

# PLASTIC SURGERY PARTIES

*It's the latest beauty trend: getting together for an evening mixing girlfriends, gossip, and Botox shots.*

*Karen Robinovitz reports.*

*Photographed by  
Donald McPherson*

**E**lisabeth Schreiber lies back on a medical table, draping her Alain Tondowski heel over the edge, and takes a deep breath. "Be gentle. I'm sensitive," the exotic-looking, 28-year-old financial advisory and private equity consultant warns Paul Jarrod Frank, M.D. Seconds later, Dr. Paul (a dermatologic cosmetic surgeon who prefers to forgo surnames) reappears with a sanitized aluminum hospital tray and eight syringes. He winks to soothe his patient's nerves and then focuses on his mission: to render Schreiber's armpits perspiration-less.

"I have a severe armpit-sweating problem. And there is nothing more unfeminine than wearing a delicate designer blouse with yellow sweat stains," complains Schreiber, while the Gucci-wearing, 32-year-old Dr. Paul administers 25 Botox (botulinum

toxin type A) injections to stun the area's sweat glands. Schreiber winces, which is surprising, since she is by no means a Botox virgin. In fact, she had this exact procedure—which costs \$1200—performed six months earlier; the results typically don't last longer than that.

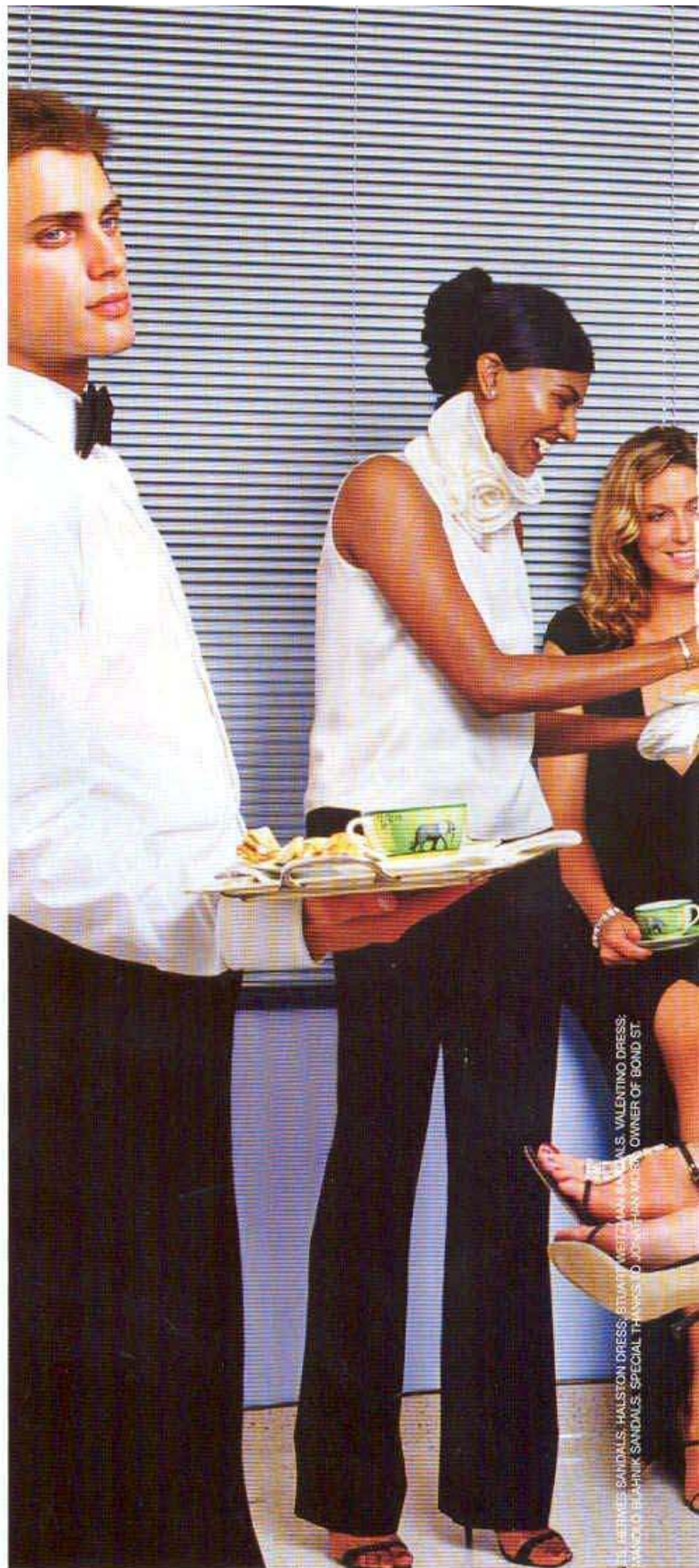
Fifteen minutes later, Schreiber enters Dr. Paul's waiting room, where four other well-heeled women are gathered. At first, it seems odd when they probe Schreiber about her treatment. But then everything becomes clear: These aren't random patients who've accidentally crossed paths—rather, they are friends. And one of them, Alicia Goldstein, a 29-year-old marketing exec, has invited them to Dr. Paul's Manhattan-based office on a Monday night for ... a "plastic surgery party."

