

Beauty

THE CREAMS

When Estée Lauder launched Re-Nutriv in 1958 it cost \$115; at the time, the most a face cream cost was \$10. Which, 50-odd years later, almost makes the latest anti-ageing offering, a duo of Re-Nutriv Re-Creation Day Creme and Night Creme, at £450, seem, if not exactly a steal, then at least relatively affordable. These creams provide everything (SPFs, antioxidants, peptides, calcium, trace minerals and much more), so you could convince yourself you're looking at a bargain.

Other options

- Try Kanebo's new super-priced, super-charged Sensai Premier La Crème, £440, exclusively at Harrods (020 7730 1234). It's Japanese skin know-how at its priciest best.
- Between working as a plastic surgeon and doing Nobel Prize-winning research on the Epidermal Growth Factor, Gregory Bays Brown has still found the time to create the skin-plumping, age-defying RéVive Intense Volumising Serum, £345, available at Space NK (020 8740 2085).

THE FACIALS

A facial with Eve Lom herself involves an eight-week wait (once you're on the waiting list), some groundwork from her assistant (she prepares your skin for Eve's guest appearance later), a thorough telling-off from the lady herself – she takes no prisoners when discussing the state of your skin – and finally a bill for £240. But for the cleanest, softest, most perfectly tended skin possible, it's all worthwhile. Follow-up facials cost £180. Ring 020 7935 9988 for stockists.

Other options

- As beauty-company facials go, Crème de la Mer's the Ultimate Facial at Urban Retreat at Harrods (020 7893 8333), sets a standard others can only aspire to. It may cost £150 for 90 minutes, but for me it is perfect, combining total luxury with amazing skincare and the most talented therapists around.
- Sisley's gorgeously scented new Essential facial, from £90 (020 7491 2722), combines the best of classic French beauty therapy with aromatic oils and an amazing massage.
- La Prairie's Signature Facial, £125, blends the traditional with the complementary to hit every spot – physically and mentally – to leave you soothed and your skin smoothed. At Whatley Manor, Bath (01666 827070) or Claridge's (020 7409 6565).
- Once experienced, the Chantecaille Healing facial, £125 (020 7409 9870), becomes almost addictive. The attention to detail – from the warm aromatic cloths to what seems like hours of gentle massage – feels like absolute perfection.

THE MAKE-UP

As one of the world's top make-up artists, Mary Greenwell has worked with every supermodel and superstar worth naming

over the past 18 years. And for the first time she can be booked for four hours of make-up heaven in the form of a private lesson, £1,200, at Becca in London (020 7225 2501). Expect to get the best tips available, an overhaul of your make-up bag and expert instruction on how to do up to four different looks.

Other options

- Make-up artist Netia Hibbert (07768 078766) has joined forces with hair-dressers Hari's salon in Knightsbridge to give clients a total makeover experience. First, book a lesson with Netia – she's perfect for those who are confused or cowed by make-up – then follow (either that day or later) with a hair re-style, cut and blow-dry. Make-up lesson, £85 for one hour; hair and make-up makeover, from £150.

THE FRAGRANCES

For those who prefer to give more thought to their scent than just being a victim of department-store spritzers, try the Roja Dove Haute Parfumerie, at Urban Retreat at Harrods (020 7893 8797). This is fragrance heaven for anyone looking for their perfect scent. Book your perfume profile, either with Roja, £200, or one of his team, £50 (redeemable against purchases).

Other options

- Les Senteurs, 71 Elizabeth Street, London SW1 (020 7730 2322), is a little gem of a perfume boutique that specialises in unusual or hard-to-find scents along with a heady mix of classics, both old and new. Give yourself ample time to browse or let the well-trained staff help you find your dream perfume.

HAIR TREATMENTS

Hollywood directors frequently call Philip B onto their sets to sort out leading ladies' hair disasters. Now his famous four-step intense hair treatment, £50, is available in London at Hari's salon (020 7581 5211). Give in to the medley of massage, warm oils, hot oils and more massage before finishing with a blow-dry; your hair will look shinier than you ever thought possible.

Other options

- Try a Kérastase Hair Ritual, £15 (0800 316 4400), with your next cut, colour or blow-dry. Each treatment, which lasts up to 15 minutes, is personally prescribed for your hair condition. Expect to be pampered with a scalp massage, steam and hair masks.

THE THERAPISTS

A facial with Anastasia Achilleos, from £130 for 90 minutes (07939 331889), doesn't just treat the skin; she gets inside your head to give you the treatment you need. Book ahead, as she is frequently flown out from the UK to work on film sets, to keep the stars and directors looking and feeling wonderful.

- An Amanda Birch facial, £90 for one hour at Michaeljohn (020 7629 6969), is more like

a check-up followed by a prescription than the usual cleanse, scrub and mask. It uses a range of facial machines, massage techniques and products, and each client receives a bespoke treatment based on how they are feeling and how their skin looks on the day.

Other options

- As a backlash against botox, some of Hollywood's leading ladies are turning to Carole Maggio, the creator of Facercise, for a set of precise exercises that work the facial muscles. Carole now gives private lessons in London at the Four Seasons Hotel (020 7499 0888), and gives each person a personalised work-out (and audio tape), to firm up and plump out features and even re-shape faces. Carole Maggio Facercise, £387 for a two-hour session (visit www.facercise.com, or email cmaggio@mminternet.com).

MANICURES AND PEDICURES

A pedicure with Sophy Robson is more than thorough – she tackles the bits that others always seem to miss. Her Medi-Pedi, £90 for one hour at the Berkeley hotel (020 7235 6000), will leave you with the longest-lasting, hardest-wearing nail polish around. Her trick? Several ultra-thin coats of varnish, rather than the usual two thicker ones.

Other options

- Ski instructor turned foot expert Bastien Gonzalez travels between London and New York beautifying the feet of the famous. Book a foot treatment, £110 (020 7565 0869), for velvet-soft skin.

LUXE FOR LESS

- Champneys Skin Comfort Gentle Bath Milk, £6 at Sainsburys, turns bathwater into the colour and creamy texture of Jersey milk.
- Elle Macpherson has done for bodycare and bath products what she has for underwear; the Body range, from £4.49 at Boots, is great quality, deepy luxurious and very affordable.
- The world's most famous perfume has become even more covetable with the launch of Chanel No 5 purse sprays, from the eau de toilette to the parfum, from £45.
- For those who like some bling with their beauty, Shu Uemura's cult eyelash curlers, £25 (020 7240 7635), now come plated in 24-carat gold.
- Claridge's stunning Black & White Collection of bath and body treats is just gorgeous – beautifully designed and appealingly scented. Every bathroom should flaunt their ingenious Polo-mint shaped soap, from £38 for a set of four mini-soaps (020 7629 8860).
- Ormonde Jayne's Parfum d'Or Naturel, £44 (020 7499 1100), blends scent with a gold shimmer to leave skin perfumed and looking beautiful. □