



ABOUT FACE

Your face is your window to the world and a nourishing facial can help keep that window clean and clear.

Words / Judy Chapman

THE EVOLVING FACIAL

Within the spa environment in particular, a facial feels worlds away from the classic salon style. No longer is a facial only about the sequence of cleanse, steam and mask. Many include back and neck massages prior to cream and oil applications or the chiming of Tibetan bells and the scent of essential oils and incense. The journey is more often one of inner healing as well as outer beautification.

Some say the face is a mirror of the inner world. According to Ayurveda and Traditional Chinese Medicine, for instance, health is linked to beauty. One does not exist without the other. Through the study of the texture, colour and condition of our skin, doctors in these disciplines can determine the state of our physical and emotional health. A radiant complexion is considered a reflection of wellbeing.

Regular facial massage is highly recommended by all. It's said you can take years off your physical appearance through regular massage, which softens the lines, releases the jaw and lifts areas that have become heavy because they are burdened

with worry. Recently, I spent time with a Chinese doctor who advised me to practise *chi kung* exercises on my face to maintain a youthful glow and enhance skin firmness.

Another well-known facialist pointed out that regular exercise maintains tone in our body and that the same approach could be applied to our face. Regular upward strokes around the chin area and across the forehead and tapping to increase circulation is said to maintain firmness over time. Indeed, many famous French beauty brands have long blended acupressure techniques from the East into their beauty treatments to stimulate the immune, circulatory and lymphatic systems.

Another trend in spas is hot and cold crystal and stone applications, massaged onto the skin to increase circulation and blood flow, which in turn creates a plumped-up appearance. Internal remedies and supplements are also recommended and sold alongside facials and skincare.

FACING FACTS

The food and liquids you absorb also impact your skin, particularly sugar, which

is believed to be your skin's worst enemy. Adding real foods such as fresh salads, essential fatty acids, pure water, raw coconut oil and fruits can assist in producing radiant skin. Then there are spas that bestow "skin food" facials made with fresh fruits and plants including freshly mashed avocado, papaya and cucumber.

But do all these all-natural facials really work? Some remain unconvinced that massage techniques and natural ingredients alone will create the ultimate facial. Millions opt for cosmetic surgery to convince themselves that ageing of the body isn't really happening. Yet, as author Andrew Weil MD writes, "Ageing reminds us of our mortality; it can be a primary stimulus to spiritual awakening and growth."

In the end, though, we learn that there is no right and wrong way to live our lives, although a combination approach is always a win-win scenario. Less worry, good food, regular exercise, healthy relationships, intimacy, lush products and regular facials and massage are a powerful way to face the world with joy and confidence.

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