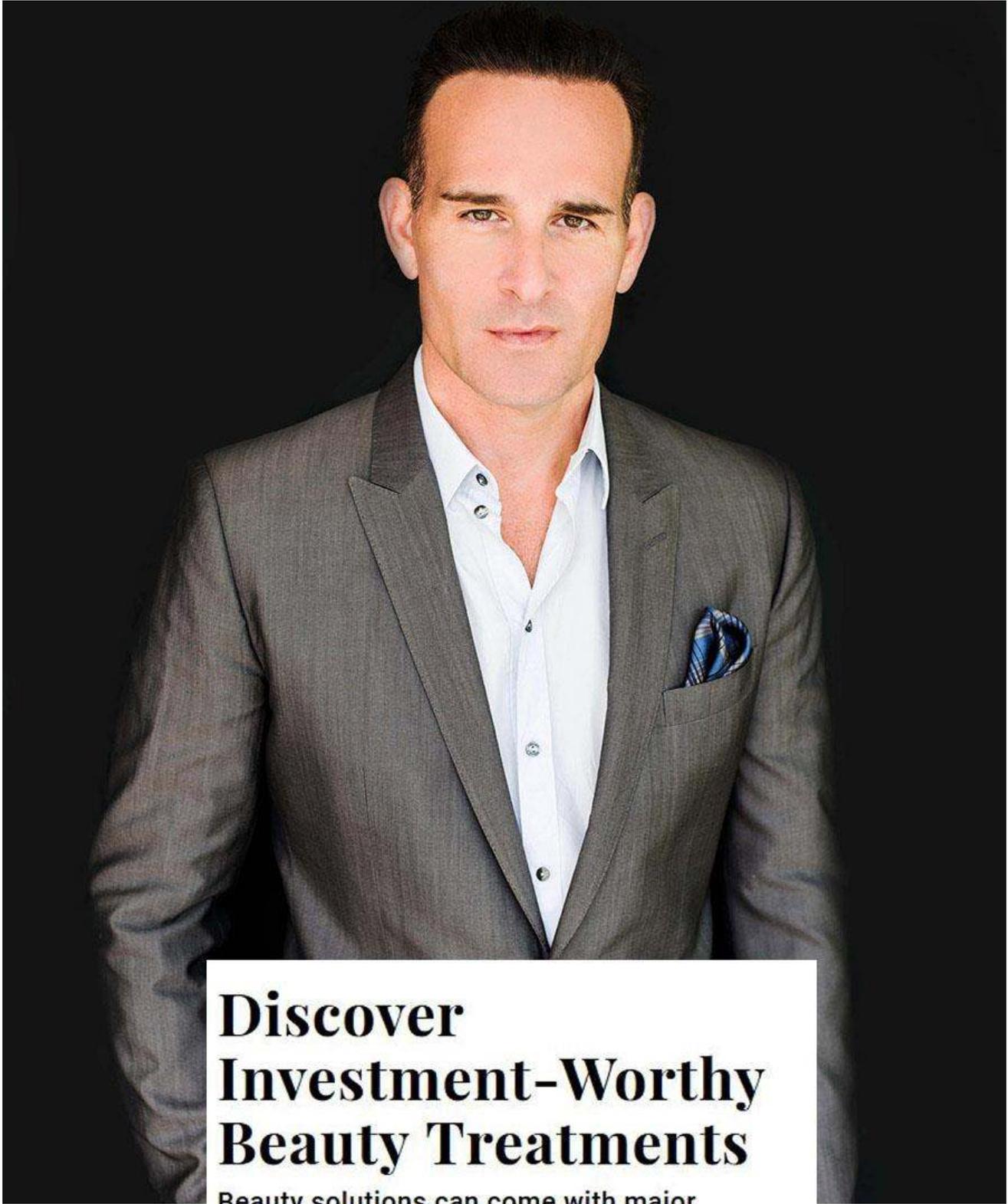


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Discover Investment-Worthy Beauty Treatments

Beauty solutions can come with major overhead, but these treatments' long-term effects make them a steal

Written by Lynn Schnurnberger

Sometimes, buying fashion is just smart financial planning; for example, with a 16% annual increase, Birkin bags have outperformed the market value of gold for the last 35 years. And while you'll never be able to resell your cosmetic procedure, some are better investments than others given the lifespan of their effects. Here, our experts weigh in on which treatments deserve a spot in your investment portfolio.