That's right: Though not one person in this youthful, ➤



## BEAUTY

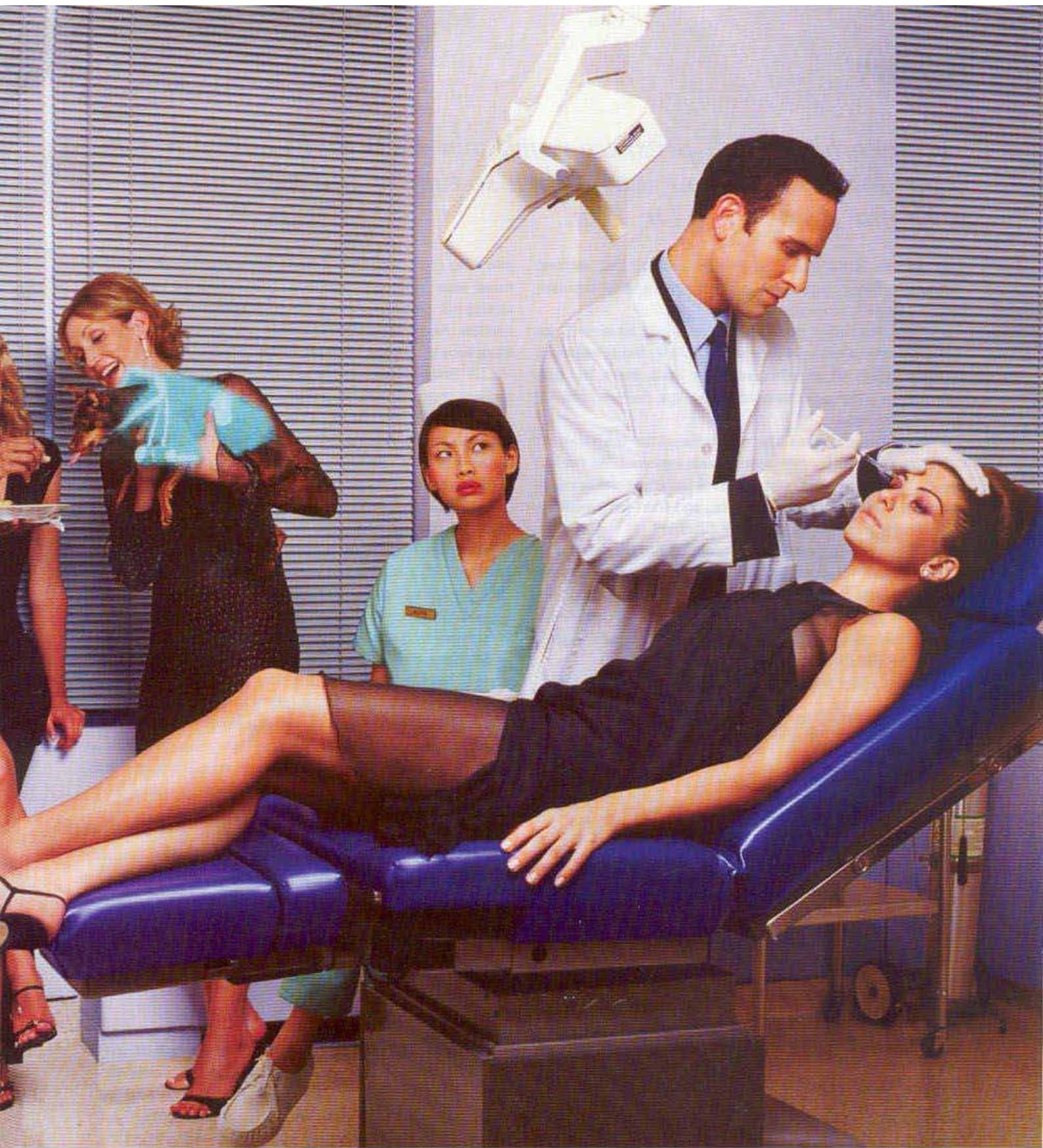
*Though not one person in this youthful, beautiful, designer-clad pack looks like she needs surgical enhancement, they have banded together, regardless, in the name of perfection.*



Above: "Working in a glamorous industry, where I'm surrounded by perfection, forces me to notice things I'd like to fix," laments Alicia Goldstein, while Dr. Paul administers Botox injections to her brow. Meanwhile, Manju Jasty, Lida Moore, and Laura Clarke (from left) keep the party going. Left, Dr. Paul injects Clarke with collagen to erase the wrinkles above her lip.

