

BRIDAL BEAUTY 101

Don't wait until the wedding day to begin your beauty prep. To achieve a flawless face, glowing skin and glossy locks, your bridal beauty regimen starts now.

CONGRATULATIONS—you just got engaged! Now the fun begins, but so does the work. In the time between selecting a dress and saying “I do,” you’ll delve into every detail of your wedding. However, the hustle and bustle of planning can leave many brides-to-be feeling more bushed than

blushing. It’s hard to imagine glowing skin and glossy locks magically appearing just in time for your walk down the aisle, but don’t fret. We’ve got your pre-wedding beauty plan to help you beat the signs of stress and ensure you look bright-eyed and beautiful for your big-day photographs.

Makeup

Every bride wants to put her best face forward on her big day. For many, hiring a professional makeup artist is a smart investment. “Not only will an artist create a look that fits the bride’s personal style, the bride can relax and feel pampered,” says

Andrea Holton, a professional makeup artist based in the Twin Cities. Holton suggests scheduling a makeup trial two months in advance to perfect the bride’s look and ensure swift application on the wedding day.

To get a celebrity-worthy look that lasts all day, expert’s must-haves include a good face primer, the right foundation and faux lashes. Amy Kelly, eyelash extension guru and owner of Jett Makeup in Edina, likes airbrush foundation, which offers a lightweight, flawless look that lasts several hours, even in humidity and wind. Also key? Giving those lashes a boost with eyelash extensions or faux lashes. “They define the eyes and offer an instant feel of glamour and beauty,” says Kelly.

But the real secret to a striking appearance? Well-groomed eyebrows. “A defined brow frames your face and draws attention toward the eye area,” says Holton, who suggests seeing a professional brow shaper at least three months before the wedding.

Keep the look classic and timeless. “You don’t want to look back at your wedding pictures and think your makeup looks dated,” says Kelly.

Skin Care

When caring for your face, starting early will put you on the path to success. “Begin a consistent routine at least six months prior to the wedding day,” advises Julie Swenson, a Minneapolis-based professional makeup artist and hair stylist. “Cleanse, exfoliate, moisturize and protect [with SPF] daily,” says Swenson. Turn it up a notch by using toner, a serum or hydrating mask with ingredients such as hyaluronic acid, olive oil, borage seed oil and vitamin E.

To bring a dull complexion to life, an esthetician at a local spa can provide facials to slough off dead skin, increase circulation and even out skin tone. Facials should start three months before the wedding so the esthetician can get to know your skin.

Fatima Olive, owner of Fatima Olive Beauty in the Twin Cities and a 25-year veteran of the beauty industry, believes the most important thing any bride can do is keep stress to a minimum. “Your state of mind shows up in your eyes and on your skin,” says Olive, “so relax and enjoy the minutes leading up to the big day.”

Body

When ladies think skin care, they’re often thinking about the face—but there are several ways a bride can get her body in shape, too. From the inside, eating right, getting rest and staying hydrated are fundamental to healthy skin. Exercise, specifically yoga, does more than just get you toned. “Yoga can release toxins and help blood circulation,” says Swenson. In addition, “Vitamin supplements such as vitamin B3, omega-3 and zinc are known to improve skin’s health.” Exfoliation and moisturizer are also essential for soft skin.

Removing unwanted hair through laser or waxing is another way to achieve smoother skin. Any new hair removal treatments for your face or body should start

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four to six months before the wedding to test how your skin responds.

Regular massages also help keep skin supple and lower stress as the big day approaches. Include a session the week before the wedding to relax tense muscles. Get a body polish around the same time (or use an at-home sugar scrub) to clear the buildup of dead, dry skin—you're guaranteed gorgeous, glowing skin on your wedding day.

Hair

“Excessive color, heat styling, drastic color changes and not getting regular trims are all things that can lead to less than lustrous hair,” says Charlie Brackney, co-founder and creative director of HAUS Salon in Minneapolis. He tells brides to not to shampoo too often and always use lotions and heat protectants before styling. A keratin treatment can also help restore hair that has been damaged from environmental stress and other factors. Further, a diet rich in protein and healthy fats, like salmon, nuts and eggs, helps promote healthy hair.

When determining your day-of do, experts unanimously proffer this tip: Be yourself. “Don't try to wear your hair in a way that is out of character,” says Brackney, “If you're a natural girl, wear an easy style; if your style is more glamorous, go big.” Schedule a trial run with your stylist a month or two in advance.

