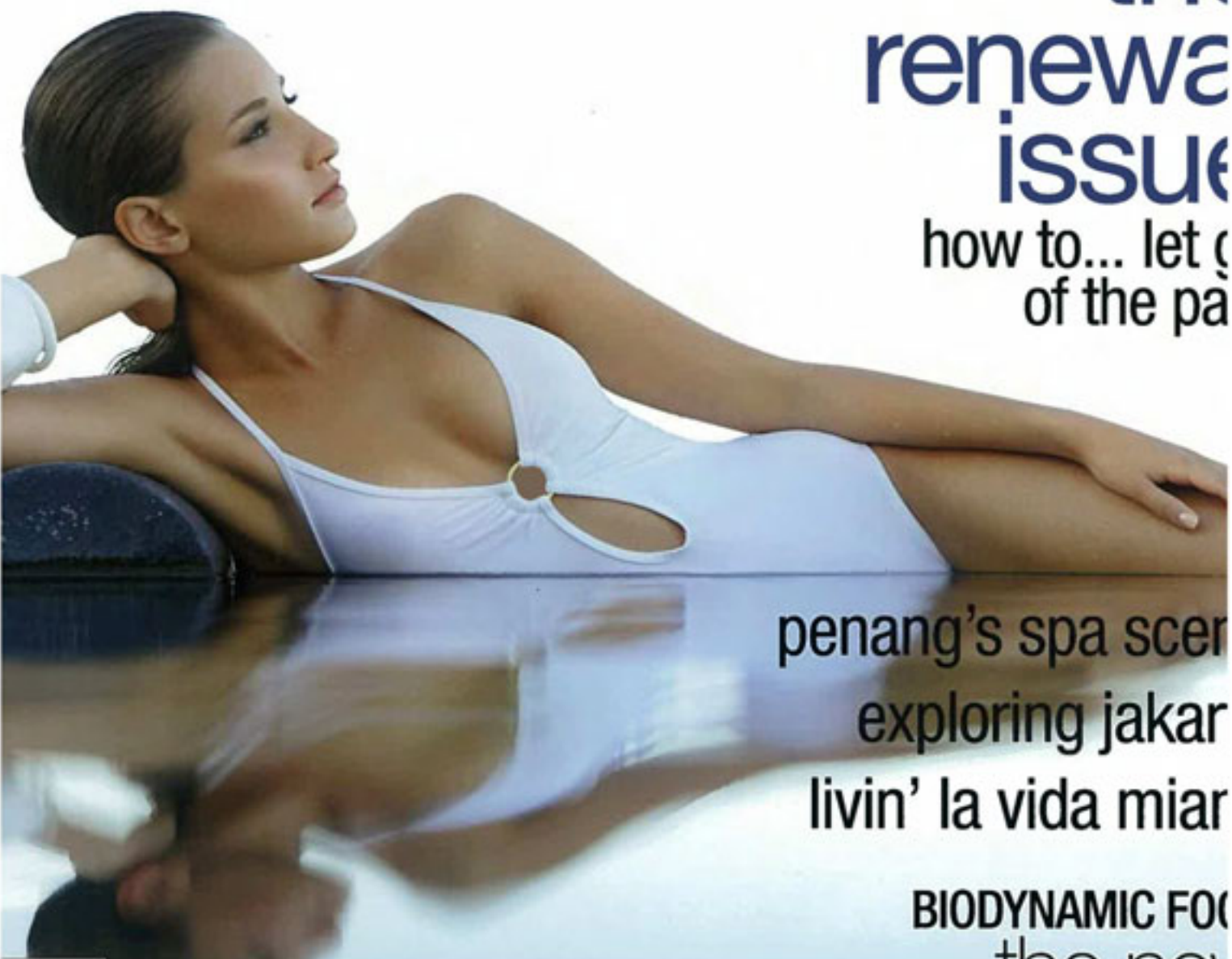


asiaSpa

january/february 2009

2009's
TOP 10
SPA TRENDS

the
renewal
issue
how to... let go
of the past



penang's spa scene
exploring jakarta
livin' la vida mia

BIODYNAMIC FOODS
the new
organic



Hong Kong, China HK\$48 • Singapore S\$6 (inc GST)
Malaysia M\$15 • Thailand ฿200 • China Rmb40
Philippines P220 • Indonesia Rp35,000 (inc tax)
Australia A\$58 • New Zealand NZ\$8 • Japan ¥1,500 • South Korea ₩1,000

We all know there is no secret fountain of youth or magic elixir to achieve healthy-looking skin, however there are certainly steps we can take to enhance the appearance of skin from the inside out. Here's how...