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beautiful, designer-clad pack looks like she needs surgical enhancement, they have banded together, regardless, in the name of perfection. And they're not alone.

In this age of advanced technology, women in New York's and Los Angeles's A-list circles are turning doctors' offices into beauty salons, and dermatology into a fun, lighthearted pastime. "Women have high-pressure work schedules and no time to see their doctors, let alone each other, so they're killing two birds with

one stone," explains Dr. Paul, who hosted a party similar to this one just six weeks earlier.

Tonight's soiree is decadent. While awaiting Dr. Paul's attentions, Schreiber, Goldstein, and their other friends—Lida Moore, a 33-year-old fashion editor; Manju Jasty, a 26-year-old investment banker; and Laura Clarke, a 36-year-old CEO of an accessories company—dine on sushi from über trendy Bond St. and sip green tea out of dainty Hermès cups. The jazzy beat of ►



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Café del Mar is the backdrop for conversation that revolves around fall's most coveted boots, the women's latest business ventures, and the stock market.

When Dr. Paul interrupts and announces that he is ready for his next patient, Clarke—who's previously had Botox injections to help maintain her smooth complexion—volunteers. Her goal today: to erase the vertical lines above her lips, the result of a 15-year smoking habit.

Seven painless minutes later, after collagen has been injected into Clarke's upper lip, the wrinkles have vanished. Yet her lips have remained the same size (which is the effect she wanted). Despite the treatment's \$450 price tag and short-term results—typically only two months—Clarke is delighted.

She then begs to have the sun spots on her arms removed. Since the \$450 laser treatment takes only two minutes—the healing process, during which the spots turn a darker shade of brown and then peel off, takes about four days—Dr. Paul concedes. "This always happens," he says with a laugh. "People come in for one thing and wind up getting three."

But Jasty, who's next in the hot seat, insists she's focused on

Twenty-nine-year-old Alicia Goldstein, who organized tonight's soiree, is a Botox veteran. Today, she's receiving a \$800 forehead and brow touch-up treatment.



one thing only: baby-smooth legs. She's already paid \$2500 for three laser-treatment sessions guaranteed to permanently reduce hair growth; tonight is her final session, which will last 30 minutes. Afterward, Jasty reclines in a chair to recuperate. "No more waxing. Forever," she says triumphantly.

Like Jasty, Moore, who's a Kate Hudson look-alike, seeks flawless legs. "There was a time my spider veins embarrassed me," she says. "But the more people I talk to, the more I realize nothing's wrong with me." The doctor concurs: "I don't know a single woman in the fashion industry who doesn't have them. Who wouldn't, wearing Manolos day in, day out?"

Dr. Paul talks Moore through the 10-minute, \$300 sclerotherapy procedure: He will inject an "anesthetic irritant" into her veins to close up the blood vessels. This will then stimulate the body's natural immune responses and ultimately eliminate her spider veins. "The veins will be red and maybe even bruised for two or three days, but within four weeks, they should be completely gone," Dr. Paul reassures Moore.

Goldstein, the last partygoer to be treated, wants Botox injections in her forehead and brow. She had a smaller \$590 dose seven months ago. "I have lines, albeit small ones," she laments, while Dr. Paul, who's been administering Botox injections to more than 30 women a week for the past five years, gets to work. "They're hardly bad, but working in a glamorous industry, where I'm surrounded by perfection, forces me to notice things that I'd like to fix."

When the women congregate one last time in the "Camp Derm" waiting room, Dr. Paul admires the results of his quick-fixes. "My clientele is predominantly young women who understand the importance of starting a maintenance program before their faces start sagging down to their knees," he says. "My patients all look natural, not fake and pulled. You wouldn't even know they've had anything done." ■

## THE FACTS ON BOTOX

**WHAT:** A purified form of the botulinum toxin type A, which is derived from the bacterium that causes botulism. Botox has been approved by the Food and Drug Administration for use against certain muscle spasms but not yet for cosmetic use.

**HOW:** Botox causes the temporary weakening of muscles. When injected in the forehead or around the eyes, it smoothes the area and limits expressions that can lead to wrinkles.

Botox injected into the armpits, soles of the feet, or palms blocks neural messages to the glands and inhibits sweating.

**RESULTS:** Visible within a week; can last up to six months.

**SIDE EFFECTS:** Upper-eyelid drooping, minor bruising, and headaches. Botox used against perspiration doesn't cause the body to sweat heavily elsewhere, except in rare cases.

**WHO:** To find a doctor, check [surgery.org](http://surgery.org) or [aad.org](http://aad.org).