



PHOTOGRAPHED BY MARTIN VALLIN

10 BEAUTY RESOLUTIONS

Looking better in 2011 begins with drawing up a list of new habits and goals. Here are achievable suggestions. **By Jasmine Alimin**

1. UPDATE YOUR HAIRSTYLE

The bob is back – now more angular with asymmetric undercuts or disconnections, according to acclaimed hairstylist Shunji Matsuo. “2011 is all about three-dimensional short hairstyles using the round bob as the base, and can be styled many ways for everyday wear,” says Matsuo, who has two eponymous hair studios in Singapore. For hair with more texture and character, and a touch of sexiness, he also suggests a tousled perm. And to further enhance hair texture and movement, monochromatic hues are recommended, especially combinations of various tones of the same colour. These include copper and ash, and matte green and dark brown.

Local rolfer Hee Tan of Posture Connection (tel: 8498-5673).

2. IRON OUT YOUR KINKS

Many women now spend most part of the day at the desk staring at computer screens. And this sedentary lifestyle can result in disproportionate muscle alignment, and cause poor posture, aches and pains, and injuries. Instead of massage (it offers only temporary relief anyway), begin the new year with a new therapy known as rolfing, a realignment technique influenced by osteopathy, physical therapy and yoga.

A rolfer manipulates soft tissue by slowly applying pressure to different body parts (10 sessions are required to reap complete benefits). This helps rebalance the body and restructure poor posture through loosening, lengthening and realigning connective tissue around the muscles. Rolfing can address various problems, such as carpal tunnel syndrome, neck aches, lower back injuries and headaches.

The practitioner begins by observing how you stand, sit and walk, and even takes “before” photos so that progress can be recorded. The therapy takes place on a massage table, where you strip down to your underwear and partake in breathing exercises.

Each 60min session builds on the previous one, so results are cumulative – the first few focus on the trunk and rib cage, while the final ones concentrate on realigning and restructuring muscles and tissue. Expect some discomfort when extra pressure is applied on problem areas, but it is often followed by a pleasant relief.

3. TRY A LOW IMPACT-HIGH CALORIE WORKOUT

Traditional weight training, which works one muscle at a time, can lead to overuse injuries. Tone a variety of muscles and joints simultaneously with the new gym craze known as Total-body Resistance Exercise (TRX).

It trains muscles by suspending all or part of your body on a nylon cable, so gravity and your body weight serve as resistance, thereby allowing for multiple planes of motion. The element of instability calls on the core to provide balance and correct posture, which translates into targeted toning, flexibility and strength training.

TRX is tough – the workout was used by American Navy SEALs in cramped bunker conditions – but challenges your body to work in new ways (TRX fan Jennifer Lopez can attest to the benefits). Most exercises are done in a standing position and said to burn up to 1,000 calories within an hour.

California Fitness, 01-01 Orchard Building, tel: 6834-2100

4. FIX YOUR HORMONES

Your hormones could be the reason you aren’t dropping those kilos. Says Adren How, managing director of Only Aesthetics beauty salon, “90 per cent of women suffer from hormonal imbalances partly due to the synthetic food and drinks we consume.” As a result, progesterone, testosterone and oestrogen levels can get affected, which may lead to ailments like irregular periods, high blood pressure and cholesterol, insomnia, cellulite and mood swings.

Available at Only Aesthetics is a weight loss solution that claims to work by regulating hormone levels. Simple blood tests are conducted to assess hormonal and metabolic abnormalities associated with weight gain. A customised nutrition plan and

prescribed supplements are then provided. Once your hormones are back on track and following weight loss, you will be taught to incorporate balanced meals and moderate exercise into your lifestyle. The one-time fee of \$2,888 includes unlimited supply of supplements and regular consultations.

One tester lost 7kg in one month and reported other improvements, such as glowing skin, stabilised periods, reduced cellulite, decreased hunger pangs and increased energy levels.

Only Aesthetics, 02-29 Singapore Shopping Centre, tel: 6338-4434

5. GRAB A GADGET

First it was YouTube, then came FaceBook and Twitter. More recently, we were inundated with iPhone apps. So don't be surprised that technophiles, armed with a string of software programs and hand-held devices, are poised to rule in 2011. Spearheading the movement is Stila, whose recently launched Get The Look application features infinite looks that can be achieved with its 37-colour Holiday Color Wheel Palette (available at Tangs).

Estée Lauder, meanwhile, offers an innovative application known as Ascent, designed to help you choose the perfect perfume. It fuses aromachology, psychographics and kinesthetics for a multi-sensory experience. Through a series of thought-provoking images, sounds and colours founded on the art and science of fragrance, you can find a scent that reflects your personality. Among the recommended potions are DKNY, Tommy Hilfiger, Aramis and Beautiful.

