

## Be a Man

Skincare isn't just for the ladies anymore.

By Mitchell Parker

Men are beginning to realize that products promoting hair, nail, and skincare are an important part of looking young and healthy. Services and products once considered strictly for women are spilling over into the routines of men; hand and nail detailing, massages, wax jobs, facials, and the 45-minute haircut have joined the tandem of men's diet and exercise. And salons are catering to this growing need by creating an environment where men can learn about proper skincare and feel comfortable. "I always thought, 'Wouldn't it be great to have a salon that guys can go to and have a beer and watch sports,'" says Phil Sacino, owner of **American Male** salon in Mountain View.

Although he doesn't discourage female clients, the majority are men. "Most of our services are geared towards men," he says. "So the facials and hand detailing wouldn't appeal to women."

Taking care of the skin is one of the most important factors in looking young and healthy. With the right products, skincare can reduce wrinkles and other signs of aging dramatically. "When you leave the gym," says Sacino, "you say, 'Okay. Now I want to keep my hair looking good and my face looking good. It goes hand in hand.'"

When it comes to products, men's and women's can differ greatly. "Women's products are more fragrant," Sacino says. "And a guy's skin is naturally more oily. So



products have a more drying effect." However, according to Patricia Bottero, spa director of **Harmonie European Day Spa** in Saratoga, "the only difference is that daily shaving can trigger irritation and ingrown hair and/or irritated skin. Our product line includes glycolic acid and salicylic acid to help treat this."

Being skincare savvy is no longer reserved just for guys gracing the pages of *GQ*. "We have roofers, a drummer from a famous band, pilots. We have doctors, nurses. It's really all over the map," says Sacino of his clients. At Harmonie, "most people come for stress management," says Bottero. "It's typically the professional and highly-stressed. Male clients still do not visit the spa as frequently as female clients, although that is changing rapidly."

But women still play a big part. "Women have been one of our biggest helps in terms of bringing in new clients," Sacino says of his salon. "We've had many situations where the wife or girlfriend comes in and says, 'You got to get this hair off his back,' or 'Clean up his uni-brow,'" laughs Sacino.

And men want a safe environment where they can learn about these products and services without feeling awkward. “We’ve found that guys want to have suggestions,” Sacino says. “And in an environment like this, they are open [to] these suggestions.”

According to Bottero, waxing is the fastest growing service among male clients. “Our estheticians have won several awards in waxing services and are experts in providing the most comfortable waxing treatment,” she says. “[It is] unlike the waxing scene in *The 40-Year-Old Virgin*.”

Most men don’t know how to use pore cleansers, exfoliates, moisturizers, eye cream, or sunscreen, and few consider themselves candidates for a trip to the beauty salon. But with a visit to a male-centric spa, most guys can learn how to look their best from an expert. And there’s nothing un-manly about that.



a full service salon for guys