

TATLER®



BEAUTY
& *cosmetic*
SURGERY
GUIDE 2012

*Everything you
need to know about going
under the knife*

Dazzle without surgery...

POWER FACIALS

10 hands-on alternatives before you hit the Botox

Tailor-made treatment

DNA SKIN FACIAL

Oh, how we heart Debbie Thomas. There is something about her no-nonsense approach, her obviously deep, almost geeky love of lasers, and the way she waves her wands while clipping about on scarily high heels that makes you trust her. Coming here is about committing to long-term results, with short-term thrills thrown in for good measure. A SkinCeuticals peel to get going, some hydradermabrasion to whoosh away dead skin cells, a touch of red-light therapy and, if you're lucky, she'll come at you with her Fotona fractional resurfacing laser to go deep undercover and fire up all that frisky collagen. All these things may sting and tingle and nip, but somehow you'll still be in a semi-slumber anyway. So, all plumped up and ready to go, you'll know that Debbie is the real thing – a beautician who feels like she has a doctor's nous. Once you've seen her, it's very hard to see anyone else.

From £145 for 60 minutes. At Hari's, 305 Brompton Road, SW3 (harissalon.com or 020 7581 5211).

Re-energising tired skin

TRANSDERM FACIAL

So what is Transderm? Well, it's mesotherapy without the injections. What's mesotherapy? It's when you get a huge amount of goodness into the skin via lots of little needles. If you're jab-phobic, then Transderm is an excellent option. To make up for the lack of skin-puncturing, your face is prepared with a round of microdermabrasion – a small nozzle shoots a blast of corundum crystals onto the skin and then vacuums them off again, unplugging the pores (like a carpet-cleaning treatment). This bit can verge on the painful, especially for novice skin, but the levels can be adjusted to a setting you are comfortable with. After your face has been thoroughly polished clean, the therapist moves on to the second stage, dermoelectroporation. Hyaluronic-acid gel is squeezed onto the skin and massaged in with an electronically pulsing tool. This also causes the muscles to jolt about involuntarily, giving your face a thorough workout – which feels a bit like you're having a seizure!

Afterwards there is very little redness. Instead you look wide awake, glowing and thrillingly clean. Book a one-off appointment and it's great. Go for three further top-ups of the collagen-boosting massage and you'll be laughing – but without those laughter lines. From £180 for 60 minutes. At Goddess Health & Beauty, 86 Golders Green Road, NW11 (goddesslondon.co.uk or 020 8201 8717).

Plumping up the volume

SKIN MATTERS FACIAL

Want supermodel skin? Claudia and Elle entrust Joanne Evans to put the zing back into their faces after endless rounds of jet-setting, partying and posing have left them pooped. She deals with everything from zapping rogue veins and sun spots with her Elite MPX laser (which also has a setting for removing the occasional chin hairs that seem to crop up more frequently with age) to carefully extracting blackheads. Ever the perfectionist, she will even shape eyebrows to lift tired eyes during a facial if she thinks you need it. On the product front, she's an alchemist of sorts and uses a mix of the most potent brands – Dr Naber's Zen Attitude range is a current favourite, as it really works to feed up withered, raisin-like skin to a peachy texture. She likens her facial to exercising in the gym. 'In the same way that you need to work the muscles in your body to keep yourself toned, you need to keep re-stimulating the cells in your face with regular facial massage and treatments like the derma-roller,' she says. Just make sure you book early to avoid disappointment – appointment slots are more popular than tickets to a Justin Bieber concert.

From £300 for 120 minutes. At the Soma Centre, Royal Garden Hotel, 2–24 Kensington High Street, W8 (somacentre.co.uk or 020 7361 1995).