WRITER TAMSIN BRADSHAW



EAT YOUR WAY TO A
BEAUTIFUL
COMPLEXION

Each year women spend more than USD200 billion on cosmetics and skincare products in the hope of a more youthful, dewy complexion. The truth is there are no miracle creams. "A gorgeous, glowing complexion reflects a state of great inner health," says nutritionist and author of *Gorgeous Skin in 30 Days*, Erica Angyal. "In other words, beauty really does come from the inside."

Angyal, who lives in Tokyo and advises Miss Universe Japan among others, discovered the strong connection between diet and skin almost by default. "I became increasingly aware of the connection between the appearance of my clients' skin and their diet," she says. "Often it didn't matter whether I was trying to improve a client's cholesterol or helping someone to shed a few unwanted kilogrammes," she claims. The results of a change in diet were the same: a marked improvement in skin colour and condition.

This was cemented when she found research which proved that "not only does what we eat have an enormous impact on the appearance of our skin, it also affects how our skin ages." Angyal stumbled upon the findings of Dr. Mark Wahlqvist of Monash University, Melbourne. He found that providing your cells with the correct nutrition allows them to operate at an optimum level, enabling the body to better prevent the ageing process by positively affecting "excess free radical production, inflammation, declining hormone levels and damage to DNA." The ramifications were crystal clear: keep your body healthy, and you'll see the results on the outside.

Armed with the knowledge that you really are what you eat, Angyal set about refining a programme that would get skin glowing. The programme includes a 30-day eating plan, complete with recipes for dishes such as pumpkin seed-crusting snapper, edamame salad, flaxseed salad dressing and almond, coconut and banana power muffins. There's a three-day, spring-clean detox to start with, a range of supplements that Angyal recommends to "maximise the effects of skin rejuvenation," along with some lifestyle recommendations.

On paper and in person, Angyal is firm about steering clear of stress and making time for "anything that causes you to switch off – whether it's yoga, meditation, reading a good book or going for a massage." Angyal even offers recommendations for dining out. She suggests grilled, roasted, steamed or poached fish, chicken or vegetables rather than fried foods, and avoiding bread, pasta, potatoes and sauces where possible. The programme is specifically designed to slot into everyday life and as Angyal stresses, "Balance is the key word. It's all about moderation."

If the 30-day plan seems too intense, the book offers plenty of small ways in which to adjust your lifestyle and achieve glowing skin.

The first recommendation is to cut back on processed foods,



which means most commercial breakfast cereals are out due to their high sugar content and high GI (glycaemic index). The key, Angyal explains, is to "opt for cereals that are minimally processed, don't contain any added sugars and are low GI, so they won't bump up blood sugar levels and in turn, insulin. Many cereals contain even higher levels of sugar than chocolate!"

Along with sugar and processed foods, alcohol is a no-no – but that's not to say you need to avoid it altogether – just have a glass of water as a healthy chaser. Whether you're following the programme or not, bypass beer and spirits in favour of red wine; the antioxidants in it "help maintain the elasticity of your arteries ensuring good

circulation to your skin," says Angyal.

Likewise, dark chocolate – containing over 70 percent cocoa solids or pure cocoa powder – is packed with antioxidants (polyphenols) that "protect against skin cancer and promote healthy skin and improves how your body responds to insulin."

Happily, coffee is also "packed with antioxidants," says Angyal. "Stacks of recent studies have linked coffee to an increasing number of potential health benefits, including protection against liver and colon cancer, and even more recently ovarian cancer, type two diabetes, Parkinson's disease, and Alzheimer's. But there's also a downside. Too much coffee can make you jittery and some studies have tied it to elevated blood pressure and heart rates." While she doesn't recommend drinking it while on the 30-day programme, on a day-to-day basis "one or two cups are absolutely fine," she offers. She does, however, advocate drinking it without sugar and encourages people to chase it down with a glass of water.

Angyal is also emphatic about the importance of factoring good fat into your diet. "Living on lettuce, fat-free yoghurt, bagels, diet soft drinks, non-fat salad dressings, for the sake of your weight, will ravage your looks," she stresses. "Good fats add lustre to your skin and help you absorb vitamins and minerals properly." Fish oil (omega-3) and flaxseed oil are on the top of the list, along with the good fats found in nuts, avocados and olive oil.

Ultimately, whether or not you intend to follow the 30-day programme, it is good to be reminded of the vital importance of a healthy diet, and to be given the tools to achieve this. Angyal does not, however, offer a miracle cure, and she is clear in warning that there are no shortcuts – cosmetic surgery may make you look young, but it can't stop time on the inside. Only by eating right will you make any real change to the ageing process. As Angyal so aptly puts it, "health and beauty really do go hand in hand."

Gorgeous Skin in 30 Days is available online through www.gorgeous-skin.com