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MAGAZINE

January 2009

New Look *for a* New Year

REGISTRY OF
CHARITABLE EVENTS:
January through April

SENTIMENTAL JOURNEYS
travels to old Havana

“O WHAT A NIGHT”
at the Odgen

Chairman of the Board of the New Orleans Public Library and Vice Chairman of the New Orleans Public Library Foundation, Irvin Mayfield; President of the Junior League of New Orleans, Leah Engelhardt; Jeremy Davenport; and President of the National Council of Jewish Women, Ina Davis, lend their support to *St. Charles Avenue's* redesign fête and fundraiser for NOPL.



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{ Su-Jit Lin }



Su-Jit Lin is one of New Orleans' transplants by way of Long Island, trading in one big sandbar for another. An avid consumer with an appreciation for luxury living, cultured by her time at Tulane University, she spends her time writing about these topics and takes a special interest in all aspects of food. Unhealthy obsessions include noodles, her dog, new books and really long scarves. ♦

{ Kathryn Jezer-Morton }



Kathryn Jezer-Morton was born and raised in Montreal, Quebec. After moving to New Orleans in 2004, she went to work in the kitchen of Commander's Palace, where she learned how to make bread pudding soufflés and proceeded to make hundreds of them every Sunday brunch for several months. She left the kitchen to become a journalist, but she still makes bread pudding soufflés for her family on special occasions. ♦

PHOTOGRAPH BY GREG MILES

{ Cheryl Gerber }



Cheryl Gerber is a freelance journalist and documentary photographer working in New Orleans, where she was born. She began her journalism career as a reporter but switched to photography after spending a year working in Honduras. In 1992, she began working for Michael P. Smith, who nurtured her desire to document daily life in New Orleans. Today, she's a regular contributor to *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, the Associated Press and *New Orleans Magazine*, and has been a staff photographer for *Gambit Weekly* since 1996. During the past two decades, Cheryl has won several awards from the New Orleans Press Club for her work on social issues and news photography. ♦



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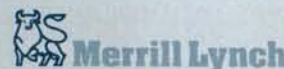
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See the Light

Where we're going
in 2009 in health,
beauty and wellness.

By Su-Jit Lin

THERE'S NO BETTER time to reflect and observe patterns already in motion than when a new year creeps up on us. It truly is the end of an era as the old phrase "no pain, no gain" finds itself unceremoniously escorted out the door in 2009 with the wane of invasive cosmetic procedures and beauty treatments more trouble than they're worth. Generation X is beginning to show

signs of wear around the edges, as aptly pointed out by Annie Richard of M.D. Claiborne & Associates, as is our environment. Repair and damage prevention, both for our bodies as well as for the planet we live on, are becoming bigger blips on our radars, taking the lead in trends this upcoming year.

seeing the (green) light

It has become extremely important to take care of the Earth that has for so long taken care of us. Eco-friendliness has been edging for a more dominant place in the spotlight – as the public clamors the industry delivers and spas have been starting to cater to the conscientious. Green Spa Therapy offers all natural treatments and **The Spa at the Ritz-Carlton** has created a special menu with Kneipp products and a "green" room, complete with environmentally

correct linens, soaps and even paint. Christy Rantz at The Spa predicts that "there will be a continued focus on eco-friendly treatments as well as 'green' merchandise." Rantz continues, "harsh chemicals are damaging to the environment and contribute to climate changes, which has become top of mind for consumers." Although we're moving forward in time and technology, we're also taking a detour to the past, regressing to embrace milder natural ingredients and materials. Jody Villeco, Quality Standards Coordinator for **Whole Foods Market**, says that 2008 saw an increased focus on natural body products, leading to the recent launch of the Premium Body Care standard initiative, raising the (soap) bar for what defines quality natural care goods so that consumers can make better choices. Working with

chemists to create fair, attainable standards, Whole Foods hopes that these new guidelines will force manufacturers to strive for less processing and the removal of irritating ingredients and artificial fragrances.

Other naturally inclined solutions to wellness woes include treatment services – we're not just turning to products alone. As people become more stressed, the need to reward oneself increases proportionately, so to maintain a mental and physical balance, it's back to basics – like Swedish massages. Demand for overall wellness over plain relaxation also continues to grow, as the general public actively seeks prevention as a partner to cure with services like Thai, deep tissue and aromatherapy massages.

Speaking of the public, it truly is a general one now as males join the ranks as clientele for dermatologist's offices, spas, salons and the like; they're realizing that the signs of aging are becoming more apparent each

passing year and that the physical effects can be slowed down. With mainstream acceptance of self-care for the everyman, they're jumping on the wellness and prevention bandwagon, booking facials and purchasing products like the famous **Natural Advantage** skincare line by **Dr. Patricia Farris**, a set consisting of a high-concentration retinol nighttime complex, alpha hydroxy moisturizer with sunscreen and cleanser.

Even beauty focuses on prevention these days, with businesses like **Salon M** consciously choosing to use products that aren't as harmful to hair. Technology of color is changing, intent on keeping the integrity and health of the hair. Ionic blow dryers and flatirons add shine and vitality with far less wear than traditional heated treatments, again looking towards avoiding damage. As Dr. Farris says: "If you prevent it, you don't have to repair it!"



