

Mumbai shops for fuller lips, slimmer hips

Heba Bhayana

heba.bhayana@hindustantimes.com

MUMBAI: Sitweta Damania's skin is glowing and taut like a teenager's. But she's not a teen. She's 26.

And the secret of her radiance lies in the thread lift, a non-surgical facelift that she had done earlier this month. The cosmetic surgeon sutured tiny, invisible threads into her cheeks and pulled the skin up during the 20-minute procedure.

"I wanted a sharper jaw line and now I have it," said Damania, who had under-

gone another procedure two years ago to make her nose sharper.

Ahead of New Year's Eve, and with the wedding season in full swing, many Mumbaiites are shopping for chicer looks to go with their chic jewellery and stilettos. Their lists include everything from minor 'lunchtime' procedures like botox shots (for wrinkles) and fillers (for fuller lips and cheeks) to the more complex liposuction and tummy-tucks to help them fit into their little black dresses.

"I performed more than 50 procedures this month, compared to the usual

25 or 30," said Dr Viral Desai, cosmetic surgeon at Bandra's Lilavati Hospital.

Cosmetic dermatologist Dr Purmina Mhatre, who runs three clinics in the city, also saw double the number of women come in for last-minute beauty treatments. "Many people have been coming in for back-polishing, so they can wear backless dresses, and 'party glow' and laser facial treatments to wipe out fine lines and lighten their skin," she said.

Marketing professional Preeti Jayram (name changed) blew up Rs 8,000 on an hour-long skin-polishing treatment last

week. "I am going to Goa for New Year's. I wanted to look stunning," said the 35-year-old, who also took botox injections in June to erase her frown lines.

The cost of cosmetic surgeries like liposuction — between Rs 40,000 and Rs 2 lakh — has not acted as a deterrent, despite the downturn.

"The demand would have been even higher if it wasn't for the 10.3 per cent service tax recently imposed on cosmetic surgeries," said Dr Mohan Thomas, head of the Indian Society of Cosmetic Surgery.

THE FAVOURITES

BOTOX: This prescription drug is injected into muscles (right) to improve the texture of skin and erase wrinkles and frown lines. The effect lasts about 10 months.

FILLERS: Anti-oxidant gels are injected into the skin to plump up thin lips or sunken cheeks and reduce laugh lines.

LASER TREATMENTS: A laser ray penetrates the facial skin and repairs collagen (tissue) to improve texture.

