

## Vaishaly: facialist to the faces



Vaishaly is one of the world's superfacialists and has a three-month waiting list. Now there's a new buzz about her unique energy healing massage, The Experience. Caroline Phillips reports

16 May 2013 by Caroline Phillips

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What do Elle Macpherson, Meg Ryan and Gwyneth Paltrow have in common? Clue: they share this person with Rachel Weisz, Kirsten Dunst and Sophie Dahl. And Nigella Lawson, Patsy Kensit and Kimberly Stewart. And some A-list men who are shy about coming forward.

The answer is Vaishaly. They're all her clients.

It won't be a surprise if you don't know about Vaishaly. She works quietly from a discreet salon in Marylebone and her followers tend to keep schtum about her. After all, she already has a three-month waiting list.

Vaishaly is the *ne plus ultra* of facialists, the one who's in the little black iPhones of the Voguettes. Additionally, she is to threading what Picasso was to paint. She was the first person in this country who worked that cat's cradle of fine cotton on eyebrows, and has become brow sculptor to the stars.

### The Experience: four massages in one

But the buzz of the moment is about The Experience, a Vaishaly treatment that has grown out of the techniques she uses in a unique combination in her facials.

The Experience is her unique blend of several methods in one energy healing massage. It uses Reiki (a Japanese hands-on energy healing technique), craniO-sacral therapy (an alternative treatment loosely based on osteopathy in the cranial region) and manual lymphatic drainage (a very gentle massage that encourages the natural release of lymph from the body).

It is a perfect treatment for the time-pressed, combining as it does four treatments in one session. And it's in a glorious class of its own alongside mermaids and nymphs.

We meet in her Marylebone clinic, on Paddington Street, a place of rose petals, Buddhas and indefinably good smells. Vaishaly is pert and pretty. Her solicitous assistants glide around, wreathed in smiles.

"The Experience is not just a harmonising full-body massage, not simply a toning facial, not exclusively craniO-sacral work (to which 45 minutes is dedicated)," says Vaishaly. "It's all of these and more. My signature facials are also the world's only facials to include cranial work. My USP is the energy work that I do."

I put it to the test. Vaishaly focuses on my neck, shoulders, scalp and face, lightly releasing bodily tensions and banishing stress gently from head-to-toe. It restores balance and harmony in mind and body (at least, that's what I learn about it afterwards). It helps me to switch off and relax totally.

I defy anyone not to disappear to Planet Bliss with that scent of organic essential oils of rose, geranium, yang ylang and chamomile. Not to fall asleep dreaming of lemon groves and lavender fields.



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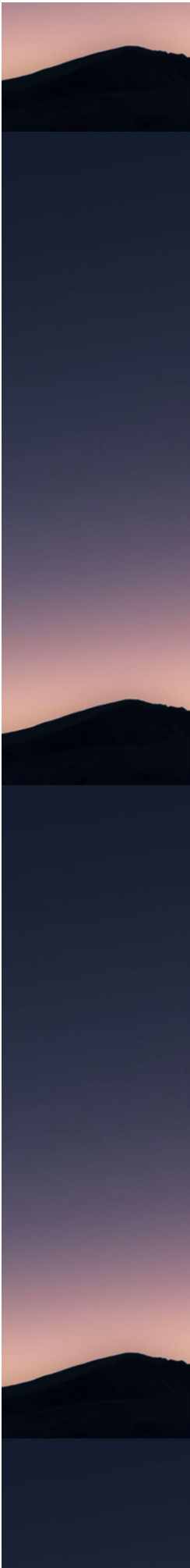
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I do, and it takes me to a deeper level: it's like yoga or meditation, but without having to do anything. Brilliant for switching off mentally. Afterwards I feel restored, calm and peaceful.

### The super-facialists

But let's talk faces. There are only a handful of super-facialists, looking after the most famous people in the world. There's Amanda Lacey, the English Rose of Skincare, who polishes the pores of George Clooney; Nichola Joss, the famous red-carpet facialist beloved of Liz Hurley and Keira Knightly; and skincare legend Eve Lom, whose magic fingers and potions grace the faces of the lucky few.

There's Anastasia Achilleous, known as the Goddess of Skin, who scours the globe for the best products and buffs multiple famous faces, including Kate Moss. And then there's Vaishaly, who – like Madonna, Brad and Sting – is known to her fans only by her first name.

Once you get into paying nearly a fiver a minute for a facial, you're in the land of super-facialists, super-celebs and super products. And when you're having an expensive facial, doesn't almost every platinum-star therapist offer pretty much the same?

