

SINGAPORE TATLER

# Menmode



autumn/winter 2007

\$10 (INCL: GST)

## WATCHES WONDER

**O** all-time  
greatest  
watches  
for men

## UP MARQUES

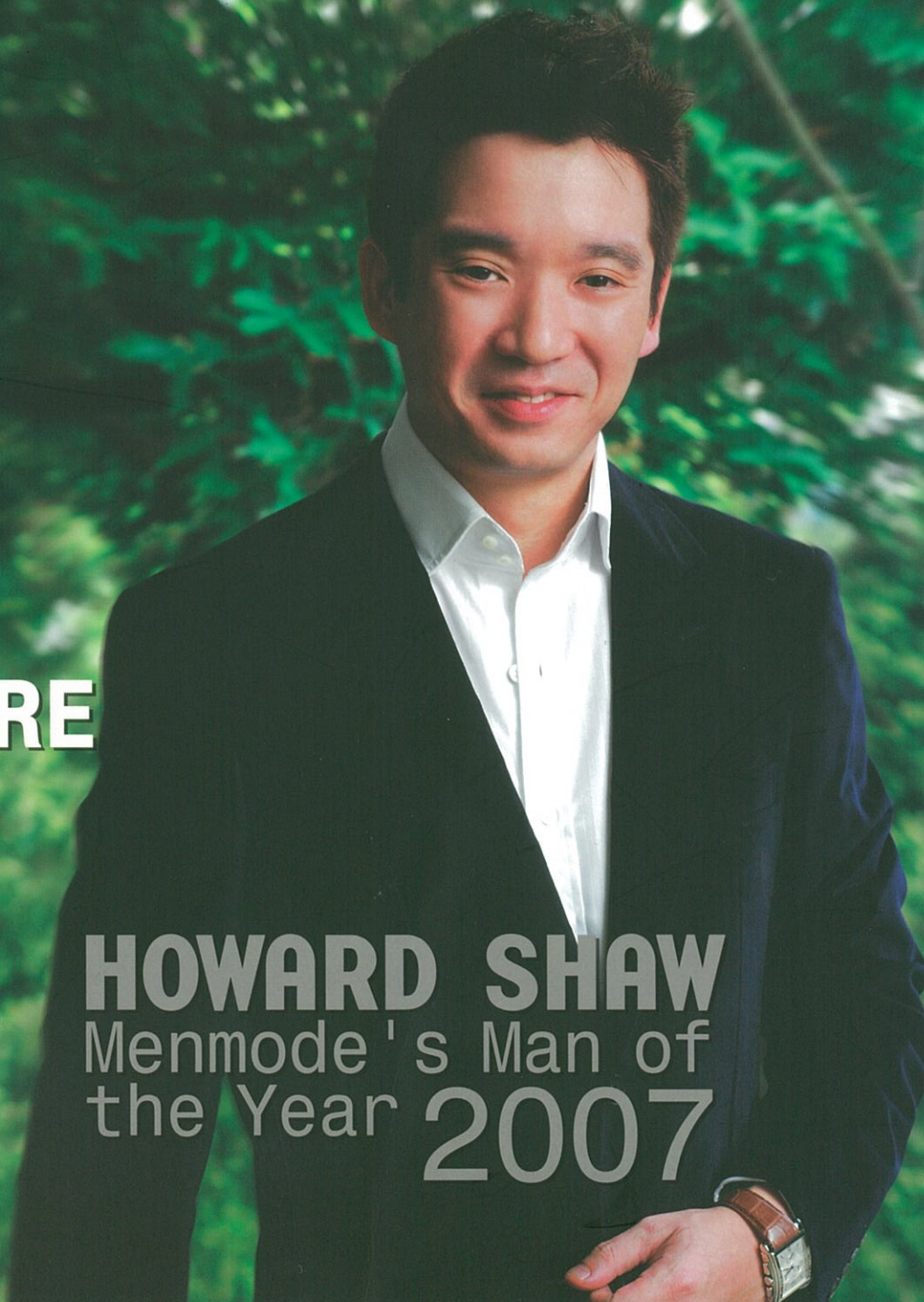
low-stopping SUVs

## SKINCARE CARE

Skincare products  
doctors  
are they better?

## DIAMONDS FOR HIM

Diamonds are  
a man's Best  
Friend Too



**HOWARD SHAW**  
Menmode's Man of  
the Year 2007

# The in-house solution

When it comes to taking care of the specific needs of individual clients, many aestheticians feel that off-the-shelf skincare products simply don't cut it, and have begun producing their own lines. **GABRIEL LEONG** investigates

**W**hy is it that when asked about their skincare regimen, almost every celebrity will mention some unheard of brand of products, available only through their personal dermatologist? You'll never hear David or Victoria Beckham or Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie say they use some common skin cream that you can easily find at your neighbourhood store. Well, there's a good reason for that; when you can afford and desire only the very best products, you're more likely to find them at your dermatologist than the department store.

