

Los Angeles

August 17,

Magazine

SPECIAL FALL FASHION ISSUE

THAT
L.A.
LOOK



In London's financial district, the cut of your collar may telegraph to passersby everything there is to know about your occupation, lifestyle and breeding, but in L.A., it's the arch of your brow that tells all. Nothing screams Van Nuys porno bumpkin like an over-plucked, pencil-thin eyebrow. Just as bad are those penciled-in orange caterpillars you see on Santa Monica hausfraus who buy \$50 fig-scented candles on Montana Avenue every day but haven't bought a new pair of pants since the flowered palazzo they picked up at Saks SFO just after little Dakota was born.

One of the most popular new methods of facial hair removal is threading, a procedure common in the Middle East and India. Threading, whereby a cotton or polyester thread is knotted, creating a trap to pull out hairs by the root, is both extremely thorough and exquisitely painful. But unlike waxing, it doesn't rip a layer of skin off along with the hair, making for a far less irritating experience. For the least painful treatment, go to Enessa Wellness Spa on Melrose, where threading is an art form.

The classic brow is neat and natural, but achieving a perfect imitation of nature is harder than you'd think. Anastasia may have been the eyebrow queen,

but the new reigning monarch is Damone Roberts, "the Eyebrow King." Roberts refers to the treatment that he and his staff of "brow divas" dole out as the "five-minute face-lift." "It can make you look 10 pounds lighter and 10 years younger," he says. "In those movie stills from the '30s and '40s, those actresses like Marlene Deitrich look like they're in their mid-40s, but they were really girls in their 20s. Thin brows definitely age you."

They also make you look like a vixen. "In the cartoons we used to watch as kids," Roberts says. "Snow White had really soft brows and the evil stepmother had really harsh, thin eyebrows. They did that for a reason."

If you're only going to go in for one luxury beauty treatment, this should be it. Can't afford a \$500 haircut from Sally Hershberger at John Frieda? Then plunking down \$55 for a Roberts brow job may be the best way to get that ka-ching ka-ching look. And if you have damaged your eyebrows beyond repair, you can enroll in Roberts' "Brow Boot Camp," an eight-week program that, for \$175, will cure you of over-plucking once and for all.

And then there's over-puckering. "Lips are huge in L.A.," says dermatologist **Debra Luftman**, "and I mean both literally and figuratively." Luftman pioneered the Botox craze that swept the country a couple of years ago. The physician says that women all over town are now plumping like ballpark franks, thanks to a new substance called CosmoPlast. While the name sounds like surgical gauze for space aliens, it's actually derived from fetal foreskin. A kind of super-collagen, it lasts longer and costs only slightly more than the bovine variety, at \$500 per cubic centimeter every three to six months. "One cc is enough for most people," Luftman says. "But if you want that huge lip thing like Angelina Jolie, you're going to need at least two."

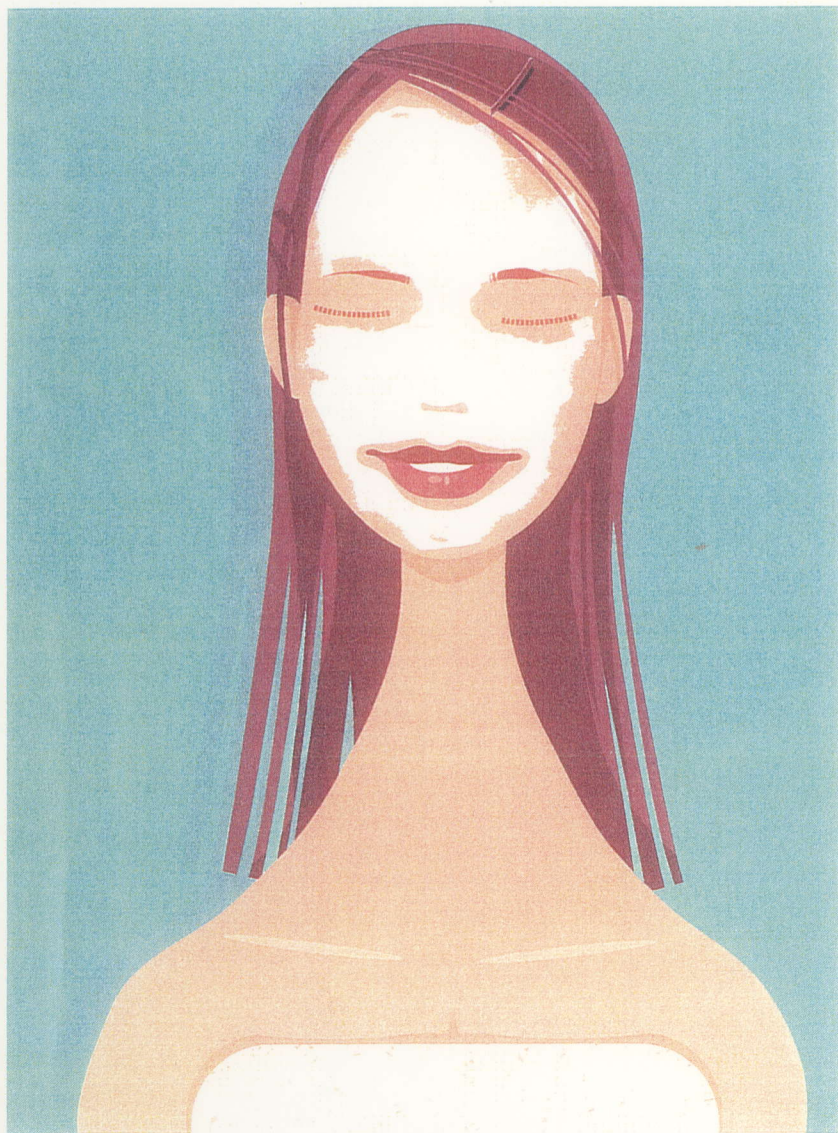
That said, the fad for lips the size of Japanese eggplants has died down, according to Luftman. "The most common request I get is for Michelle Pfeiffer lips, small but nicely shaped." Lips are a popular gift item. One of Luftman's clients got hers from her husband for Valentine's Day. And since it's derived from human tissue, CosmoPlast doesn't require a 24-hour allergy test, giving it impulse-buy potential. So if you wake up on Sunday morning with that punched-out-by-Shannen Doherty look and can't remember where you went after the Viper Room, you may well have gotten yourself CosmoPlastered at the wrong party. But not by Luftman—she doesn't do Botox parties anymore.

But what good are plush and padded lips if you don't have good skin? The whole trend toward \$150 pots of crème made from the saliva of Peruvian sandworms, for example, is over, and permanent, noninvasive procedures are the new trend. Luftman recommends the photofacial, a process whereby light pulses liquefy the collagen in your skin, allowing it to resettle into a smoother, more even layer, eliminating red spots and brown spots and various minor glitches. It's a magic wand, and people in Hollywood like it because there's no down time. It is not, however, a particularly hedonistic experience.

For sensual pleasure, go to Kinara, the luminous West Hollywood day spa in what used to be a veterinarian's office, which has finally come up with a facial that doesn't make you break out. I can't tell you much more than that because each facial is individualized.

And that's probably the secret right there.

Enessa Wellness Spa, 8012 1/2 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles; (323) 655-5950. Damone Roberts, 9669 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills; (310) 271-2100. Debra Luftman, 16500 Ventura Blvd., Suite 409, Encino; (818) 905-5277, and 436 N. Bedford Drive, Suite 105, Beverly Hills; (310) 275-1170. Kinara Spa, 656 N. Robertson Blvd., West Hollywood; (310) 657-9188.



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