### Is a Vaishaly facial worth £250?

Don't they all do deep-cleansing extraction, gentle microdermabrasion to lift off dead skin cells, exfoliation with a smattering of ground diamonds (well, I had that in a very posh place in Italy, but you usually get some expensive new ingredient), toxin-draining lymphatic massage and a high-frequency treatment to close pores, eliminate toxins and stimulate collagen production, all topped off with a rejuvenating treatment mask?

With any leading facialist, you can expect an improvement in your skin's elasticity and tone, less puffiness and finer lines: a sort of high-50-turned-low-30 result. Oh yes. So why do people pay £250 for a 55-minute facial with Vaishaly (or £120 for one of her team)?

I am burning with questions for her. Is it possible that there's no difference in what the top facialists do to your complexion? Can it ever be worth spending more than the cost of a pot of Pond's cream for it? What are her skincare tips for the second half of life? And what's her secret?

"What's different about me?" she mulls. "Clients say that my hands are 'calming' and 'intuitive'. Each client's facial is tailor-made on the day.

"I treat holistically and not just superficially, which involves cranio-sacral work to calm and re-balance the mind and body. This imbalance is the root of all problems.

"As therapists, the cranial work we do taps into specific areas, and then the body takes over and continues the healing process. So clients see and feel the benefits on many levels. Clients tell me that I'm doing Reiki too." (This is a gift – unlike the cranial work – and is not something in which she was formally trained.)

What's exclusive to Vaishaly is her energy healing. She and her team use this combination of methods in her signature facials and in The Experience.

"The facial I give differs from client to client," says Vaishaly. "I use the face for diagnosis – much as reflexologists work with feet – looking at the client's skin to detect internal problems.

"I factor in everything from the season to an individual's state of wellbeing. I work, for example, to boost blood circulation and assist lymphatic drainage, which alleviates puffiness and congestion."

The cranial work is particularly important. In a one-hour facial, there will be 20 minutes dedicated to it.

"The facial massage that I do is the defining factor. The 'more' that I give is a superlatively relaxing facial massage that includes cranial and my own blend of energy work. It's a spiritual experience," she says. "Something intangible."

Vaishaly has always had a passion, even a calling, for this work. When she first told her family that she wanted to go into the beauty industry, her brothers were horrified. "'Of all the jobs you could do, why go right to the bottom?' they asked.

Undeterred, she trained with skincare guru Bharti Vyas, now one of the industry's tribal elders. She studied cranio-sacral work full-time for a year at the Upledgers Institute. ("John Upledger was the first person to do cranial work," she says.) And in 1996, she started her own business.

In 2006, Vaishaly produced a [natural facial skincare range](#) that she sells online and in



Fenwick on Bond Street. “I don’t believe in ‘potent’ anti-ageing chemical agents for the mature skin,” she says. “I’ve seen too much chemical overload on the skin of new clients over the years.”

Recently, select Four Seasons hotels began offering her signature facials and The Experience, using a team she has trained. “I select the therapists specifically for their healing touch,” she says.

So now it’s possible to have her treatments in her west London clinic or the Seychelles, in Park Lane or the Maldives. The plan is to roll them out through the Four Seasons worldwide.

Vaishaly gives treatments that really work and a high level of service. She also makes products that work. So yes, it is worth spending more than the cost of a pot of Pond’s cream for your face.

Yes, she has good skincare tips for high50-ers (below). Yes, there is indeed a difference in what the top facialists do to your complexion. And yes, she has a secret. But it’s now out.

#### **Vaishaly’s ten skincare tips for mature skin**

These will help over-50 skin look and feel its best:

1. Wear sunscreen every day. This will reduce such signs of ageing as age spots and fine lines.
2. Change skincare products. Products that work well in your twenties and thirties may not be suitable in your forties and fifties. Use more natural-based products as your skin matures. (Chemical ones will irritate and dry the skin.)
3. Exfoliate. It will make your skin look vibrant and glowing.
4. Massage your face every night for about a minute. This will give a natural facelift, making skin look plump, radiant and firm, and reducing fine lines.
5. If your skin feels dry, moisturise and use oils or serums. This will reduce the appearance of fine lines and give your complexion a more youthful look.
6. Manage stress. To keep your skin looking its best, it is very important to manage stress effectively. Stress can lead to oily skin, acne and related skin problems.
7. Avoid tanning beds. They are no safer than the sun, and not a good alternative.
8. Get regular skin cancer check-ups.
9. Get a good facial once a month.
10. ...from Vaishaly?

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