SELLING POWER

Hot on the trail of the vibrating mascara wand introduced by Lancôme and Maybelline is Dior's Diorshow 360 Revolving Lash-Styling Mascara. It turns clockwise or anti-clockwise to dispense mascara on lashes, pulling them skywards while combing through and eliminating clumps. It gets thumbs-up for being the most effective battery-powered mascara to date.

Repechage Lip Rescue Kit (\$95, from Renaza Wellness Lifestyle Lab) comes with a Volume Enhancing Massager to stimulate circulation and plump up your pout pre-volumising gloss.

RE-DEFINED!

Ageing results in weakened muscle mass and tone, causing skin to sag or hollow. This can exacerbate the appearance of facial lines and wrinkles. One way to restore definition and create a "lifted" look is with Aibi SlenderTone Face (\$699), which uses electrical pulses to exercise and firm nerves and muscles, and eventually improve circulation and complexion. Known as electro-muscle stimulation, this technology has been used for over 40 years in hospitals, clinics and physiotherapy practices to strengthen and rehabilitate muscles.



OUT, SPOT, OUT

Begin the year blemish-free, thanks to a selection of new tools designed with the latest technology.

Combat acne with Runve Ozone Acne Defensor (\$188 at Guardian). Working on the premise that bacteria in pimples cannot survive in an oxygen-rich environment, this nifty device releases stabilised oxygen to instantly disinfect, detox and deodorise problem areas. Also recommended to prevent inflammation, it helps purify and prep skin for makeup.

Ridding pimples just became more instantaneous and enjoyable with Talika Light 660 (\$500). This palm-sized disc emits LED light in two wavelengths to act on oily skin – blue to attack bacteria and red to soothe skin. Simply position over problem areas and let it work for three minutes. Other long-term benefits include regulated sebum levels, reduced blackheads, and refreshed skin.

Conscientious scrubbing helps eradicate dead cells and impurities so skin feels soft and smooth. If you need extra help, look no further than Neutrogena Wave (\$16.10), a vibrating exfoliator that offers two speeds for gentle and deep pore cleansing. Otherwise, Garnier Pure Active Exfo-Brusher Wash (\$18.90) is a salicylic acid-based gel cleanser with 170 rubbery micro-bristles to pamper skin while exfoliating.

(From left) DIOR Diorshow 360 Revolving Lash-Styling Mascara, SKIN INC All-In-One Optimiser+, REPECHAGE Lip Rescue Kit, STILA Holiday Color Wheel Palette



PHOTOGRAPHED BY MARTIN VALLIN

ALL REVVED UP

In a time-starved society like Singapore, multi-tasking is highly sought-after even in skincare. Touted as the next big thing in beauty for its multi-faceted capabilities, Skin Inc's All-In-One Optimiser+ helps enhance the effect of skincare products so skin looks better faster. Its receptors emit light in three hues – red to boost cell renewal and collagen production; blue to calm damaged and acne-prone skin; and green to treat pigmentation.

It also releases low frequency micro-currents to improve cell metabolism and blood circulation, so ingredients can penetrate quickly and easily into skin. Here's how to use: apply serum or mask over clean skin, turn on the All-In-One Optimiser+, select desired chromotherapy, and move the device over face in a circular motion. In 10 minutes, you'll notice a beautiful glow. Makes the \$788 pricetag worthwhile, no?



GETTY IMAGES



YOSH U4EAHHI EDP
50ml, \$220, Oblique

6. SMELL DIFFERENT

Venture under the radar or off the beaten track. Senteurs de Provence stocks the entire line-up of French heritage brand Fragonard. Besides its signature scent Caresse, there are latest holiday scents like Desert, a spicy-sweet eau de toilette infused with saffron, tonka beans, tobacco and oud.

If you're a fan of Bath & Bodyworks body splashes, lotions and shower gels, visit Scent Library at www.scentlibrary.asia. The local start-up distributes niche brands such as Glasshouse Fragrances, Urban Rituelle, Abode Aroma from Australia, and Margot Elena's collections from the US.

And for scents like Nobile 1942, Histoires de Parfums and Histoires de Parfums, sniff them out at Oblique (located on the mezzanine floor of Hide & Seek), a fragrance boutique by home-grown makeup maestro Clarence Lee. His new favourite is a US-based brand created by Taiwanese perfumer Yosh Han, whose alluring concoctions are worn by celebrities such as Nicole Kidman and Kate Hudson. Lee himself uses Sottile EDP, made from tea rose and lily of the valley, although the *L'Officiel* team also fell for U4EAHHI, a fruity blend of pomegranate, pear, cucumber and water lily.