According to renown aesthetic surgeon Dr Martin Huang, most over-the-counter products are too mild to achieve any significant results. He says, "medical grade products are far more potent and effective, yet not necessarily more costly."

As more and more people realise how effective these specialised formulations, known as "cosmeceuticals" are,

there's been a corresponding surge in specialised in-house lines developed by aesthetic surgeons, dermatologists and cosmetologists. Some world-famous skin experts like Dr Nicholas Perricone (Oprah Winfrey's dermatologist) and Dr Charles Sebagh (the Parisian cosmetics surgeon who treats Cindy Crawford, Naomi Campbell and almost all the socialites and crowned heads of Europe) have found their cosmeceuticals so popular that they've gone public and now sell their extensive lines to non-patients. (Check out <http://www.nvperriconemd.com> and <http://www.drsebagh.com> for more information)

Locally, aesthetics physician Dr Georgia Lee recently came out with her own line of products launched in June called GL while cosmetic surgeon Dr Woffles Wu is currently in the midst of developing his own range as well.

Why would all these professionals launch their own line of products if according to Dr KC Liew, aesthetic physician at BCNG Laser & Medical

Aesthetics, the sales of these products tend to make up a very small percentage of revenue? The reason is simple – their patient's needs and the lack of suitable products in the over-the-counter commercial market.

Dr Lee says that she could not find a brand on the market with a good complete set of products that could meet the needs of her patients.

"Some of these products are produced in western countries for Caucasian skin or Asian countries with much lower humidity," she says, "I believe that the availability and plethora of such products are an important reason why there are so many adult onset acne and allergies."

Similarly, aesthetic dermatologist Dr Patricia Yuen, who started her own Skinsense line around five years ago, found that many of the products out there were not concentrated or strong enough to produce the desired results that could address all of her patient's needs.

We are able to produce skincare that meets patients' requirements, where generic counter products would fail to produce results



Ms Chee Su Lin



D'lab products from aesthetics clinic Desire

Dr Yuen cites the Skinsense Pigment Lightener, a cream-gel based formula that treats hyper-pigmentation, as an example of a formulation with a higher concentration of effective ingredients than in off-the-counter products. In fact, Dr Yuen's line of products cannot be purchased without a prior consultation with her for a thorough diagnosis as they must be used under a doctor's supervision.

While these specialised cosmeceuticals have a concentration higher of potent ingredients and thus carry a risk of over-use or abuse, all the doctors give the assurance that their products have undergone stringent measures and

tests before they are sent through the production line. The entire process usually takes a year before the products are finalised.

Ms Chee Su Ling from aesthetics medical clinic Desire, which has nearly a decade of experience in the pharmaceutical industry, says that her line of D'lab products (which has been around since 1997) undergo extensive clinical testing and use only the highest quality ingredients from all over the world.

This is to produce results that are a step-up from counter products. Chee explains, "My product lines are sourced from all over the world to obtain the

highest quality ingredients that are not found in over the counter products. We are able to produce skincare that meets patients' requirements, where generic counter products would fail to produce results."

Another common reason offered by the doctors for developing their own lines was the pressing need for a specific range of products to complement the skin treatments that patients undergo.

Dr Yuen created a line specifically for post-treatment use as she performs many laser and radiofrequency procedures on her patients and they need products that will complement and fortify the skin following these treatments.

She quips that her products are like "homework" for her patients to apply regularly at home.

Ms Chee also supports this notion, as her line of D'Lab products are prescribed to clients in combination with the aesthetic treatments in order to achieve the maximum results desired.

There is a common misconception that such products tend to be very costly. The truth is, most of the products are reasonably priced. Dr Yuen's Skinsense line of products vary from \$38 for a Vitamin C Sebo Wash to \$130 for the popular Pigment Lightener.

At BCNG Laser & Medical Aesthetics, their top-sellers like the Queen Moisturizer meant for mature skin retails for \$80, while the Dark Eye Ring Lightener goes for \$120.

Not all aesthetic doctors have jumped on the bandwagon to develop their own line of skincare – some use imported medical-grade products that

Range of SKINSENSE products from Consultant dermatologist Dr Patricia Yuen



are available to doctors. Dr Martin Huang for one does not see the need to launch his own line as he feels that dermalogical products currently available are already of very high quality and efficacy, and are able to meet the needs of his patients.

Dr Huang, who has been using the Obagi Nu Derm and CRX systems for many years now, feels that a large company like Obagi Medical Products

(OMP) has the resources for critical research and development that can result in important and breakthrough products that no individual doctor can produce.

Dr Yuen adds that dermatologists like her regularly attend medical and specialty conferences all over the world, and remain updated on the latest developments by reading peer review journals in order to make

improvements on the formulation of their skin care products.

Regardless whether the products belong to the clinic's own range, or if they belong to a large pharmaceutical company, two things are certain: you get more accountability when purchasing such products from the clinic than you would at a department store, and you'll get better advice and consultation from the doctor than the cosmetics counter salesperson.



The GL line by aesthetics physician Dr Georgia Lee



BCNG products from aesthetic physician, Dr KC Liew