

英式豪华世界

# Pomp

VICTORIA  
COREN'S

**POKERSTYLE**

TRACEY  
EMIN

**UNLEASHED**

...AND NEW  
WATCHES  
WORTH

**£3 MILLION**

THE  
DIAMOND  
LIFE OF

KEITH

*A World of British Luxury*

# THE SUPERDENTISTS

*No longer is London a byword for bad dentistry. These days, presidents, princesses and tycoons flock to the capital to have their teeth tended in style says* LYDIA SLATER



PHOTOGRAPH: GETTY IMAGES

British dentistry was once a global joke. Not any more. While the NHS is still providing emergency and routine dental care, the British are increasingly prepared to spend on their smiles. Between 1988 and 2009, the amount we spent on private dentistry increased tenfold. And an entire industry has sprung up to service this new demand, offering cutting-edge cosmetic dentistry to the international jet set that makes London its home – or at least a frequent stop-off point. Catering to a clientele that is accustomed to be pampered, these surgeries are glamorous environments where the whiff of disinfectant has been replaced by the scent of essential oils and where luxurious extras are a matter of course.

One of the crown princes of cosmetic dentistry is Dr Didier Fillion. A pioneer in 'lingual orthodontics' (discreet braces attached to the back of the teeth), he is believed to be the man responsible for the Duchess of Cambridge's glamorous yet ultra-natural smile and, while he is obviously reluctant to discuss his Royal client, he will admit to having enhanced the dentistry of Sadie Frost, Kelly Brook and John Galliano, and flies to Morocco monthly to treat the King's niece. To cater to his ever-expanding client list, Dr Fillion shuttles regularly between three practices: one in London, one in Paris and a third in Geneva (which has a VIP service that chauffeurs clients from the airport straight to the surgery).

His surgery in Wimpole Street is undeniably elegant. Chandeliers sparkle from the ceilings and modern art hangs on the trendy flock wallpaper. In the reception, a client is calmly discussing a course of treatment that will set him back over £6,000. Despite such prices, there is no shortage of demand for Dr Fillion's services: in fact, there's an eight-week waiting list, and patients travel from Nigeria, Korea and Kuwait. 'Someone came to see me from Dubai yesterday,' he says, 'and she'll fly over every six weeks until her treatment is completed.'

When you look at his book of before and after photographs, it's not hard to see why he inspires this sort of devotion from his patients. The transformations are almost miraculous – hideously overlapping teeth are straightened, gaps closed up, discoloured teeth blasted to pearly white. Gums are reduced and teeth repositioned to give the widest smile possible. In extreme cases, surgery is used to correct jaw malformations. Some patients are unrecognisable afterwards, and in almost every case, the patient looks younger. 'We position the teeth so they give better support to the lips, which keeps people looking more youthful,' he explains.

'We have cases where the patient looks a decade younger after treatment,' agrees the equally sought-after Dr Mervyn Druian, who runs the London Centre for Cosmetic Dentistry in Hampstead. He is the man to whom *X-Factor* contestants are sent for routine teeth whitening, and is the principal dentist on the TV show *Extreme Makeover*. His surgery also offers a 'Smile Lift', which uses veneers to plump out the cheeks and lift the corners of the lip for a subtly rejuvenating effect. 'Attitudes to cosmetic dentistry have changed in a single generation,' he says. 'If you switched on the TV 10 years ago you'd see journalists and politicians with terrible teeth, but that's no longer acceptable.' As the British have become more demanding of dentists, so standards have shot up. 'This is a very sophisticated dental market,' says Dr Druian. 'Americans used to go back to the US to have their teeth done but now they're coming over here.' Dr Druian's patients include A-list film stars and wealthy Middle

Eastern clients. Veneers, which are made in America, start at around £1,000 per tooth. And to make the process as pleasant as possible, he has invested in NuCalm, a deep relaxation system, which sends contrasting brainwaves through electrodes to mimic the natural process of falling asleep. When Dr Tim Bradstock-Smith set up the London Smile Clinic in the West End in 1999, he says 'we were the only practice with the word "Smile" in our name. Now there are hundreds. It's indicative of a change in attitude to dentistry in the UK. Ultimately, dental health is still more important to people than how they look, but how they look has become amazingly important.'

What his patients want is 'the teeth of someone lucky. When I started out, the Hollywood smile was prevalent but then people started to see stars on TV who had clearly overdone it. Now it's much more about a natural look – I call it perfect imperfection. You can create very realistic tooth colour, texture and anatomy, with that translucency at the tip of the tooth, in a good porcelain veneer. What you want is for people to say "You look well", not "what have you done to your teeth?"' (Which is why when Rolling Stone Ronnie Wood opted for veneers after years of smoking, he got them with a built-in stain for extra realism.) Dr Bradstock-Smith has clients from Europe, the Middle East and America (he's accredited to the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry), and a large roster of film, pop and soap stars on his books. 'We have something of a reputation among the celebrities.' His patients are entertained in the dentist's chair with DVD goggles showing the latest releases and treated with painless injections.

He charges £835 per tooth for multiple veneers and says a typical smile makeover would cost in the region of £7,000. It sounds a lot, but the effects can be life-changing. 'I've treated people who can't bear to smile without putting their hand over their mouth. They don't want to go out or meet people or go for a job interview. A bad smile can affect someone and when the work is done, it can kick-start their life. It gives me so much pleasure when someone comes back to say they have a new job or are engaged to be married.'

Past president of the British Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry, Dr Christopher Orr, opines, 'London is certainly a better place dentally than it ever was. High-end North American dentistry is excellent, but high-end British dentistry is now just as good.' His state-of-the-art surgery, the Advanced Dental Practice, occupies a period brick warehouse in a groovy part of Bermondsey. 'And we are seeing an increasing number of clients from abroad – partly because London is an easy place to get to from North America or the Middle East.' He is discreet about his glamorous clientele,

many of whom are 'very much in the public eye – discretion is one of the reasons people choose to come to us. And the other is that we make efficient use of their time because we can sort out all their problems on-site. We keep up-to-date with the high-end diagnostic technology so we can spot problems before they develop.' Most of his patients have been referred by other dentists, and about a third are themselves dentists looking for treatment. It doesn't come cheap: dental implants cost between £3,000 and £4,000, veneers are between £900 to £1,200 per tooth and bleaching costs £400 – but Dr Orr's reputation is such that he has found no need to resort to gimmicks to lure in the customers. 'Although the other day, someone did suggest that we opened a champagne bar in the surgery,' he says wryly. And if he doesn't, it's probably only a matter of time before one of his rivals does. ■

DR FILLION  
57a Wimpole Street,  
London W1G 8YP  
020 7486 2883

THE LONDON  
CENTRE FOR  
COSMETIC  
DENTISTRY  
93 Haverstock Hill,  
London NW3 4RL  
020 7722 1235

THE LONDON  
SMILE CLINIC  
Ground Floor East,  
40-44 Clipstone Street,  
London W1W 5DW  
020 7255 2559

ADVANCED DENTAL  
PRACTICE  
11c Bell Yard Mews,  
Bermondsey Street,  
London SE1 3TN  
020 7940 0880