7. BOOST YOUR BOOBS

With the fashion runways filled with cleavage-revealing necklines, all eyes are once again on the décolletage. But since options such as push-up bras, silicon padding and hyaluronic injections do not offer permanence, the moment has come to consider more long-lasting results. The Sloane Clinic has rolled out Lipokit, an FDA-approved treatment that removes and harvests fat from one area of the body (usually hip, abdomen or bum), and transferred to the chest. Unlike surgical breast augmentation, which involves pain and health risks, the side effects from this procedure is limited to light swelling. Permanent size can be achieved in just three months. Cost varies with the problem area, but typically ranges from \$10,000 to \$15,000.

The Sloane Clinic Plastic Surgery, 08-35 Novena Medical Centre, tel: 6397-6848

8. DIY DOWN THERE

Good news for those who love the post-Brazilian airiness! You can now maintain it with at-home kits. Bliss has a Poetic Waxing Kit (\$79) with everything required to self-administer a decent wax job for both face and body. It includes a 150g tub of microwaveable aromatherapy-infused wax, skin cleanser, spatulas, as well as pre- and post-waxing oil.

Don't fancy wax? Pink Parlour carries a less painful depilatory line known as Ready Betty Stylin' Kit (\$58), which removes

strands with BettyBare Revolutionary Cream (it's scented with rose, peach and lavender, so there's no nasty ammonia odour). It also offers a skin conditioner to prevent ingrown hair, a trimmer, and creatively-shaped stencils.

Over at Honey Pot, the hygiene-conscious can check out SweetSpot Labs, which carries pH-friendly feminine care essentials formulated with essential oils and botanicals. Allergy- and dermatologist-tested, the range includes balancing mists (aka perfumes), gentle washes and on-the-go wipes in various aromas (citrus galbanum, geranium lavender or basil grapefruit), with prices starting at \$20 for a pack of wipes to \$90 for a gift bag.

9. LOOK THROUGH COLOURED LENSES

No Lasik, no problem. A host of spectacle designs means it's cool to look four-eyed now, especially with innovative lens technologies boasting multi-coating, lightweight materials and UV protection. The hottest must-have among chic geeks: Dust-, scratch-, droplet-, reflection- and smudge-proof lenses by Crizal. Manufactured by reputed lensmaker Essilor (famed for Transitions lenses), Crizal lenses battle the common drawbacks of wearing glasses by using an advanced material that can fend off even the slightest thumbprint. Prices range from \$80 to \$110, at Capitol Optical.

If contact lenses are still your preferred mode of vision, smarten up with colours. Choose from tinted rings to "open up" the iris, and fully coated lenses like FreshKon Mosaic. These have a wider optical zone so your vision won't become blocked, are super durable and moisturising, and offer a vibrant speckled pattern. Available in grey, brown, green and blue, at \$38 a pair.

For extra glamour, try FreshLook Illuminate by Ciba Vision, where an outline around each lens enhances the appearance of the iris and even creates a natural twinkle. A unique starburst pattern mimics the natural gradation of colour in the eye, while the dual-layered printing technology gives a 3D effect to adapt to and intensify your natural shade. At \$22 for a box of five pairs.

New, too, is the 1 Day Acuvue Define Natural Shine. Achieve more depth, definition and sparkle with its combination of natural dark grey limbal ring and gold shine. In addition to a Beauty-Wrapped-In-Comfort technology (that seals the colour between two thin layers without affecting oxygen transmissibility), lenses are also built with UV protection. At \$61.10 for 15 pairs.

10. RECYCLE & RE-USE

Do your bit for the environment by recycling your used glass, paper and plastics. The Body Shop carries recycling bins at all outlets for beauty containers. Origins also has an on-going Return to Origins recycling program that accepts cosmetic empties, regardless of brand – just be sure to remove contents and clean them before drop-off.

At Pure Tincture, every batch of recycled boxes and bottles you drop off awards you a \$2 voucher. Jurlique, meanwhile, offers a \$10 voucher for used bottles from its own brand, and Bud Cosmetics encourages customers to return their paper bags.

Kiehl's, which collected a total of 12,000 empties last year, gives out a complimentary product in exchange for full-sized bottles. To further reinforce its Eco-Loyalty Program (which runs till the end of the year), every container submitted awards you an Eco-Loyalty stamp. Three stamps gets you one travel-sized product, 10 stamps two travel-sized products, and 15 stamps a full-sized lip balm.