On the big day, come with clean hair (washed within the last day). “There's this myth that dirty hair styles better,” says Brackney. “If I were a bride, I wouldn't want to feel like I had dirty hair.”

Nails

Having a manicure and pedicure right before the wedding is a fun way to get pampered and polished, but don't wait until the 11th hour to pay attention to your hands and feet. Begin at home by treating your feet using a pumice stone in the shower, followed by a moisturizing foot cream. Use cuticle oil on fingers and toes to strengthen nails and condition the surrounding skin.

Sara Saferstein, owner of A La Mode Boutique and Nail Spa in Edina, suggests brides visit a nail salon a few months before the wedding. “A seasoned nail technician will evaluate the health of your nails and provide you with a road map of care,” says Saferstein. “Have a pedicure or two prior to the big day to remove calluses and moisturize your feet.”

From barely there to bold, a bride's nails should reflect her personal style. “More brides are choosing to walk down the aisle with color on their nails,” says Saferstein. “There are no rules.” Red nails are dramatic and sophisticated, while a pale pink is classic. Or mix it up, says Saferstein. “If you go conservative on your hands, go fun with your toes.”

Whatever look you choose, Saferstein recommends brides go for Vinylux or a gentle gel, such as Shellac. Both stay put for one to two weeks, ensuring you'll have chip-free nails through the honeymoon. ✕

PRE-WEDDING PAMPERING HOT SPOTS

WEEK-OF:

A LA MODE BOUTIQUE AND NAIL SPA

Getting a luxurious pedicure while bonding with your 'maids is just the beginning at this stylish salon. Shop on-trend fashion and home accessories and pick up a few finishing touches for your tootsies, outfit and abode. *Edina, alamodenails.com*

EXTRADOS

Trying to pluck your way to perfectly shaped brows? Stop. This house of wax tames beastly brows and banishes body hair better than any at-home attempt. To boot, these artists of the arch also excel at lash extensions, facials and hair services. *Minneapolis, extrados.com*

IVY SPA CLUB

Spend the day in the lap of luxury. Hit the steam room, sauna or pool before enjoying one (or more) of the 90 world-class treatments. Need to reconnect with Mr. Right? The Romantic Retreat for Two package hits the spot. *Hotel Ivy, Minneapolis, ivyspaclub.com*

JUUT SALONSPA

The premier Aveda salonspa sets the standard with its innovative beauty and wellness services. Leave nothing to chance and put your skin and hair in hands of its experts, aka “Daymakers,” for your big day. *Seven metro locations, juut.com*

MINNEAPOLIS LIFESPA

Relax your body and renew your mind at this exclusive full-service spa. Let a master massage therapist rub away pre-wedding stress or go for the slimming detox wrap for a feel-good boost. *Grand Hotel, Minneapolis, grandhotelmpls.com*

PHRESH SPA SALON

Specialties at this boutique spa and salon include organic facials and spa pedicures. A private room overlooking Grand Avenue is perfect for the ultimate pre-wedding mani-pedi party for up to 20 people. *St. Paul, St. Louis Park, phreshspasalon.com*

SPALON MONTAGE

All the pre-wedding pampering a bride could want in one harmonious setting. A wealth of hair, skin and spa services are available, but bundle and save with a Spalon Retreat package. Arrive and relax, then leave looking and feeling like a million bucks. *Edina, Woodbury, Chanhassen, spalon.com*

DAY-OF:

BLOWDRY! BLOWDRY BAR

Bounce to this Uptown beauty bar if your wedding motto is “fun and fabulous.” Bridal party blowouts will make movie stars of the lot. Bundle your bridal hair 'do and makeup application and you're red-carpet ready. *Minneapolis, blowdryblowdry.com*

BLUSH BEAUTY ROOM

There's no shying away from this playful beauty shop in Uptown, priced right for every bride. Get dolled up, browse cosmetic lines and nab accessories to finish off your look. Come for wedding party primping, return for girls' night out. *Minneapolis, blushbeautyroom.com*

JETT MAKEUP

One word: magic. This eyelash bar and airbrush makeup studio makes brides bewitching, with knockout lash extensions and airbrush applications. Bring along your 'maids or charm their socks off with an on-site package for all-day touch-ups. *Edina, jettmakeup.com*

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