

21st century smile

Thanks to the latest revolutionary treatments, perfect teeth are no longer a futuristic dream, but a reality

Words Anna Magee

Photographs Guy Aroch

A few years ago, I did a story about a hot new trend from the US: the Hollywood Smile. The secret, it seemed, of the flawless white smiles of celebrities was veneers and whitening. Easier said than done. Anyone who had crooked teeth – from Courteney Cox to Martin Amis – had them ground back and covered in porcelain, or painfully bleached, which stripped back tooth enamel, as well as wine stains. Either way, they emerged from dentists' offices throughout LA and New York with the same uniformly glaring, piano-key white teeth. But, as the rest of us clamoured to get in on the dazzling action, many realised that not only was the pain factor high but, while beyond-white might work on screen, in St Albans it just looked fake.

Enter the 21st-century smile. Top cosmetic dentists are using space-age technology to repair and enhance your smile based on your own teeth and facial features – in less time and with less pain. The result is still white, straight and maybe even wide, but it's also natural and specific to you. Now, the smile makeover-ed can look like themselves, just better.

A recent Mintel survey found that a third of Brits were unhappy with the look of their teeth. But, while many are still asking cosmetic dentists for 'celebrity smiles', they're also being more discerning. 'People no longer simply ask for a Hollywood Smile,' says Dr James Goolnik, vice-president of the British Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry (BACD). 'They're specifying who they do – and don't – want to look like.'



On the most-wanted list were Julia Roberts, Kylie Minogue and George Clooney.

We're also coveting Kelly Brook's smile. Her once-crooked teeth didn't get straight through veneers, but with new futuristic 'invisible' braces, placed on the inside of the teeth – Sadie Frost has these to thank for her current smile, too. 'Five years ago, many dentists would have simply fitted veneers over crooked teeth,' says Dr Asif Chato, from London Lingual Orthodontic Society, where both Sadie and Kelly were treated (only 50 specialists in the world fit them). 'The downside was that, if you had veneers fitted at 30, by your 40th birthday you'd need to replace them. But the new options mean you can have your own teeth straightened permanently without having to spend months of your adult life wearing ugly train-tracks.'

Braces placed behind the teeth can take up to 15 months to work but, according to Dr Tim Bradstock-Smith of the London Smile Clinic, up

to 95 per cent of patients who need orthodontic treatment decline, because of the time factor. With the latest Inman Aligner, however, the London Smile Clinic suggests that the right candidate could have straight teeth in between six and 12 weeks and they need only wear a thin wire on the outside of their teeth. 'We had one case, where a thirtysomething career woman needed 12 months worth of orthodontic work,' says Dr Bradstock-Smith. 'We fitted an Inman Aligner and her teeth were straight within

seven weeks.' So, what's the catch? 'There isn't one,' says Dr Goolnik. 'But it does rely on your wearing it day and night, or it won't work.'

'Walk in without teeth, walk out with teeth.' That's one of the promises from Swiss Smile,

London's new state-of-the-art dental clinic that not only features widescreen televisions and Veuve Clicquot in the waiting area, it's also open 365 days a year, from 8am to 8pm. With several different dental specialists under one roof, Swiss Smile uses new CEREC technology to

'New technology works with your own teeth and facial features'

create ceramic dental implants, crowns, fillings, even bespoke porcelain veneers, in a couple of hours. 'We know British people are pressed for time and that's what we want to give back to them, along with great teeth,' says co-founder and dentist Haleh Abivardi. 'The old version of dental implants involved extensive surgery and a six-month wait. With this, you can have them done almost without any surgery, leave the same day and, the next, bite into an apple.'

Still, veneers and tooth whitening haven't fallen off the radar quite yet. Mintel's survey found they're still the second and third most requested treatments, respectively, after white fillings. They're now just better. 'Whitening used to take up to two hours and could result in

'You can have your teeth done in a day'

seriously sensitive, painful teeth,' says Dr Goolnik. 'But new Zoom Advance Power takes 45 minutes. It's not only more effective and can whiten teeth that were previously unresponsive to treatment but, because of

a new active ingredient, called Amorphous Calcium (ACP), it reduces sensitivity and pain.'

'Ten years ago, there was a one-size-fits-all approach to veneers, where dentists just stuck the same old porcelains into any mouth,' says Dr Anoop Maini, known for his incredibly natural work with veneers, jaw realignment and gum reshaping. 'Today, there is a whole wardrobe of veneer types to choose from.' From paper-thin Lumineers, which require no grinding down of the teeth, to one-day veneers if you're in a hurry, to ultra-thin, hand-milled veneers.