WHILE YOU MAY NOT UNDERSTAND THE SCIENCE, YOU KNOW SOMETHING EXCITING IS GOING TO BE HAPPENING

Ironing out wrinkles

FORLLE'D HYALOGY O2 HYDRADERM FACIAL

Sherron Holder-Culver's skin is phenomenal (ask her how old she is – you'll never guess!), which is instantly reassuring. Tucked away in a cosy corner at the Stephen Price super-gym (they launder your sweaty kit after every workout and leave it freshly pressed in your locker – imagine), she is quietly pioneering the use of some serious Japanese technology in a bid to shrink frown lines and crow's feet. The Forlle'd range that she swears by is complicatedly futuristic and while you may not understand the science – we barely do either – you know that something exciting is going to be happening to your face. The focus of the products is nanotechnology, which means that the creams are made up of outrageously minute molecules that can seep deep into the dermis rather than just hover about on the surface. It also means they can achieve results akin to injectables and mesotherapy, delivering hydrating hyaluronic acid, retinol and coenzyme Q10, but all during a deeply relaxing facial. A course of six can seriously and significantly change the topography of your face. And if you have already succumbed to Botox, these facials can extend the life of the treatment too. Form an orderly queue... From £225 for 70 minutes. At Stephen Price, 3 Jubilee Place, SW3 (spandco.co.uk or 020 7351 3332).

Tightening and refining

SKIN-CELL RENEWAL

Everything about QMS Medicosmetics is clinical: the gleaming, bright treatment rooms, the crisp linen sheets and the white-suited therapists, all bristling with German efficiency. If you're looking for whale music and tea lights, you might as well stop reading now, because QMS is the place you come to when you're looking for proper results. The skin-cell renewal treatment is not the most soothing experience. Yes, you lie down on a bed and the therapist scoops back your hair and cleanses your face, but after a thorough skin analysis comes an acutely tingly and quite unrelaxing 3.5pH fruit-acid peel to remove all those grey dead skin cells. This is followed by ▶

◁ collagen and algae masks to enhance the stimulation of new cells and improve the metabolism of the skin – and then a blast of 98 per cent oxygen from the machine. It's a little noisy but by this stage you should have realised that this is not the time or the place to catch 40 winks. Last but not least, a hand, neck and shoulder massage, so you can finally exhale. And when you emerge, all pink-cheeked, with skin toned and taut, you'll wonder what you were fussing about. *From £175 for 90 minutes. At QMS Medicosmetics, 43 Cadogan Gardens, SW3 (qmsmedicosmetics.com or 020 7730 8090).*

Proper polish THE SUPER-FACIAL

Based at one of Harley Street's top cosmetic clinics, this is the perfect place to come pre-Botox or fillers to get your skin buffed as smooth as a baby's bottom. Katherine Sen is a straight talker and will catalogue what needs fixing: flaky foreheads, fine lines, acne outbreaks and that dreaded dullness. She's a rare find as, after scrutinising your skin and delivering her verdict, she keeps the chat to a minimum so you can really switch off without feeling obliged to talk about the weather. The pièce de résistance is a thick, paint-on, peel-off alginate Environ mask (claustrophobics beware, it goes over eyes and the mouth) that sets on the face. The edges are then hooked up with crocodile clips attached to a machine that pulses a galvanic current through the mask – again causing a tingling sensation – to stimulate skin circulation and drive all the mask's vitamins and goodies deep down. It's a caterpillar-to-butterfly-like transformation when the mask is peeled off to reveal fresh, sparkling skin underneath. *From £85 for 60 minutes. At Fiona and Marie Aesthetics, 121 Harley Street, W1 (fionamarie.co.uk or 020 7487 3032).*

Restoring radiance BIOEFFECT EGF SERUM FACIAL

The women in Reykjavik swear by BioEffect EGF. It's a serum made from barley that's harvested in enormous, eerily glowing greenhouses on an Icelandic moor. Full of growth factors from the barley plants (vegetarians, listen up), the serum is claimed to be a 'skin-rejuvenating phenomenon' and – as this is the first time it's been integrated into a treatment – expectations are high. The facial kicks off with an energetic water-pistol spray of saline solution (keep your eyes closed) to open pores and flush out the grime. The sensation is rather mesmeric. The following extractions, less so. Then comes a massage to calm everything down and make your skin nice and relaxed. And so to the serum, the

wunderkind ingredient, the star of the North Atlantic island – so good they apply it twice during the treatment. And what do you get? Lovely instant results, which is what we all want. Skin looks a million times brighter and is clear, glowing and fresher than it has been in months. Douze points to Iceland. *From £165 for 75 minutes. At Hushh, 8 Motcomb Street, SW1 (hushhspas.com or 020 7752 0652).*

