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EXCLUSIVE:
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REVEALS HER
STYLE SECRETS*

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GOWNS—IT'S YOUR
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*HOW TO
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*SEEING
THE LIGHT
THE BEST
WHITENING
BUYS FOR
EVERY AGE*





Uncover brighter,
fairer and more
luminous skin

LIGHTEN UP

*Skin whitening can lighten spots,
give you a post-exercise glow and even
turn back the clock. By Claire Zhang*

“Fair is beautiful” is not strictly an Asian concept. Until Coco Chanel made tanning fashionable by sauntering off on

a friend's yacht with sun-kissed skin in 1923, a porcelain complexion was almost universally coveted.

Today, despite the overwhelming tanning trend in the western world, Asians still equate porcelain skin with youth and attractiveness. “Younger skin tends to be less dull and patchy as well as less pigmented. So brighter, clearer skin does tend to make a person look younger,” concurs Dr Calvin Chan, medical director of Calvin Chan Aesthetic & Laser Clinic.

BRIGHT CHANGES

That said, gone are the years when women would wear foundation a shade lighter than their natural skin tone—and thankfully so. Over time, the ideal has morphed from an unhealthy shade of pale to encompass a host of more natural improvements including brightening, spot removal and luminous skin for any skin tone.

Dr SM Yuen, medical director of Atlas Medical—Laser & Aesthetics Clinic carefully avoids loosely using the term “whitening” in his practice because of its negative association with skin bleaching. He personally prefers terms such as “brightening” or “lightening.”

COLOUR CORRECT

This makes good aesthetic sense because as we age, the skin becomes sallow due to glycation of collagen fibres, according to Lancôme's scientists. The stiffening of collagen fibres also causes skin to sag and crease. Whitening products, when effective, prevent this from happening whilst lending the skin a soft luminosity.

This also works for the yellowish undertone leftover from a tan. Whitening products work by buffing off dead skin cells and regulating melanin production to clear away dull, sallow skin, shares Dr Chan.

SPOT ON

Another key benefit of whitening products—they provide a thorough solution for spots. And according to top experts at Estée Lauder, these are so varied that they can be divided into four broad categories: barely visible spots below the skin's surface, small

surface spots, stubborn age spots and recurring spots.

Age spots, for example, are formed when the skin's support structure collapses over time, allowing pigments to cluster. Skincare salves like Lancôme's new Blanc Expert range are designed to preserve the skin's natural support structure and prevent the clustering of pigments. Recurring spots are the results of the "memory" of past irritation deep within the skin. So, the American beauty label blends in actives to reduce irritation and prevent the re-formation of these spots.

WHITENING ROUNDUP

Indeed, with the growth in the whitening trend, gone are the days when whitening was a matter of slathering on some Hazeline Snow Moisturising Cream. Today, a comprehensive whitening regime includes an occasionally baffling array of products. However, in most skincare lines, the serum is the star product of the range, containing more concentrated active ingredients.

In general, most whitening products contain actives such as vitamin C, arbutin, kojic acid and protein peptides to inhibit melanin formation, the brown pigment responsible for darkening the skin. Many of these also contain exfoliating agents and collagen boosting actives. "Alpha Arbutin in high levels of four to seven per cent can help lighten and brighten pigmentation

marks dramatically, fade unevenness and reduce the 'yellowness' of sallow skin or the 'greyness' of dull skin," says Dr Chan.

While whitening products have traditionally been the mainstay of Japanese beauty labels like Shiseido, top Western skincare labels today are also cashing in on the trend, developing Asian-exclusive whitening lines, with new launches and improved formulas launched usually around this time every year.

TOPICAL PRODUCTS

That said, can topical creams and salves effectively lighten the skin? Yes, says Dr Chow Yuen Ho, co-founder of TCS at Central Clinic.

"Topical skincare can work because the structure of the skin is such that pigment cells responsible for skin colour are found very near the surface," he explains.

Dr Chow also points out that more women are opting for one-step aesthetic treatments like Cosmelan, an in-clinic mask followed by a home maintenance cream to block the synthesis of melanin. Patients can expect skin tone to lighten by up to three shades with this procedure.

That said, can excessive whitening prove to be too much of a good thing? Dr Chow warns that it may. "Melanin is the skin's natural defence against sun damage, and as such is important for protecting it and keeping it healthy. Excessive whitening can

reduce the skin's natural defence against harmful UV rays," stresses Dr Chow.

His final words of advice: if it's dramatic results you desire, seek the expertise of a trusted doctor—and always use sunscreen when using whitening products. ■

WHITE FLASH

Three non-invasive whitening treatments to try:

COSMELAN

A hassle-free procedure that includes an in-clinic mask to remove dead skin cells followed by a home maintenance cream. Cosmelan blocks the synthesis of melanin, the pigment responsible for the yellow or brown tone of the skin. \$1,500 at TCS At Central Clinic, #11-90, The Central, Office 1. Tel: 6221 8221

FULL-BODY BUFF

Full-body microdermabrasion combined with I2PL—the second generation of pulse light technology—exfoliates skin, clears pigments and gives skin a soft luminosity. \$1,500 for full-body microdermabrasion and \$1,100 for I2PL for face, neck, back and décolletage at Calvin Chan Aesthetic & Laser Clinic, #05-11 Wheelock Place. Tel: 6732 4981

SILKPEEL

This treatment uses diamond tips to remove dead skin cells while simultaneously infusing the skin with kojic acid to prevent melanin formation. Suction force is used to enhance the infusion of actives for translucency and brightening. From \$150 at Atlas Medical – Laser & Aesthetics Clinic, Blk 722 Ang Mo Kio Ave 8 #01-2829. Tel: 6556 0829

GLOW-GETTERS

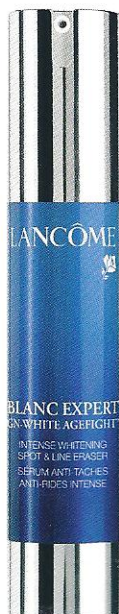
From serums to masks, these beauty picks offer bright solutions to all your whitening needs.



