

We Tried It: A 2.5-Hour (!) Facial With 14 Steps



By **ZOE RUDERMAN** August 01, 2013 10:40 PM

Courtesy Klara Beauty Lab

What is it: The [KLARA Beauty Lab](#) personalized facial, which is a favorite of fancy Upper East Siders including at least one Real Housewife

Who tried it: Zoë Ruderman, Senior Style Editor

Why she did it: My 30th birthday is coming up, which means I'm right at that glorious age when breakouts are not yet a thing of the past and wrinkles are no longer just something your clothes get when you don't fold them properly. And this facial promises to deal with every kind of skin issue one can experience.

How crazy is it on a scale from one to Kim Kardashian's blood facial?: 4. The extractions were not pleasant (and really, they shouldn't be), plus it lasted over two hours! I rarely do any one task for that long, except watch a movie. And even then, there are snacks.

Whenever I've made an appointment for a facial in the past, I was faced with a slew of options, all designed to treat different issues and needs. I'd make my choice based on a short description on the spa's website, go in and hope for the best. Often the esthetician would even tell me that next time I should really go for this other treatment. Kinda like going to the podiatrist then asking her to treat your headaches. Frustrating.

But when I made the appointment with [Klara](#), there was no choice to be made. Confused, I went to the site and realized there was no menu. The facial is personalized for each customer. They don't have a set length of time (though they're all at least an hour and a half), they don't follow a formula and they don't all use the same products. Genius!

The appointment started with me filling out a form that asked every possible question about my skin. (That's a lie. The appointment started with me spotting a basket of granola bars, asking if I could have one, then eating one. And a half. Just as runners have to carbo-load before a race, I needed to fuel up before my marathon facial.)

Then I went into the treatment room where Klara herself (who has perfect skin and the most soothing voice — just what you want in a facialist) looked over my form and asked me more questions about my skin. She had me lie down, she removed my makeup and she got a look at what I was working with.

To my delight, she said I have great elasticity and that my skin is very smooth. Then she chastised me for not moisturizing (busted) and guessed that I sleep face-down and that my work phone is on my left (true!). Then my psychic — I mean, facialist — told me her plan. It would be a mix of treatments designed to clear my pores, "lift" my face, neck and décolletage, stimulate cell regeneration, nourish and moisturize my complexion and relax me.

Here's exactly how we spent the next two and a half hours:

- skin cleansing
- exfoliating with rice extract and enzyme with brightening properties
- extractions (Owee! But also: Satisfying!)
- post-extraction mask
- oxygen infusion
- uplifting massage
- aromatherapy
- mask número dos (this one to rejuvenate)
- sonotherapy to promote relaxation (but if you don't think I was already crazy-relaxed after a massage, two masks and aromatherapy, you're nuts)
- Reiki (Klara is a Reiki Master, which means she's extensively studied this Japanese technique for stress reduction)
- light therapy (see photo)
- eye cooling treatment
- nourishing lip treatment
- moisturizer and SPF application

Oh, and I didn't include the step where I asked her to get my phone out of my bag, at which point she (probably) saw the inappropriate text from my boyfriend about facials then took a bunch of photos for my blog post.

The whole process took just about two and a half hours. Afterward, she offered me a post-facial cocktail, gave me a sheet of paper with her notes and observations on it as well as suggestions. Among them: Change your pillowcase everyday, wash your hair upside down if you notice breakouts along your hairline, take vitamin B supplements since it promotes healthy skin and cell turnover and get a facial once a month. I'll probably do one of those things.

I looked in the mirror as soon as I left and was shocked that my skin wasn't red or beat up, but rather looked really smooth and even despite my lack of makeup.

The verdict: I loved every second of [the facial](#) (well, maybe not those extractions). It's been a few weeks and my skin still feels ultra-smooth and I haven't noticed any blemishes. The perfect way to enter my 30s.

Tell us: Would you try a facial that lasted over two hours? Do you like the idea of choosing your own facial or having the esthetician personalize it for you?



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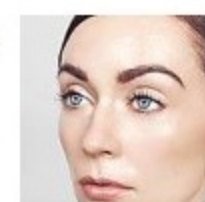
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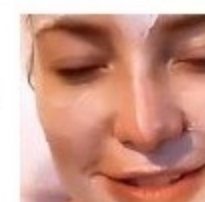
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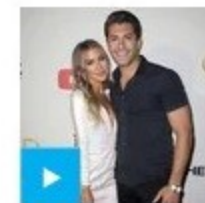
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