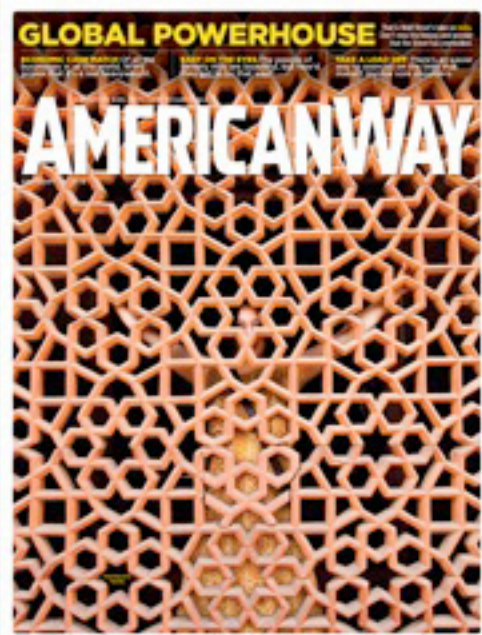


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Vacationing for a New You

by Ethan Rouen



These days, if you're traveling to [Beverly Hills](#), there's a good chance that shopping will take a backseat to beauty. Well, maybe shotgun. Rodeo Drive can't help but beckon.

Beverly Hills has long been known as one of the greatest shopping destinations in the world. But along with their Gucci bags, Prada loafers, and Bentley coupes, many visitors have been buying reshaped noses, larger breasts, and firmer tummies.

The mecca of beauty and all that is superficial has grown in the last several decades to become ground zero for the cosmetic-surgery industry. The famous 90210 zip code is attracting not only the glitterati of [Tinseltown](#) but also regular Joes and Janes who want to nix their double chins and international visitors looking for just the right amount of junk in their trunks.

"There is a high degree of excellence and superspecialization in all areas of appearance improvement," says Robert Kotler, MD, a facial-surgery specialist who has written extensively on the subject and who was one of the stars of the television show *Dr. 90210*. "They come to Beverly Hills because there are lots of good practitioners, and you know they must be good because this is Hollywood. The whole world sees their work every day."

Finding someone in [Los Angeles](#) who has had some touch-up work done to improve his or her body is easy, but the Beverly Hills cosmetic-surgery industry depends heavily on patients coming from around the world, especially with the economic downturn. Improved communication and medical technology have allowed doctors to cater to these tourists, providing a relaxing surgery experience with recovery times that won't use up their vacation days.

"Thank God for the Internet," says Stuart Linder, MD, who works across the street from Kotler and who is one of the highest-regarded revision breast surgeons in the world. "We do virtual consultations. A woman in [London](#) sees me on [BBC](#), and we can start working with her the next day."

On Linder's website, [www.drlinder.com](#), an animated video shows spidery legs stretching across a map of the world, highlighting just how far people have traveled to see him. He has performed surgery on patients from 40 states and 23 countries; Kotler cites similar statistics.

According to the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, there are 39 plastic surgeons and 31 dermatologists in Beverly Hills, which has a population of about 34,000.

Those tallies don't include the dozens of businesses that have sprouted up to support patients. On the block of North Bedford Drive where Kotler and Linder have their offices, there are 37 surgeons, 11 cosmetic dentists, five dermatologists, four beauty salons — which use makeup to help conceal post-surgery bruising — and a nail salon.

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