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fixing the yellow(ing, even 'round the eyes)

However, repair may be the best course for some of us after years of abuse to our skin and health: tanning, smoking or just plain neglecting what it takes to maintain our wellness. For the other half of the 13th Generation, turning back time is the ideal, and more feasible, solution.

Cosmetic enhancement has traditionally been the preferred route back to youth but even the smallest modification used to require bandages, bruises, extended hospital stays and steadfast denial. Now, Father Time can be put in his proper place with an in-and-out visit to your dermatologist. Adherence to universal safety regulations and the advancement of non-invasive solutions have made aesthetic modifications an accepted practice, the procedures' low-risk factor melting away inhibition and taboo along with the wrinkles.

Botox and dermal fillers, two of the most commonly booked procedures in Dr. Farris' office, are some of the greatest innovations of this age that demonstrate the effectiveness of non-invasive cosmetic enhancement. When used in conjunction, both will rejuvenate the upper and lower face and, as she says, "won't break the bank, but leaves you looking like you spent a million bucks."

Dr. Ruth Owens, who specializes in facial plastic surgery, agrees. "The trend towards non-invasive procedures will likely continue into the new year in light of their affordability," she observes, including Botox injections, filler materials for facial contouring and microdermabrasion in that synopsis. She acknowledges the downside of these types of procedures – the more temporary, subtler nature of the result in contrast to traditional cosmetic work – as well as the advantages, but believes that this trend is still a winner for the

upcoming year.

"Along the lines of non-invasive procedures, there are exciting innovations on the horizon. We are performing clinical trials to test a potentially permanent 'Botox machine,' [which] offers patients relaxed expressions that are long-lasting or permanent." Dr. Owens is also keeping an eye on non-invasive liposuction, "a hot new item being tested in clinical trials ... that performs liposculpture without invasive cannulas."

Meanwhile, for surface treatments, Dr. Farris and Annie Richard are both appreciative of the advances being made in laser technology. Richard cites the popularity of laser hair removal among both men and women, and her office also makes a point of staying informed of all of the "latest surgical [laser] procedures" and equipment. Dr. Farris stays abreast of this trend, too, remarking, "fractional resurfacing lasers have really changed the way

we deliver laser energy to the skin; with this technology, we can improve wrinkles, acne scars and pigmentation."

Relatedly, for pigmentation Dr. Farris highly recommends a skin lightening masque that goes on in the office, comes off several hours later at home and requires following "an intense skincare regimen." But she enthuses, "I've been really impressed by how revitalized the skin looks after using this peeling system. It's well worth it!"

yet still in the red

Which brings us to *worth*. As Baby Busters stare down yet another recession this lifetime, the price of beauty becomes that much more relevant. Not far from anyone's mind these days are the rising costs of living and the falling economy, which has a huge effect on trends. So it makes sense that businesses are doing what they can to counter that effect and continue helping people take care of themselves. For

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instance, **M.D. Claiborne & Associates** is looking at lowering some prices and offering options like payment plans to their customers. Also, The Spa at the Ritz-Carlton has one of the best-kept money-saving secrets – a local's discount of a whopping 40 percent, bringing their rates down to the competitive levels of much less richly appointed spas.

Measures to ensure the continuation of normalcy are being taken. Great service is being emphasized more than ever at The Spa and expansion of retail offerings can help to fill in the gaps. "Many of the products that used to be medically prescribed can now be purchased over-the-counter, such as M.D. Skincare's line," notes Christy Rantz, who also

foresees higher numbers for at-home treatment products versus in-house sessions. Likewise, many physicians concur that the more expensive treatments will probably take a hit in the upcoming year, but that fact may only boost the upward

trend of non-invasive services.

On the other hand, Salon M believes that fields like that of haircare, will not be as hard hit by the current economy as others may be. As celebrities continue to sport geometric, stylized bobs, retro sleekness and extreme styles and colors, establishments like Salon M are being kept busy, maintaining fashionable cuts and the health of hair by good care and timely trims. New creative styles continue to drive the beauty industry's success.

However, it's noteworthy that the health, beauty and wellness industry are all working together to help the consuming public achieve their goals of eco-friendliness and affordable care *despite* the recession. Behavior patterns indicate that the desire to improve or take care of oneself will not be found lacking. Instead, we've just

become more selective about how we spend, picking the sure thing (in terms of results) and opting to go green whenever possible.

Prevention seems to be the most important thing this year, whether it's avoiding the negative effects of stress with spa services or sun damage with sunscreen. Repair is the other side of that coin, with non-invasive procedures and injectable treatments steadily gaining momentum this year.

Essentially, even though we're entering 2009 on a low note according to Wall Street, there's massive potential to exit it on a few high ones. As long as we continue the trends that are already in full effect – namely, prevention and repair with an eye on green living – and maintain our wellness with healthy choices, there's no reason that it won't be uphill from here. So flags up, New Orleans – all systems point to 'Go!' for a happier, healthier, more beautiful new year. ♦



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