

New year is time for renewal

DISCOVERING BEAUTY



MARY ANNE TOCCALINO

We've made it through the holidays and now we've started a new year — the time we look for new ways to improve ourselves. We look for a fat-burning diet pill to lose weight, the best exercise equipment to tone our bodies and the best products to improve our skin and natural appearance.

After doing my own research during the past year, I've compiled a list of new and not-so-new best products for the skin.

This time of year, dry skin is a big complaint. To help skin in dry environmental conditions typical of Midwest winters, give Giovanna Anti-Age Serum a try. The clear gel immediately hydrates the skin without a greasy, heavy masked feeling. You may want to layer this product with other moisturizers for maximum benefit.

Another quality anti-wrinkle cream is Chanel's Lift Serum. The beauty of this product is that you will notice results within a few days. If you need to watch your budget, a more affordable product is L'Oréal's Pluristyle Revitalift Anti-Wrinkle Cream, which also tightens, moisturizes and smoothes skin.

We all know how important the eye area is and I have several suggestions about how to take care of it:

- **Kiehls Moisturizing Eye Balm** with vitamin E feels like lip balm rather than eye cream and works well under a concealer.

- **Chanel Firming Eye Cream** doesn't make a lot of outrageous claims but moistens the area without leaving eyes slippery or your vision blurred.

- **Collex-C Eye Contour Gel**, which triggered the Vitamin C craze, still makes the best of the best list. It smoothes and diminishes crow's feet while alleviating puffiness.

As for foundations, there are a few I really like to work with and my choices depend on skin condition and how much coverage is needed:

- **Estee Lauder Enlighten** feels as smooth as cream and seems to vanish into the skin on contact. Its only trace is a virtually "perfect" glow.
- **Min Pelle Foundation Stick** with SPF 8 is silky and quickly absorbed, which leaves a fresh (but lasting) non-powdery finish.

- **Elle dry powder foundation** strikes a perfect balance between dry and creamy, while balancing skin tones without bringing out blemishes.

Good eyeliner is always sought after. I judge eyeliner based on endurance and precision. Here are my picks:

- **Estee Lauder Automatic Pencils** for eyes stays put and are not harsh.
- **For long wearing color**, try **Chanel Precision Eye Definer**.

Now it's time to conquer women's most common makeup concern: What's the best mascara?

- **Maybelline Great Lash Mascara**, a permanent favorite, cranks up the volume for fat, luscious lashes with no clumps.

- **Prescriptives Lashes Gentle** produces lashes that look natural only richer and deeper.

- **L'Oréal mascara** products are my ultimate favorite. It lengthens and thickens in one formula without creating heavy spider lashes.

Blush should be barely blushing. The best products and colors for creating a soft effect are:

- **Cover Girl in Soft Sable**
- **Laura Mercier in Wild Bouquet**
- **NARS in South Beach**
- **Launcome in Cedar Rose**
- **Bobbi Brown Essentials in Sand**

Pink
To take care of those luscious lips, try a non-greasy balm with sunscreen such as:

- **Burt's Beeswax Lip Balm**
- **Laura Mercier Skincare Lip Silk**
- **Elizabeth Arden's Eight Hour Cream Lip Protectant Stick**

So start off your new year by taking care of yourself with some of the "best of the best" products.

If you have a question for Mary Anne, call her at (248) 203-9477. Toccalino is a professional makeup artist and skin care consultant operating at RED the Salon, 470 Old North Woodward, Suite 200 in Birmingham. The founder and owner of Toccalino Cosmetics, she studied at Joe Blasco's School of Cosmetics in Hollywood where her training included work in special effects for film and print.

Retailing women

Retail buying is shopping, analyzing and more



On the floor: Clothing buyer Maggie Rei, who grew up in Troy and currently lives in Ann Arbor, stands in Jacobson's Birmingham store beside apparel she bought for the retailer's Women's International Collections department.

Story by Nicole Stafford

For the third in a three-part series on women working in the retail industry, we talked with Maggie Rei, a buyer for Jacobson's Women's International Collections department.

Rei, 31, grew up in Troy and began working in the retail industry at age 16 at Saks Fifth Avenue. At the Troy store, she helped behind-the-scenes at fashion shows, fitting models, removing price tags from clothing and organizing accessories. She later became a sales associate at Saks and worked for the retailer over the course of eight years, including during college. Rei, who now lives in Ann Arbor, studied fine arts at Michigan State University.

Rei later worked at Neiman Marcus in Troy where she launched their RRL Ralph Lauren department in collaboration with a store buyer.

Today, she's developing a spin-off department of women's designer clothing for Jacobson's that targets baby boomers and older generation X shoppers. Designers from which she purchases include Missoni, Armani, Max Mara and Donna Karan Signature.

Q: Are most buyers women? Does your field feel like a female-dominated one?

R: I would say so. I would say there are more women. ... I don't know if it's women-dominated, but you definitely feel a presence of women. ... It's a great field for women, especially in the stores. ... It's very open to women

and you're encouraged to move ahead.

Q: What's different about men and women when it comes to walking into a store and buying clothing?

R: Men aren't quite as confident ... in terms of what looks good on them, in terms of what they need to add. Men need to be coaxed a little more into trying something new. Women shop a lot differently. They go after more unique merchandise that allows them to be independent. Men don't really want to stand out.

