

# EasyStreats

60 • STREETS • FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2003

*So you want that sun-kissed look but (a) you want it fast; (b) the sun's not out; (c) you fear the sun? Then try the Instant Brownie, for a spray-on week-long tan. GARY LIM reports*

**WEARING** only her shower cap and looking slightly apprehensive, she walked into the booth (1.2m by 1.5m by 2.3m) buck naked.

She took up her position and pushed the button. Soon, a brown mist enveloped her. In less than a minute, during which she had to adopt four positions, it was all over and she emerged a few shades darker.

Administrative assistant Elsie Ch'ng, 23, was trying out the latest UV-free indoor tanning device in town, the Instant Brownie, at Spa Esprit Downtown in Paragon Shopping Centre.

Designed by former Motorola and MRI engineers, the \$70,000 booth was built by MagicTan in the US, where the system is already a runaway success.

To achieve a healthy bronzed look, many like Ch'ng usually spend hours basking under the hot sun



Who needs the  
**SUN?**

spend hours baking under the hot sun.

Never mind if they end up so burnt that their partners are not allowed within a metre of their sore bodies for the next few days.

Said Ch'ng: "I love the tanned look. But in order to get the tan that I want, I usually have to spend six to seven hours in the sun.

"I just can't afford the time to do that often. Furthermore, where can I go? To do that in public pools and beaches means that there is very little privacy."

Spa Esprit Downtown is the only company in Singapore so far to import

the MagicTan system.

Each booth has 40 spray nozzles to ensure thorough coverage.

According to owner Cynthia Chua, dihydroxyacetone or DHA, a sugar derivative used in food and cosmetics for decades, is the active ingredient, while the spray also has aloe vera and moisturisers.

The DHA reacts with proteins in skin cells, resulting in brown pigmentation, according to the National Skin Centre.

While the process takes less than

a minute, the tan stays for up to seven days, and the user can choose from three levels and tan intensities. Each session costs \$45.

For Ch'ng, the tan set in almost fully within five hours, and she looked more than ready to parade herself as a bikini stunner.

She said: "I'm really satisfied with the effects. Although I've read about this in foreign fashion magazines, I'm still amazed at how natural the tan looks."

She had one complaint, though: "It's cold in the booth!"

## ONE TARZAN MASSAGE, PLEASE

SPA Esprit Downtown, located on the fifth storey of the new extension to Paragon Shopping Centre, offers a whole lot more than the Instant Brownie.

Patrons are spoiled for choice, given that services range from the Milk-Dub Rub, which harnesses the beautifying qualities of tofu, to the Yogic Divinity, a massage inspired by different yoga positions, patrons are spoiled for choices.

Unable to resist the temptation, I went for the Tarzan Rope Massage, an ancient form of Indian massage originally called chavutti thirumal.

The masseuse, while holding on to a support rope, uses her foot instead of hands to massage you.

Okay, the thought of somebody's foot stepping all over me was not too appetising initially.

Thankfully, the masseuse, Anna Loh, has 13 years of experience under her belt.

She said: "This massage uses longer strokes and is more fluid than the other forms. It's a very relaxing form of massage.

"We even have to undergo some taiqi lessons before we learn how to perform this."

My earlier worries were unfounded. After the one-hour session, I came out feeling energised and ready to be back for more.

Another round of Tarzan, please!

## UV-BE-GONE

ONE of the main advantages of the Instant Brownie is that it is UV-free.

Dermatologists have long warned of the harmful effects of going under UV or ultraviolet rays, long known to be damaging to skin.

Excessive sun exposure can also lead to skin problems such as wrinkles, sagging and dark patches, and aggravate conditions such as eczema and cold sores.

The National Skin Centre sees more than 300 people each month seeking treatment for sun-related ailments or illnesses, 10 per cent of whom have skin cancer.

According to the centre's associate consultant dermatologist, Dr Wong Su-Ni, in an e-mail response to Streets, sun exposure, particularly repeated sunburn during childhood, is a risk factor for malignant melanoma, a form of skin cancer that is less common but relatively more deadly than other types of skin cancer.

If you want to find out more about laser and cosmetic treatment for common skin problems, head down to the centre's public forum tomorrow, 2.30pm to 5pm, at Meridien Hotel Orchard.

There is a charge of \$10 per person. For enquiries, call 6350-8436/7.



Pics: Edwin Koo