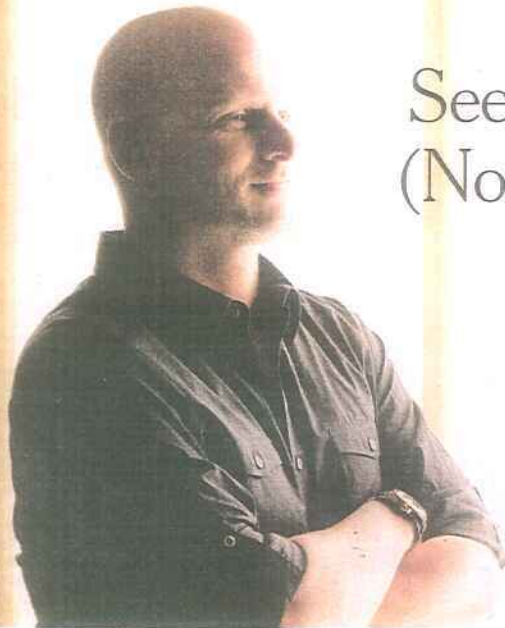


THE NEW YORK TIMES, THURSDAY, JULY 22, 2010

Skin Deep

Seeking to Shine (Not to Be Shiny)



OH, DEAR Lee Jacobs, above, at his wedding. He now makes matte skin products for men.

By ANDREW ADAM NEWMAN

THE term "mattifying" is popping up a lot these days in beauty magazines and skin care aisles. You won't find it in the dictionary, but most women seem to know that it refers to a product's ability to reduce the appearance of oiliness on the face, which is a particular problem in summer.

Now men are being introduced to the concept of mattification, with new products that are meant to be patted on their heads and faces. Men, it turns out, don't like that shiny look, either.

"Sometimes I'll be talking on the phone with my hand resting on my face, and then I'll have all this oiliness on my hand," said Karl Gerstheimer, 42, a lawyer in Windsor, Ontario. "I don't want to look like Mr. Oily Face."

A few years ago, Mr. Gerstheimer could not find men's skin care products that addressed the issue, but now he has plenty of choices. So far his favorite is Oil Free Moisturizer by Baxter of California, which promises a "shine-free matte finish."

"When I was trying other moisturizers, I was finding that sometimes by midmorning that I would have that visibly oily skin," Mr. Gerstheimer said. "But now I find I don't have that problem."

Although many men prefer not to use moisturizer—or, at least, prefer not to admit that they do—enough have embraced anti-shine products to make the category blossom. Mintel, the market research firm, predicts that there will be 36 new "mattifying moisturizers" for men in 2010, a 56 percent increase over the number introduced in 2008.

The overall market for men's grooming products has flourished. Retail sales reached \$5.6 billion in 2009, up from \$3.8 billion in 2004, an increase of 46 percent, according to Packaged Facts, a market research firm.

Depending on how you look at it, men have either been buying beauty products despite the bad economy or perhaps because of it, since looking good may provide an edge in the job market and the workplace.

"If your face is oily and sweaty, it looks like you're not in the control of the situation," said Jason Chen, grooming editor at GQ. "Men are not going to powder their faces or walk around with those oil-blotting tissues that women carry, but a mattifying moisturizer is something you can just slap on in the morning. It's sort of a way for men to have makeup without having makeup."

When Lee Jacobs, who was married on a beach in Santa Barbara, Calif., in 2003, first saw his wedding photographs, he was mortified.

"My face was shiny in the pictures," said Mr. Jacobs, 47, who at

the time was a marketing manager at Kao Brands, which makes personal-care brands like Jergens.

When Mr. Jacobs looked for men's products that addressed shine, he found none, and decided to design his own line, Matte for Men. In 2007, he introduced his first product, Complete Face and Head Care Lotion, with oil-absorbing ingredients, like oats, that are intended to reduce glare on shaved scalps, too. Today the line includes a shave gel, face wash and cleaning cloths.

One customer is Josh Waggoner, 34, a real estate agent in Tucson, who often shows houses when the temperature is well over 100 degrees. He used to keep a roll of paper towels in his car to blot

Men find that non-oily skin might help in the job market.

his perspiration-and-oil sheen, but now he uses the original lotion from Matte for Men.