Porcelain Veneers

“A set of porcelain veneers is life changing,” says cosmetic dentist to the stars Dr. Marc Lowenberg. “There’s nothing more telling than an aging smile.” Teeth, which age at a faster rate than skin, start to appear darker in your 30s. To make matters worse, they also get shorter, causing laxity and even drooping in the lips. But the permanent solution, veneers, come at a cost—\$3,000 to \$4,000 per tooth, to be exact. (Although unless you’re Julia Roberts, you typically only need to cap 18 out of your 32 teeth—ten uppers and eight lowers.) So is \$54,000 worth it? “I’ve put veneers on over 10,000 patients,” Dr. Lowenberg says. “And not one of them has ever complained.

Botox

“Botox is such a familiar product that people tend to forget it’s preventative value,” says renowned New York dermatologist Dr. Robert Anolik. “Sure, there’s the reward of immediately diminishing crow’s feet or forehead wrinkles. But I’m seeing more and more patients in their 20s who don’t have any of those problems who are coming in as a pre-emptive strike.”

Dr. Anolik explains that the effects of Botox, which can block muscles from forming forehead lines and creases, are cumulative. “Early use can save patients from needing more time-consuming and costly procedures down the road,” he says. For example, depending on where you live, Botox injections will run about \$500 to \$1,200 once or twice a year, while more drastic later-in-life measures like Bolotero can cost \$4,000 a pop. Ablative lasers, meanwhile, can cost \$3,000 to \$6,000—not to mention 10 days of recovery time.

The numbers back seem to back it up, as does the science. In a 13-year study of a set of identical twins reported in *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, a twin who had been treated with Botox only twice during the study had forehead and frown lines and crows feet, while her sister, who received Botox religiously two to three times a year looked noticeably younger and wrinkle-free—even after the effects of the last injections had worn off.

Micro-blading

Piret Aava, an aesthetician catering to stars like Serena Williams and Malin Akerman, isn’t known as the “eyebrow doctor” for nothing. Aava’s refined, 90-minute micro-blading technique, in which she uses a small hand held tool (and numbing cream) to draw in individual semi-permanent “hairs” carefully matched to your skin tone, costs \$1,500 and lasts up to three years. (She also recommends annual \$500 touch-ups and the first one is free.) Aava’s natural looking brows aren’t only the perfect remedy to over-plucked brows—they’ll also save you buckets of money on pencils or waxing.



Before and after by “eyebrow doctor” Dr. Piret (photo courtesy of Dr. Piret)

Lasers and Micro-Needling

They may not be the most relaxing treatments, but Clear & Brilliant lasers and micro-needling, according to celebrity cosmetic dermatologist Dr. Paul Jarrod Frank, are the gold standard when it comes to luxury treatments (Frank also warns against over-the-top fads, like the \$4,000 “gold facial,” which he says is “temporary and short-acting.”) Specifically, he recommends his own Skin Fitness Membership at the PFRANKMD Skin Salon, which works like a gym membership, with various packages ranging from 4, 8 to 12 treatments at 20 to 40% discounts. “Wouldn’t you rather tidy up your house from time to time instead of having to overhaul it? It’s the same thing with skin care,” he says. “Not only will they brighten your skin now, they’ll negate the need for more aggressive treatments like Fraxel later on.”

Main image: Celebrity cosmetic dermatologist Dr. Paul Jarrod Frank (courtesy of Dr. Paul Jarrod Frank)