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A Pittsburgh Area Mineral, Fossil, & Lapidary Club

Himalayan Salt Cave is Pittsburgh's Latest in Natural Health

Maybe you've been to Whole Foods or Trader Joe's and seen the latest gourmet health food trend, Himalayan Pink Salt. This salt is widely touted as "all natural", "pure", "full of essential minerals"... some even make claims that this salt cures specific health problems, increases sexual vitality, or even decreases high blood pressure!

Himalayan Pink Salt, whether in a jar, a shaker, a grinder, or some other form, is basically halite, or rock salt. Its pink color owes to the presence of trace amounts of iron oxide.  Himalayan Pink Salt is most commonly mined in Pakistan, in the foothills of the Himalayan Mountain Range. Some people think that this pink salt has a higher purity than ordinary table salt because it comes from an ancient seabed that has been largely protected by the mountains for millions of years. Others argue that the limited processing of it, and the retention of the trace minerals, are what make it beneficial.

But did you know—there is no scientific proof that eating or drinking Himalayan Pink Salt provides any special health benefit?

The same is not true for another emerging health trend, and that is the simulated Himalayan Salt Cave.

Many people who live by the sea, or go to visit the shore, will tell you how nice it is to breathe in that salty sea air, and research actually shows that there are medical benefits associated with this.

Stemming from one Polish physician's observation that lung diseases were positively affected by the environment in salt mines, medical science has since found more evidence that these salty micro-climates can be beneficial for increased respiratory function in cases of chronic respiratory ailments such as allergic rhinitis, asthma, bronchitis, or cystic fibrosis.

A treatment known as halotherapy, which involves the inhalation of microscopic particles of salt, has resulted from this research and is finally making its way from Europe to the United States. A spa and wellness center near the neighborhood of Highland Park, called Peace, Love, and Zen (www.peaceloveandzen.com), features a simulated "Himalayan Salt Cave", where people can sit and relax in a room lined with six tons of Pink Salt on the walls and floor, while breathing in air specially infused with tiny particles of pharmaceutical-grade salt.

If anyone would like to experience the Himalayan Salt Cave and report back, the Club is always looking for speakers!

- Ron Smart



The Himalayan Salt Cave at Peace, Love, and Zen

[Editor's Disclaimer: the information given in this article is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. Please consult your physician for informed medical advice.]