

Centre of excellence

Harley Street has long been revered for its world-class healthcare, but it is its wellness services now on offer that Middle Eastern clients are tapping into

By Sophia Charalambous



Elixir Clinic, intravenous therapy



ABOVE: Elixir Clinic, intravenous therapy
BELOW: Epilium & Skin



“People from the Middle East are becoming more aware of their health and wellness, and are looking for new treatments that will enhance their wellbeing”

The landscape of healthcare in Marylebone is changing. Surgical cosmetic procedures were once the principle reason to visit Harley Street, but with the beauty and wellness industry tipped to be the next trillion pound one, now other services are starting to take centre stage.

The Elixir Clinic, which offers intravenous drips, has seen a continuous growth in business figures, with a growth of 83 per cent since 2016, and is administering more than 1,000 drips per month. Intravenous drips deliver liquid substances, vitamins and minerals, directly into the vein.

The Elixir Clinic, established as market leader in the UK and the Middle East, offers VitaDrip infusions and booster shots alongside other forms of therapy, and offers a diagnostic clinic.

With clinics in Marylebone and Harrods, it is the go-to service for Middle Eastern travellers and London residents.

Co-founder Mahi Aramideh says that half of all the clients at both Harrods and the Marylebone clinic are Middle Eastern.

She says: “People from the Middle East are becoming more aware of their health and wellness, and are looking for new

treatments or services that will allow them to enhance their wellbeing.

“The Elixir Clinic expanded operations by entering the UAE market in 2015 and, since then, we have spent time educating people about IV vitamin therapy, the benefits, and the importance of sustaining long-term wellbeing through natural, safe, effective and essential treatments, such as our VitaDrip infusions.”

Intravenous therapy has gained popularity because nutrients directly enter the blood stream and are 100 per cent absorbed, unlike oral supplements that can only reach around 10 to 30 per cent.

According to Mahi, the most popular drip for Middle Eastern clients from the VitaDrip range is the VIP Elixir, which costs £407 for 45 minutes and contains 12 ingredients including a high dose of vitamin C and glutathione for radiance. Harrods provides a VIP Exclusive VitaDrip for £700.

“When we opened clinics in the UAE, our Middle Eastern clients from London were thrilled to have Elixir closer to home,” Mahi says.

“We see clients from Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, and even our London-based clients who visit the UAE often.

“We also aim to create convenience for our clients; they can use their packages in any of our branches: Abu Dhabi, Dubai or London. The Elixir Clinic is now available for franchising opportunities, and we are working on expanding to other regions in the Middle East.”

It is not just intravenous drips that are growing in popularity. French medical beauty clinic, Epilium & Skin, identifies that 20 per cent of its clients hail from the Middle East.

Clinic director Valentine Fellous says that its offering of non-surgical treatments is proving to be the most popular with visitors.

“They usually do face injections as they like the way our French doctors (Dr Hayot, Dr Lemierre and Dr Dumas) keep a natural look,” Valentine says.

“These surgeons have many years of experience in their surgical or injections practices.”

Dr Hayot created his technique, named “Micro-Injections”, himself, which involves several mini-injections just underneath the skin, performed using a thin needle.

His process involves injecting small amounts of fat directly into the treated area, without blocking muscle activity, like in the most common use of the injections.

Other treatments that prove to be popular include weight loss and detox programmes.

Valentine says: “In our Epilium & Skin clinic, we offer these women a tailored detox skin and body programme with our trained nutritionist and nurses for weight loss and health condition improvement.

“Our nutritionist Ionna can tailor a detox menu combined with Coolsculpting (fat freezing) treatment. We also do liposuction surgery.

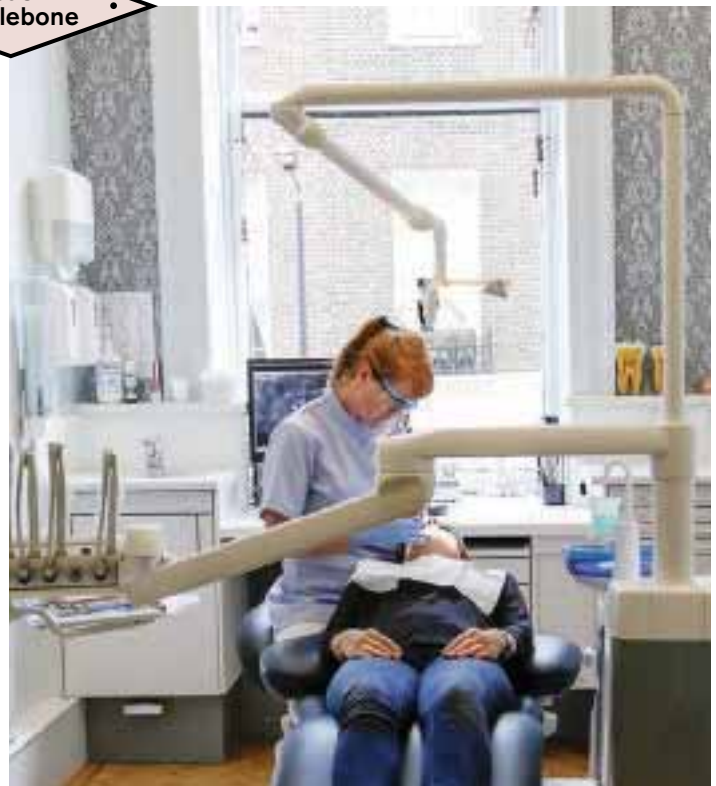
“In terms of skin condition, we propose a skin diagnostic, which can be combined with skin rejuvenation (Skinbooster, PRP, hydra facial or deep facial cleansing) and detox menus. This association is optimal to get a radiant, hydrated and plump skin.