"I didn't seek the product out because I thought it was going to help me close more deals, but you really do feel better dealing with customers when your face isn't all greasy looking," Mr. Waggoner said.

Mattifying agents are widely used in women's makeup, but rarely are they added to products for men. Many men's moisturizers advertise themselves as oil-free, but only recently has there been much selection in products that don't just leave out the oil, but also add ingredients like clay to absorb secretions and control shine.

Some men have started recognizing oily skin as a problem worthy of a trip to the doctor. Dr. Ranelia Hirsch, a dermatologist in Cambridge, Mass.,

said that she sees far more men than she used to and often recommends mattifying moisturizers to them, inexpensive unscented brands available in drugstores.

"With shine in particular, it's a subject that men have only recently felt comfortable talking about," she said. Now, patients tell her they worry that their glistening faces might put them "at a competitive disadvantage."

Men's skin tends to be thicker than women's and to contain more glands that produce sebum, the medical term for oil. Testosterone can activate those glands, said Dr. Kenneth Beer, a dermatologist in West Palm Beach, Fla. So when male patients complain about oily skin, one of the first questions he asks is whether, for either bodybuilding or anti-aging purposes, they are taking anabolic steroids, which mimic testosterone.

"A lot of men—and some women—are using anabolic steroids, and that really whips the oil glands into overdrive," Dr. Beer said. "We're seeing more men come in with that than we used to, and we try to tell them to back off the testosterone."

Men can be a tough sell, said Patricia Finn, director of marketing for Jack Black, a men's brand that recently introduced a product called All Day Oil-Control Lotion. Men tend to be skeptical of so-called beauty products, and want visible proof that something works, she said.

"Our product specialist will do a half-face test and show them their image in the mirror, and that's when a guy will see what a mattifying product will do for him," Ms. Finn said. "When guys can see that difference, they're hooked."

Mr. Gerstheimer, the lawyer in Canada, has a comprehensive mattifying regimen. At home, he uses a clay mask made by Anthony Logistics for Men and an after-shave and toner by Kiehl's called Blue Astringent Herbal Lotion. At work, he tucks Matte for Men Complete Cleansing Cloths in his desk drawer.

His wife teases him about these habits, as does his brother-in-law—who then asks if he has any products that he can spare, he said.

"Since I turned 40, I don't really care what people think," said Mr. Gerstheimer, who also uses anti-aging creams. "I have to live with my face, so I'm going to do what I need to take care of it, because I want to look good when I'm 50 or 60."

In that case, he is lucky that his skin is on the oily side, according to Dr. Beer.

"A consolation for people with oily skin is that they tend to age better and not wrinkle as much," he said.



TONY CENCIGA/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Beauty Spots

A PARTY ON EVERY NAIL
With stars like Katy Perry, left, wearing holographic nail lacquers, no wonder companies are introducing new varieties. Milani, for example, has six new colors this summer: Cyberspace blue, 3-D gold, Hi-Res purple, Digital pink, HD silver and Hi-Tech green (\$4.49 each). The sparkly effect comes from mica and pearl particles in the formulation, the company says.

MICHAEL BUCKNER/GETTY IMAGES; MOTTIE BROWN/WILLIAM P. O'DONNELL/THE NEW YORK TIMES



FRANCOIS DURAND/GETTY IMAGES

TIE-DYE LOCKS Tired of paying for highlights every six weeks? Ombré, a hair effect that gradually shows a dark-to-light color shift from scalp to ends or vice versa, might be for you. According to stylists at the Mizu New York salon on Park Avenue and 58th Street, the look, seen recently on Sarah Jessica Parker and Rachel Bilson, above, lasts four to six months and costs the same as traditional highlights.



WILLIAM P. O'DONNELL/THE NEW YORK TIMES

HAIR NOSTALGIA Finesse, the beloved shampoo brand among 16-year-old girls circa 1987, is marketing to its original customers with Finesse ReVitality, a new line for aging hair. The line includes shampoos, conditioners and a leave-in treatment, priced at \$4.49 to \$4.99. And speaking of leave-in treatments, 1980s girls who can splurge might enjoy Alterna's new Caviar Anti-Aging Overnight Hair Rescue, available in salons and online for \$35.

HILARY HOWARD