

Beauty queen

Susie Rushton



Undecided about cosmetic surgery? You bet we are. Even the demographic of British women most likely to Botox their frown lines are apparently uncommitted about going under the knife in comparison with their American counterparts. But open to *considering* it, we apparently are. And in a softly-softly approach, plastic surgeons are marketing their procedures to us as nothing more than another beauty product. A new how-to book, *The Viel's Beauty Bible*, is pitched perfectly at the nervous British reader. Its tag-line is "Look and feel fabulous with or without cosmetic surgery" – although, of course, it's not for women who merely want advice on eyeliner. Accordingly, the book's authors, Drs Roberto and Maurizio Viel, who practise on Harley Street, blur the lines between the benefits that diet and exercise can deliver (tips on press-up techniques) and those that can be achieved in an operating theatre ("Which Anaesthetic?" is one chapter heading). Next Sunday, Harvey Nichols plays host to "Beauty School Brunch", a lecture-event led by a US surgeon, Dr Barry Cohen. Rather than go on one's own for a personal consultation – and all the commitment that would appear to entail – this is a chance for the bashful to ask about recovery time after a chemical peel and "just how much pain is 'some pain'". Cosmetic surgery is unlikely ever to be regarded as blithely here as it is across the Atlantic. But however dressed up in niceties this information might be, and however depressing a future of Botoxed, lifted and tucked women might sound, it is heartening, I suppose, that at least us sensible Brits like to get all the facts straight first. *



Beauty School Brunch, 25 February, 10am-12pm, Harvey Nichols, London SW1. Tickets £35, 020-7235 5000 ext 2375

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