“The reason also the women come to London to get their treatments is that the Middle East countries are warm, exposing them to the sun. Most facial treatments can’t be done under sun exposure.”

While you might not think that people would travel abroad for teeth, dental implant specialists Dawood and Tanner has evidence to suggest otherwise.

Andrew Dawood has been involved in the research and development of specialist implant manufacture, and 3D imaging and 3D printing to make dental implant procedure more efficient and less invasive for the past 25 years.

Dr Dawood has treated thousands of patients and has built up a strong reputation internationally, with many patients flying over from Saudi Arabia and the UAE for dental treatment.



ABOVE: Dental specialist Dawood and Tanner
BELOW: Susan Tanner and Andrew Dawood



“It is very satisfying to help people who’ve not been able to get help, and we try and do it without compromise, which I think we do”



Cornelius O'Shaughnessy of Bodhimaya



“Our Middle Eastern clients appreciate the unparalleled level of support we offer, and also our in-depth, science-backed and detailed approach to wellbeing”

He says: “For a long time, we’ve set ourselves up so that we have every possible specialist so we can manage every aspect of the process ourselves.

“We have very regular patients, who we see from the UK, but over the summer season, we see most people from abroad. This is because people don’t want to be in England in the winter, but equally they don’t want to be in their country in 50 degree heat.

“If you’ve come from overseas, the most common treatment is something that is a full mouth, complex restorative treatment, such as implant dentistry – services that they are unable to access in their home country.

“We’ve set ourselves up so that we are fast, we can do the treatment in a week when we have to – but it’s nice to have more time to get really excellent results, and there are people who come back for general maintenance. But we write to their home dentist to inform them of the work that’s been done, so they can carry on with regular check-ups.

“Actually, over the summer, our regular patients are either away or planning for their holidays, so the clinic is full of overseas patients for a couple of months – everywhere from Russia, the Middle East, Nigeria, Australia, South America.

“It is very satisfying to help people who’ve not been able to get help, and we try and do it without compromise, which I think we do.”

Bodhimaya, which organises luxury wellness retreats and personalised nutritional therapy, has seen a rise in clients from particular Asian countries, eager to learn about the holistic approach.

Founder Cornelius O’Shaughnessy says: “Our Middle Eastern clients appreciate the unparalleled level of support we offer, and also our in-depth, science-backed and detailed

approach to wellbeing.

“Our BodhiGen biomarker analysis and also our private retreats are very popular with our Middle Eastern clients.”

BodhiGen, from £2,795, uses genetic data and various other markers to determine exactly the type of diet, supplement regime and lifestyle someone should have, and Cornelius reveals that the treatment is the most advanced of its kind.

When it comes to the private retreats, Cornelius says: “We organise a retreat at a location of their choice with several wellness experts, and create a personalised retreat experience for them and their guests.

“We have locations all over the world; from private islands in the Maldives, French chateaux or safaris through to yacht retreats in Antarctica, and create some very special experiences.”

celebrated Christmas, Ramadan, Chinese New Year, Nairuz, Diwali, Her Majesty's 90th birthday at Windsor, the Easter banquet at Mansion House, the Trooping the Colours and Royal Ascot. I feel that every day there is something to celebrate.

What do you like about Mayfair?

The fact that it is very central. You can walk to everywhere. The cosmopolitan feeling. You walk down the street and you hear at least five languages being spoken at once. You feel you are walking the corridors of the United Nations. And, of course, receiving *Mayfair Times*.

Do you have any anecdotes about your time in Mayfair?

Well during my training with one of the top florists, I was asked to work with the team to do the flowers at 5 Hertford Street private members' club. Of course, I went incognito. Dressed in my black uniform and my apron, I started at 5:15 in the morning, conditioning the flowers and washing bases. I finished work around 11:30 and made my way out through the main entrance. The gentleman at the door was nice enough to open the door for me and said goodbye. It happened that I was invited for lunch at 5 Hertford Street on the same day. So I walked in at 12:30, completely transformed but I did notice the gentleman at the door staring at me with a puzzled look on his face... I think he recognised me!

What do you do for fun?

I love dancing, taking long walks in the park with Betsy my golden retriever and, of course, working with flowers.

What are your favourite restaurants, shops, clubs, art galleries in Mayfair?

Mayfair is known for its excellent restaurants. My favourites are Oswald's, Isabel, George, Jamavar, Annabel's, Umu, Scott's and the Mount Street deli – and the list can go on.

My favourite shop is Roksanda and, as for art galleries, Mayfair has plenty. To name a few of my favourites – Phillips, Simon Lee Gallery, Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac and Hauser & Wirth.

What do you think is your biggest contribution to the Egyptian community since living here?

I have tried my best to highlight Egyptian heritage and culture through organising a wide range of events, ranging from book launches to fashion shows, concerts, art shows, lectures and debates. I wanted



to make the Egyptian community feel proud of being Egyptian and to see how amazing and creative the young generation is. Also, I wanted to give a platform for successful Egyptians to have a place where they can network and give them a sense of belonging.

What have been your proudest achievements?

The last event I organised, Made in Egypt, in the Egyptian Hall of Mansion House, where we celebrated Egypt's vibrant contemporary designers. More than 300 of London's elite met the designers to hear their stories and see up close the remarkable items on display representing fashion, home furnishings and accessories, handbags, linens and jewellery.

What ambitions would you still like to fulfil?

After I read an article that florists are the happiest people, I decided to study to become a florist. I took an course in the business of floristry, obtained my diploma and started work as an apprentice. This was completely different from my life as an ambassador's wife. I had to start my day at 5am to go to the flower market, as most of the work is done in the early hours of the morning. Florists have to be discreet, hence most florists wear black. They have to go unnoticed to highlight their floral creations. My wish in the future is to make my passion for flowers my profession.