Seismic shift REJUVENATION MESOTHERAPY

As the price would suggest, this is a little more than your average cleanse, exfoliate and moisturise. It's a proper cure for crêpey skin. Once you're ensconced on Knightsbridge-based Dr Véronique Simon's chaise, she gently takes some blood from your arm and pops it into a centrifuge machine. This separates the platelets so that she can extract the growth factors – the key ingredient needed to build up new collagen and elastin stores in the skin, plumping it out like a well-filled cushion and ironing out any creases. Next she re-injects this youthful elixir directly into your face with a super-fast mesotherapy gun. It sounds a bit like a sewing machine as it rattles away, but again the experience is disconcerting rather than painful. She massages the face with hydrating serums before applying a special heated mask that opens the pores, allowing the growth factors to seep deep into the skin, before finishing off with a good dose of cold cream to take down any redness. Instantly skin is smoothed, but the real results become more visible after three sessions, when that magic concoction has kicked in and flattened those wrinkles into submission. *Mask and mesotherapy, from £440; blood platelets, from £600. At Simon Thérapie, 9a West Halkin Street, SW1 (simontherapie.com or 020 7235 0679).*

Instant glow SIGNATURE FACIAL

Su-Man Hsu is the Tinker Bell of the beauty industry. She's a tiny Taiwanese ex-dancer with the strength of a sumo wrestler. This is no fluffy, floaty facial. No siree, it's a body-jacking, face-lifting energy reboot – perfect for days when you look and feel like you might not have a pulse. She starts with a deep neck, shoulder and scalp massage to stimulate the circulation in the upper body, which makes the facial more effective. It's a godsend for those of us who spend days hunched over a computer or permanently have a small child wrapped around our neck. She works the face with her nimble, ninja-like fingers, even tackling the pressure points deep in the eye sockets to drain puffiness and make

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE A 'SEA PLACENTA' FACE MASK, WHICH FEELS LIKE A JELLYFISH SITTING ON YOUR FACE

your eyes brighter. The fact that Juliette Binoche refuses to go on a film set without a treatment really says it all. Su-Man uses her own range of products, based around botanical and marine ingredients. Highlights include a 'sea placenta' face mask, which feels like a jellyfish sitting on your face, but works to hydrate and plump up skin in a way no moisturiser can. It may not be super-hi-tech, but this facial fizzes with fairy dust. *From £120 for a 60-minute home visit; £200 for 60 minutes at the Away Spa, W Hotel, Leicester Square, W1 (email su-man@blucyonder.co.uk or 07779 151346).*

Wake-me-up LUMINA IPL FACIAL

Super-duper queen of skincare Sarah Chapman has long been smoothing and soothing the faces of those lucky enough to snaffle an appointment with her. Her Skinesis bespoke facials are good enough to elicit compliments from even the least forthcoming husband, which speaks for itself. But it's the Lumina IPL (Intense Pulsed Light) machine that's on our radar right now – a collagen-boosting, age-spot-zapping treat. Go for a patch test at least a week before to make sure your skin isn't going to have a hissy fit. And be aware that there are certain conditions under which the machine cannot be used – if you are pregnant (which you might expect), if you have had an operation in the last six months (which you might not). The treatment kicks off with a thorough cleanse of the face, neck and a bit of décolletage, and microdermabrasion or a skin peel – this preps your face by gently sloughing off the top layer of dead cells. A cooling gel is applied and then... hold tight and get your goggles on, because here come the bright lights. The machine is big and white, and not dissimilar to a photocopier, with a handheld gun that zaps across the face multiple times. It feels like a light prickling, but is nothing to be alarmed by. Afterwards the treated area looks red, but no worse than post-Bikram yoga. And the next day? Glowing, rehydrated and – dare we say it – younger-looking skin. Hurrah! *From £290 for 120 minutes. At Sarah Chapman, 106 Draycott Avenue, SW3 (sarahchapman.net or 020 7589 9585).* □