At Dr Maini's award-winning Aqua Dental Spa, Chinese massage softens the pain, while a spot of Botox or wrinkle-filling Restylane can soften your lines. On a more serious note, Dr Maini uses new Joint Vibration Analysis (JVA) technology, which analyses jaw and bite problems that could be causing tooth grinding and headaches. 'Many dentists overlook the importance of the jaw,' he says. 'But, by sticking veneers on a lopsided bite, you're almost sure to get chipping after a few months. We're concerned with the health and longevity of the work, as well as aesthetics.'

With so much new stuff coming out, finding the right dentist is key. Firstly, if you're lucky enough to have an NHS dentist, don't expect them to treat you. 'You can't have cosmetic work done on the NHS – it's there to provide dental health and that's it,' says Dr Goolnik. It's perfectly acceptable, he says, to ask a dentist to see examples of the work he has done. 'If you're still unsure, ask to speak to people he's treated previously.' You'd ask the same thing before undergoing building work and, surely, your smile is just as important as your loft conversion? ■

What it costs and who to see

INVISIBLE BRACES

What? Lingual Braces, placed behind the teeth.

Who to see: Dr Asif Chatoo, London Lingual Orthodontic Clinic, 020 7486 2883; londonlingualbraces.com
Swiss Smile, 0845 094 4004; swiss-smile.com
£££ £3,500-£4,000 per jaw, around £8,000 for both.

SIX-WEEK BRACES

What? The Inman Aligner is a metal plate that can do the job of long-term orthodontics in between six and 12 weeks.

Who to see: Dr Tim Bradstock-Smith, London Smile Clinic, 020 7255 2559; londonssmile.co.uk
Dr Tif Qureshi, Dental Elegance, 020 8850 8820; dentalelegance.co.uk
£££ £1,500-£2,000 per jaw.

BITE REALIGNMENT

What? Joint Vibration Analysis (JVA) can help dentists correct bite problems associated with jaw clicking and pain, tooth grinding, migraines and malformed bites.

Who to see: Dr Anoop Maini, Aqua Dental Spa, London: 020 7935 5332, Luton: 01582 723 220; leadingsmiles.com
Dr Tim Bradstock-Smith, London Smile Clinic, 020 7255 2559; londonssmile.co.uk
£££ Starts from £150-£250 for a consultation, more for treatment.

REVERSIBLE VENEERS

What? Lumineers are less than one-millimetre thick shells of porcelain placed over teeth with minimal filing of existing teeth.



Can be removed, whereas regular veneers cannot.

Who to see: Dr James Goolnik, Bow Lane Dental Group, 020 7236 3600; bowlanedental.com
Swiss Smile, 0845 094 4004; swiss-smile.com
Dr Andrew Chandrapal, 01628 523 353; bourneendental.co.uk
£££ £450-£1,500 per tooth.

ONE-DAY VENEERS

What? Veneers fitted in one day – consultation in the morning, fitting in the afternoon. Requires filing down of teeth. Not reversible.

Who to see: Dr Joe Oliver, Welbeck Clinic, 020 7486 8100; thewelbeckclinic.co.uk
£££ £995 per tooth.

SAME-DAY CROWNS, IMPLANTS, FILLINGS

What? For diseased or missing teeth, cavities or amalgam replacement, CEREC technology mills ceramic crowns, implants and fillings in the dentist's lab. Longer-lasting, less painful and less drilling.

Who to see: Swiss Smile, 0845 094 4004; swiss-smile.com
Dr Anoop Maini, Aqua Dental Spa, London: 020 7935 5332, Luton: 01582 723 220; leadingsmiles.com
£££ £350-£600 per procedure.

SPACE-AGE WHITENING

What? The latest in Zoom technology, Advance Power Whitening takes just 45 minutes, is kinder to tooth enamel and minimises subsequent sensitivity.

Who to see: Dr James Goolnik, Bow Lane Dental Group, 020 7236 3600; bowlanedental.com
Dr Stanley Kay, Harley Street Dental Clinic, 020 7486 1059; hsdnc.net
£££ Around £600, plus £200 for home-whitening maintenance trays.

GUM LIFT

What? Using a combination of surgical techniques and laser technology, dentists can now either lengthen the teeth and correct gummy smiles, or replace receding gum tissue due to age or acid erosion.

Who to see: Dr Anoop Maini, Aqua Dental Spa, London: 020 7935 5332, Luton: 01582 723 220; leadingsmiles.com
Dr Oliver Harman, City Dents, 020 7920 0700; dents.co.uk
£££ £280-300 for one tooth, around £975 for full upper and lower smile (10 or more teeth).

Find an accredited cosmetic dentist near you by specialty at British Academy of Cosmetic Dentists, bacd.com, or call 020 7612 4166