gift this morning. It was a **real shock to my system**."

Here are a couple more examples with **a shock to one's system**:

Bethany: I drove in downtown Manhattan last weekend for the first time.

Mike: Yikes, that's never a fun time. How did you manage?

Bethany: It was a real **shock to my system**. I have never been so stressed out on the road like that! If I lived there, I would never drive. I would always take the subway.

Charlotte: How are you enjoying the hot tub?

Oliver: It's great. I feel so relaxed. I'm afraid I might fall asleep!

Charlotte: Then it's the perfect time jump into the snow! Trust me, **a shock to your system** feels great. Let's go!

Oliver: If you say so... alright!

Quiz

1. Which of the following is a good synonym for “all-inclusive”?

- a) Limited
- b) Complete
- c) Restricted
- d) Partial

2. Your friend says, “I want to be pampered on my birthday.” What does she mean?

- a) She wants to go out and party
- b) She wants to be alone all day
- c) She wants others to take care of her needs
- d) She doesn't want to do anything for her birthday

3. A café describes itself as “catered towards vegetarians.” What does that mean?

- a) The café does not want vegetarian customers
- b) The café is mainly focused on the desires of vegetarian customers
- c) The café does not accept customers who eat meat
- d) The café is operated and managed by vegetarians

4. Which of the following would best be described as a “shock to one’s system”?

- a) Suddenly moving to a new country with an unfamiliar language and culture
- b) Getting caught in the rain with no umbrella
- c) Discovering a new favorite restaurant downtown
- d) Moving from one apartment to another apartment

5. Which of the following a good synonym for “sweat it out”?

- a) To tough it out
- b) To give up
- c) To take a break
- d) To pause and think

Writing and Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever been to a spa or sauna? When? How was your experience? If not, would you like to be pampered at a spa? What spa treatments would you like to try?
2. What is your favorite way to relax and rejuvenate after a busy time?
3. What are some typical or traditional methods of relaxing in your home country? Are they communal (done with other people) or solitary (done alone)? Please describe them.
4. If you had to pick between the two, would you prefer extreme heat or extreme cold? Why? Do you think you would enjoy sitting in a sauna and then taking a cold plunge into icy water?
5. What is the most relaxing vacation you've ever had? Conversely, what is the most stressful or busy vacation you've ever had? Describe one or both.

Quiz Answers

1.b 2.c 3.b 4.a 5.a

Episode credits

Hosts: Andrew Bates and Kassy White

Music: *Something Elated* by Broke for Free

Episode preparation/research: Andrew Bates

Audio editor: Marshall Vaillancourt

Transcriptionist: Heather Bates

Study guide writer: Indiana Brown

English editor: Andrew Bates

Operations: Tsuyoshi Kaneshima

Image: The Anam (unsplash.com)