

Elemis Biotec facial is the secret behind many celebrities' glowing good looks. Gill Sutherland went along to Miri at Le Spa, located in a beautiful setting overlooking the Welcombe Hills just outside Stratford, to try the wonder treatment

# Face value



If you could look like any celebrity who would it be? Personally I can't stand the over made-up looks of the Kardashians and other so-called 'celebrity beauties' seemingly just famous for the fullness of their pouts or bottoms. Give me the classic film-star good looks of, say, Christina Hendricks – a red head who always looks dynamite but naturally so.

One of Christina's beauty secrets is that she regularly gets Elemis Biotec facials, especially ahead of red carpet events. A-listers Victoria Beckham and model Jourdan Dunn are also fans of the beauty treatment.

As a working mum of three in her sixth decade, with greying hair and short of stature I am unlikely to morph into a lookalike of the gorgeous *Mad Men* actress anytime soon, but I could try getting her peachy complexion by copying her beauty regime. Luckily for me I don't have to head to the States to seek out Christina's 'facialist' Georgia Louise Vassanelli, who charges \$600 for a 90-minute treatment at her New York clinic, as Miri now offers the Elemis Biotec facial at her spa salon just outside Stratford with prices ranging from £40 to £95.

Set in an old red brick former farm building on in the bijou Hatton Rock Business Estate, with divine views across the Warwickshire countryside and over the

Welcombe Hills, walking into Le Spa feels instantly relaxing. It looks and smells heavenly, and with its off-white walled interiors has a wonderful ambience. This is greatly helped by Miri's warm and friendly presence – meeting her is like chatting to an old friend.

There are a number of treatment rooms off the large main room where in pride of place a large portrait of Audrey Hepburn sets a sophisticated but joyful tone: girls just want to have fun... and look beautiful.

I quickly learn that Le Spa is the kind of place where treats are served alongside treatments. While I enjoy fresh coffee (fizz, chocolate and fruit are also on offer), I fill in a questionnaire as part of my consultation, and Miri and I chat about my skincare routine and what I'm looking to improve – younger looking, and less tired, puffy, baggy, wrinkly, dry and less spotty please!

Before we head to one of the treatment rooms, Miri tells me about Le Spa.

"We relocated here 18 months ago. Before that I'd been at Temple Grafton for just over seven years, but this location is closer to Stratford and is a perfect spot," says Miri.

She continues: "I hope I have created a relaxed and luxurious ambience for clients to enjoy before and after their treatments. We are a unique boutique, a haven for health and wellbeing with fabulous spa treatments. Decor-wise I've kept it

minimalistic – I don't like clutter and I like to keep the colours soft."

Miri continues: "We're really pleased with it. I feel like I've always been here, and clients love coming here."

"Le Spa is not a pavement salon – such as those in Stratford's town centre – nor are we a day spa attached to a hotel. We are a hybrid, so quite unique."

Although the spa feels intimate and personal, it is also big enough to host larger parties, and offers a diverse range of treatments: from waxing, tanning, facials, body treatments, massage, Jessica and Shellac nails, eyebrow tidy, brow and lash dye to make up services.

Miri continues: "Our uniqueness also stems from the fact that this is such a tranquil space and I get to spend time with my ladies. I get to know them, and get to know their skin. No one feels rushed here."



IN GOOD HANDS: Le Spa owner Miri



FEATURE Miri at Le Spa



Miri has worked in the beauty business for over 20 years – working at Bodyline in Stratford for over seven years, before she became the manager at the Billesley Manor Hotel spa, and eventually setting up her own business 12 years ago.

Miri has an array of experience and knowledge having worked with many skin care brands, including Kanebo, Shisedo Elemis and Thalgo.

Miri decided to invest in the Elemis Biotec facial machine as the brand has a great reputation and offers a range of gorgeous products alongside its extensive skincare range and advanced technology. Although Miri offers other well-known brands, such as Thalgo, Elemis is proving to be the most popular.

Following my consultation Miri concludes that as my skin is showing signs of dehydration and tiredness due to winter conditions and limited sunlight, the Elemis Biotec Radiance Renew Facial would be the most appropriate for me.

Miri explains: "The Radiance Renew Facial is ideal for you as its cellular-boosting effects target tired complexions and the Ultrasonic Peel stimulates the removal of impurities and dead skin cells and the Galvanic Rejuvenating current restores moisture to reflect an instantly clearer and visibly brighter skin."

## The magic begins...

As I recline on the super comfy treatment bed, Miri gets going with the facial. The Biotec machine has a air of sophistication and elegance with a futuristic aspect. An array of attachments can deliver eight different treatments in conjunction with an array of skincare products.

The facial begins with a double cleanse followed by the ultra -sonic peel to draw out impurities, deep cleansing and gently exfoliating. The spatula tool vibrates at a rate of 27,000 per second. The hydra active soothing gel mush is applied. This soothing formula, rich in orange flower, elderberry extract and allantoin, helps to deeply hydrate and calm the skin

The galvanic-rejuvenate treatment is then applied. This helps to deep cleanse and improve fine lines and also helps with uneven skin tone.

Next, Miri begins a micro-current lift procedure where two probes are used to lift facial contours – it also helps to re-educate and strengthen muscle memory.

My treatment was tailored on this occasion to enable myself to experience and feel other aspects of the machine and other Elemis products.

Miri also gave me a lovely facial and décollete massage by using the Elemis rose skin bliss capsules. This helps with the hydration. My arms were also massaged with Elemis Japanese camellia body oil.

HAPPY PLACE: The relaxing interior of Le Spa

My skin was also oxygenated by oxygen infusion. Bursts of compressed air helped infuse my skin. It left my skin feeling tighter and firmer.

The treatment concluded with light therapy. Blue light which combats anti-bacterial /skin calming. Red light helps to stimulate collagen production. Anti-ageing helps smooth fine lines and wrinkles.

My skin was then toned with the appropriate toner. Radiance activator was applied to my face and neck. Pro collagen advanced eye treatment for the area under my eyes and pro collagen neck and décollette balm for my neck area. Biotec skin energising day cream for my face. Pro radiance illuminating eye balm for the areas under my eyes.

The Elemis treatments are recommended once every three weeks within a course of six. It is no exaggeration to say that Miri has magic hands – literally the best massage I've ever had. Immediately after the treatment I look much better. I'm truly amazed by the results, my skin looks more taut and brighter. All I'm waiting for now is my invite to the next red carpet event to show it all off... Watch out, Christina!

■ See page 33 for details of Miri at Le Spa's special offer for Focus readers.

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE: Left, Gill after her facial and, right, Christina Hendricks (photo by idominick @ flickr.com)

