



Beauty Sarah Vine

A great facial – even the sandblasting *Kick-start springtime with a little help from the experts*



I had an incredible facial the other day. To be honest, I don't really do facials, not unless it's with someone really amazing like Sarah Chapman or Vaishaly Patel, and not even I can get an appointment with them these days. Facials just take so much time, not to mention the form-filling and endless faffing around with towels and the infinite varieties of gruesome whale music.

Some facials, however, are worth it. Either because the person administering it has genuine knowledge and expertise, and really understands the way skin works, or because the products themselves are special. This one was the latter – although don't get me wrong,

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the woman doing it was very good indeed. But it was one of those predominately mechanical facials, where a machine does most of the work.

The products in question are by Doctor Duve. As in duvet. A German gentleman, apparently. The treatment itself is called the Fresh Lift Facial (£85 at Four, 62 Conduit Street, London; 020-7297 9600), and is perfect for clearing the complexion after months of gloom.

It basically involves sandblasting the face (in a nice way: it's really not at all uncomfortable and I'm a total wuss about this sort of thing, plus I have very sensitive skin) to exfoliate, while at the same time pumping in oxygen. Then a variety of skin boosters are applied (depending on need: my skin, as ever, was very dehydrated, so I got lots of useful things like hyaluronic acid) before a collagen mask and a massage.

The whole thing took just an hour and the results were excellent: soft, plump skin, relaxed stress lines, and a brighter, more even tone. Since then, I have been using Doctor Duve's Anti-Ageing Plus Boosting Face Fluid ampoules, which is a once-a-year treatment, designed to kick-start the skin. It would be perfect to use in the run-up to a special occasion or following a nasty bout of flu – or if, like me, you're just feeling a bit ancient.

Each ampoule contains a generous amount of serum, viscous and slightly sticky, which packs a potent mixture of – yes, you guessed it – hyaluronic acid, as well as plant-derived growth factors to stimulate collagen production. It's a two-week course, and the effect on the skin is wonderfully soothing and nurturing. The effect on the wallet less so: £195. Then again, cheaper and better than Botox, in my humble view (doctor-duve.com).

A similar and less pricey product is Sarah Chapman's Intense Hydrating Booster (£57; sarahchapman.net). This is more of an everyday option, since it is more user-friendly than the Duve ampoules, and can be added to any old moisturiser to boost hydration levels. I would also recommend her Overnight Facial (£45), which remains one of my all-time favourite products, not just because of its divine smell but also because it really does make skin look better in the morning. ■

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