PREPPING LOTION
Chanel White Skin Renewing Essentiel Pre-Lotion, \$75, combines narcissus bulb, turmeric, liquorice and vitamin C derivatives to prevent melanin synthesis while gently exfoliating the skin with glycolic acid to prep it for other whitening products.

DE-PIGMENTING PICK
Clinique Derma White Clinical Brightening Essence, \$110, blends potent antioxidants, vitamins and actives that penetrate deep into the skin surface to break up large clusters of pigments.

ROYAL FLUSH
Lancôme Blanc Expert GN White AgeFight, \$185, combines sunflower seed extract and soy extract to prevent the degeneration of collagen fibres, reduce yellowness undertone and give skin a lovely glow.



PORE MINIMISER
Elizabeth Arden White Glove Extreme Brightening Pore Refining Gel, \$102, contains an Emblica C Complex from Indian gooseberries and intense Marine Mineral Extract to lighten dark spots, hydrate skin and minimise pores.



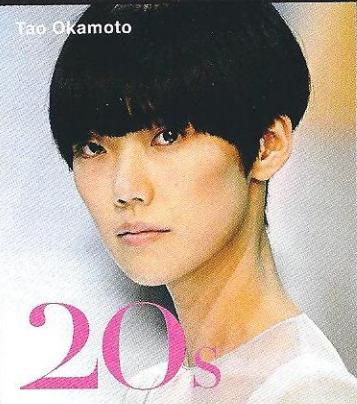
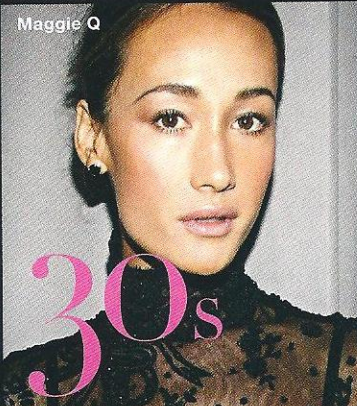
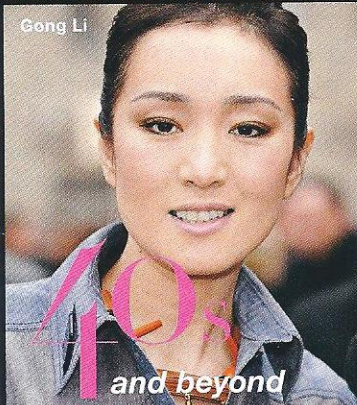
CORRECTION FLUID
Estée Lauder Cyber White EX Advance Performance Brightening Essence, \$150, includes actives such as melanin interception technology, glucosamine and protein to correct age spots, recurring spots and small surface spots.



SPOT CHECK
Shiseido White Lucent Intensive Spot Targeting Serum, \$159, harnesses powerful whitening actives to lighten age spots, acne marks and even pore discoloration.

YOUR BRIGHTENING

Seeking the best radiance-boosting arsenal shouldn't mean neglecting the rest of your skin.

		Characteristics	Look Out For	Aesthetic Fix
For Partied-Out Skin	Tao Okamoto  20s	While you are living it up, skin undergoes stress from insufficient sleep and unhealthy habits like alcohol and an unbalanced diet.	Light-textured and oil-free products which cleanse thoroughly, fight premature ageing with antioxidants and offer sun protection.	Clarins' Whitening from the Andes facial cleanser and relaxes skin with potent lotus for supreme brightening. \$140 for 60 mins. Tel: 6836 5380
For Stressed Skin	Maggie Q  30s	Skin renewal starts to slow down when pregnancy changes hormone levels and stimulates the production of melanin, causing skin to look tired and uneven.	Renewing treatments that boost cell regeneration with AHAs, salicylic acid and gentle exfoliating agents while inhibiting melanin synthesis.	SilkPeel, a new-gen microdermabrasion at Atlas Medical effectively sloughs dead skin away while pushing in active ingredients for overall hydration, clarity and luminosity. Fresh-faced beauty minus the down-time. \$267.50 for 75 mins. Tel: 6556 0800
For Tired, Mature Skin	Gong Li  40s and beyond	Visible lines and wrinkles, loss of elasticity, uneven pigmentation and skin texture is generally rough and flaky. Scientists at Lancôme also peg Asian skin as being more prone to pigmentation with age, owing to yellowing collagen fibres over time.	Products rich in hyaluronic acid to replenish low moisture reserves.	Lancôme Absolu Advance Regenerating & Replenishing Precious Treatment purges toxins with a signature jade stone acupressure massage for brighter, plumper skin. \$320 for 90 mins. Tel: 6737 6778
SOS	Zhou Xun  Any Age	You've done too much or too little and are now suffering the consequences of dull, sensitised or flushed skin.	Areas prone to shadow such as under eye, nose and chin areas or skin that's angry and hot to the touch.	Photogen at LinC Aesthetic Clinic for painless skin tone-evening and line-filling with radiofrequency and phototherapy. Tel: 6732 0208