

View from the porch

By EVE MARX

My Turkish lover and more hair-raising adventures

The news, at first, seemed pretty bad. The hair treatments that have revolutionized my life, namely my beloved Brazilian Blow Out and Keratin Conditioning Treatments, have been inundated with negative press. Suddenly, on facebook, all my friends were on the offence about the Brazilian, swearing they'd never do it, or bemoaning the fact they'd ever done it in the first place. "It's toxic, it's formaldehyde, it's cancer-causing poison," a couple of friends wailed. The only person who appeared unfazed by the onslaught was my friend Steffani in Miami, who claims to be unconcerned about exposing herself to known carcinogens. "This is the first time in my life I've loved my hair," she wrote. "I'll definitely keep doing it." Feeling much the same, in response to the anti-Brazilian feeding frenzy, for my weekly [www.stillababe.com](http://www.stillababe.com) column, I wrote a blog entitled, "What's a little formaldehyde between friends?"

A few days later, I was at Paulo's Atelier, the best salon ever. I was scheduled for a hair re-think with their newest stylist, a young Turkish guy named Yasin. I put myself in his capable hands after giving a few loose directives. "My signature look is my hair is in my eyes," I said, "and since I'm a sex book writer, I'm expected to look sexy." I added that I ride a horse every day, and require a style that can survive the helmet. When it comes to dryers and flatirons and other tools of the trade, I'm all thumbs, I said, plus I barely wash my hair, or even comb it.

"You don't need another Brazilian for awhile," Yasin advised when asked for his opinion. For the record, my last Brazilian was June 2010. Say what you will, but the treatment works. While Yasin wielded the scissors, Paulo came over for a heart to heart. OSHA has given him all approvals regarding his straightening treatments, and he said that if anyone prefers to be masked during the process, all they need do is ask. Next year Paulo is installing even more ventilation systems to protect salon employees, and for clients on the fence about the Brazilian but who crave maintenance-free hair, the salon is offering a treatment called Kerastase Express, which at a mere \$35 smoothes and de-frizzes. Smoothing results last six weeks.

A week later at the Radiance Med Spa in Mount Kisco, where they specialize in Botox, Restylane, and IPL therapy, as well as laser hair removal and laser lipo, I made an appointment with treatment clinician and New York State Licensed Medical Aesthetician Nicole Nicolis. After a bit of dermabrasion, which is a light sanding of the face, Nicole administered the Obagi Medical Professional-C serum, an antioxidant therapy. What's the difference between the serum and pouring lemon juice on your face, I asked. Penetration is the key, as only professional grade vitamin C sinks into the epidermis to stimulate collagen. This is feel-good stuff you can get in any decent spa, but a few minutes later we switched rooms so I could experience a true medical procedure called pulsed light photorejuvenation. This treatment, which does hurt a tiny bit (it feels like tiny pin pricks), literally pulses light into the skin. Nicole warned my spots might actually darken, i.e. look worse, before they went away. Typically, this treatment is administered in a series, but I only got the one. Nicole offered me a tube of zinc-infused medically-approved Obagi sunscreen to use afterwards, and I was extremely pleased to see that within a week my sunspots had faded. Really faded, no kidding. This treatment is also beneficial for rosacea and spider veins.

In a final fit of pampering prior to the holiday madness, I had a soothing massage facial with my all-

time favorite aesthetician, Simi Roofeh, who is currently practicing her magic in Katonah at kd studio, across the street from Perks. Simi is licensed to do a myriad of procedures, including med-spa, in not one, but two states. European trained, she also does threading. I told her I'd just had some heavy duty pulsed light treatments, so we focused on a steamy and thorough cleansing, followed by a replenishing treatment with a moisturizing and purifying mask. Simi truly has magic fingers and I fell fast asleep as she deftly massaged my neck, my upper chest and my entire face. She strokes your forehead like no other; I defy anyone to leave her table without feeling blessed. She finished up with a bit of Reiki and some aromatherapy. I would go to the ends of the earth for her treatments; Simi is the best!

A final note on Yasin at Paulo's Atelier. My friend, the celebrated author Esmeralda Santiago, wrote a memoir called "The Turkish Lover," a title I must share. Yasin is Turkish and while he certainly is not my lover, I love what he did with my hair. I am now officially a fan. At my age, it's not effortless to feel sexy, but with a few discerning swipes with his scissors, Yasin took me there.