Q: When a woman goes shopping in your department, generally speaking what is she looking for?

R: It depends on the lifestyle of the client. It depends on the age. It depends on lots of things. But I think she wants a versatile wardrobe. She really wants to get what she pays for in terms of quality and in terms of how much she wears something, likes something, and can wear it with other things in her closet.

Q: Obviously, you buy women's clothing. But does gender affect what you put in a store in other ways?

R: I think men and women buy completely differently. Men only buy when they absolutely have to, maybe once a year. ... Women want things for different occasions. Women like to feel special and beautiful for particular occasions.

Q: What do women want in clothing today and do generalizations about women still affect women's fashion?

R: Women are increasingly getting busy with families and work and travel. ... Everything plays a part in the fashion industry. ... I feel that the parents of the baby boomers are shopping now. It's a change in lifestyle. Not as many women today have time to shop throughout the day and go to lunch with their friends. Maybe occasionally, but their schedules are so hectic. Clothing needs to reflect that, to be more versatile.

Q: Overall, how do you think the fashion industry is faring when it comes to giving women what they want?

R: I think they are doing a better job at listening. In earlier generations, fashion had more of a "this is what's in right now, this is what you should buy and this is how you should wear it." Now, I think designers are doing a great job of listening to how customers' lifestyles are changing. It's more of an interaction than in the past.

Q: Do you ever feel that you are affecting women's tastes and interests?

R: I hope to give customers a new perspective. I hope they come in and see things that they didn't expect to see.

Q: Do you ever have trouble with certain fashion trends in that you, as a woman, feel a particular one might not fare well with women?

R: Yeah, yeah, I don't want to buy something just because they say you

have to buy this. I want it to be something that makes sense on the floor.

Q: Women can do anything today, why work in the retail industry?

R: It's constantly changing. It's always new. ... Generally, I find that we like to be social (in the industry) so I'm able to build relationships with people that help with my job and are also friendships. ... And, there's a sense of responsibility, which is exciting for me. It's exciting for me to be responsible for a department that's in 22 stores.

Q: Aside from being more attuned to what women want to buy and wear, are there aspects of your job at which you think women excel?

R: I can speak for myself. I'm definitely analytical (in my job). ... I feel a lot of women are probably analytical in different aspects of their jobs.

Q: There's a perception that being a buyer is like being a shopper. Then there's the thought that women like to shop more than men. What do you think about that?

R: That's a small aspect of the job, but it definitely is an aspect. You definitely go 'shop a line.' But I love the whole industry.

Q: Would your department be different if a man were buying for it?

R: Oh, definitely, even if it was another woman. I think it's individual.

Retail, style and special store events are listed in this calendar. Please send information to: Malls & Mainstreets, c/o Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009. By fax, (248) 644-1314. E-mail, nstafford@oe.homecomm.net. Deadline for publication is two weeks in advance.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 21

MALL BOOK DRIVE
Oakland Mall in Troy collects books to donate to the Detroit Public Library and other Detroit metropolitan educational resources. For each book donation, the mall will make a cash donation to the donor's school of choice. Event runs through March 31. Donations will be accepted at mall's information desk on the lower level. For more information, call (248) 686-6000.

SEWELL'S SALE
Westland Shopping Center's winter sidewalk sale runs through today with more than 30 stores participating. For details, call (734) 425-5001.

TOY SHOW
Plymouth's Collectible Toy Show returns to the Plymouth Cultural Center, 525 Farmer Street. The show includes new, used, antique and collectible toys of all kinds, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Admission is \$5. Kids under age 10 enter free. For more information, call (734) 456-2110.

ADDED ATTRACTIONS

MONDAY, JANUARY 22

TRUNK SHOW
Badgley Mischka's spring 2001 special order trunk show collection visits Saks Fifth Avenue, the Somerset Collection in Troy through Jan. 23 with informal modeling slated 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Designer Salon, second floor. For more information, call (248) 614-3393.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 25

FASHION SHOW
Saks Fifth Avenue, the Somerset Collection in Troy, presents Ellen Tracy's spring collection at a breakfast fashion show to benefit the Lighthouse Path Magic & Mayhem event, 9:30 a.m. breakfast, 10 a.m. show. Tickets are \$15 and \$25. Designer Bridge Sportswear, second floor. To purchase tickets, call (248) 614-3317.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 28

MARKS AT THE MALL

Magician Gordon Ross performs and tells a tale for children at the Livonia Mall at 7 Mile and Middlebelt roads, 2 p.m. For more information, call (248) 476-1160.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 30

RETAIL BENEFIT
Art Van Furniture stores in Novi, Royal Oak, Dearborn, Taylor, Shelby Township and Southfield host a benefit to raise money for the Capuchin Soup Kitchen. Local celebrities dish soup to contributing guests, and non-perishable food donations will be accepted, 5-8 p.m. Call the local Art Van Furniture store near you.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6

CHARITY FASHION SHOW
The Women of Westland present Sweetheart Charity Fashion Show featuring merchandise from Hudson's, Nicole's Style Revival, The Bottom Drawer and Leona's Lane at the Hellenic Center, 36376 Joy Road in Westland, to benefit several local charities. Tickets are \$15 in advance and \$20 at the door. Event includes hors d'oeuvres, wine, dessert, prizes and silent auction, 7:30 p.m. Call (734) 326-7222.