

SALON OF THE MONTH

In Your Own Skin

1825 Colonial Medical Court
Virginia Beach, VA 23454
757.962.3655
InYourOwnSkin.com

"Healthy skin is beautiful skin," says Saphonia Gee, esthetic educator and co-owner of In Your Own Skin. "But keeping it healthy can be very difficult." That's why IYOS (as the sumptuous center is also known) addresses everything from recovery care and a hyperbaric oxygen chamber to waxing, special-needs facials, makeup services and massages. Private changing rooms and a separate entrance further comfort VIP and postsurgery clients.

To ensure that clients have every look-good resource available, Gee and co-owner Kim Thumel work directly with plastic surgeons and dermatologists. "Our approach is a holistic one where not only are the skin type and condition a concern, but also lifestyle, health, nutrition, exercise program and family history."

Not surprisingly, this dedication has won the pair numerous accolades, most recently skincare giant Repêchage's coveted Spa de Beauté of the Year award. The honor, presented to Gee and Thumel this past August during the 2007 International Congress for Salon & Spa Professionals, recognizes an establishment that embodies "the values of esthetic excellence." "I was so overwhelmed with happiness knowing that our peers really appreciated what we've developed here," says Gee of winning the competition, which was judged by none other than *Launchpad*. Adds Thumel, "After all of our hard work, winning the award felt like a way of sharing our accomplishments with the industry."

Opened in November 2005, IYOS boasts an impeccably trained staff of master estheticians and a calm, pristine environment that both owners and employees run with clockwork precision. Arrivals are staggered every 15 minutes, ensuring quietude and privacy. "Clients comment that from the minute they walk through the door, they feel like they're somewhere else," says Thumel, adding, "which is exactly our plan."

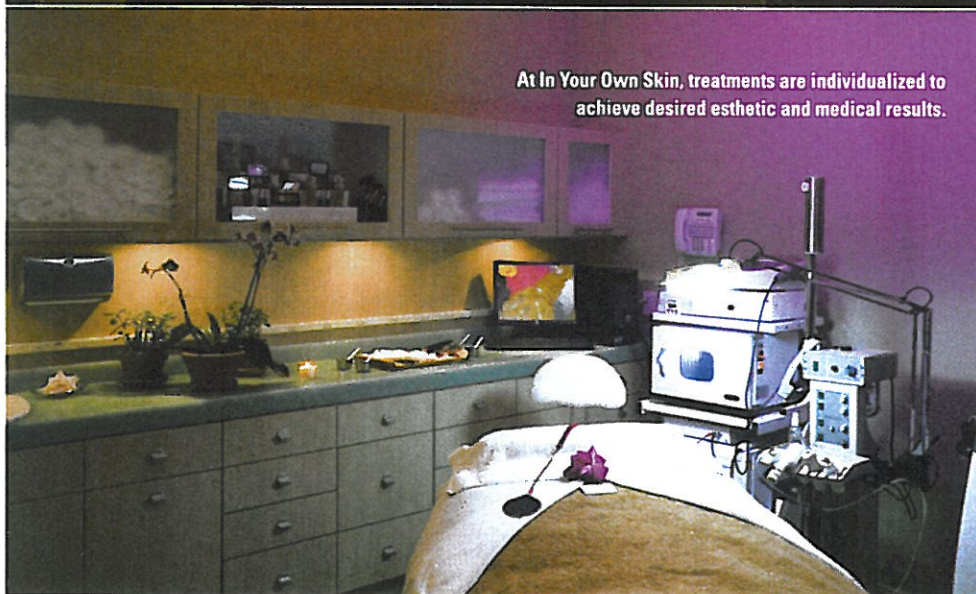
The pair acknowledges they've built a solid business. "We really are our best



Saphonia Gee and Kim Thumel, owners of In Your Own Skin



The Venetian bath is just one of the many "retreats" at In Your Own Skin.



At In Your Own Skin, treatments are individualized to achieve desired esthetic and medical results.

SALON OF THE MONTH

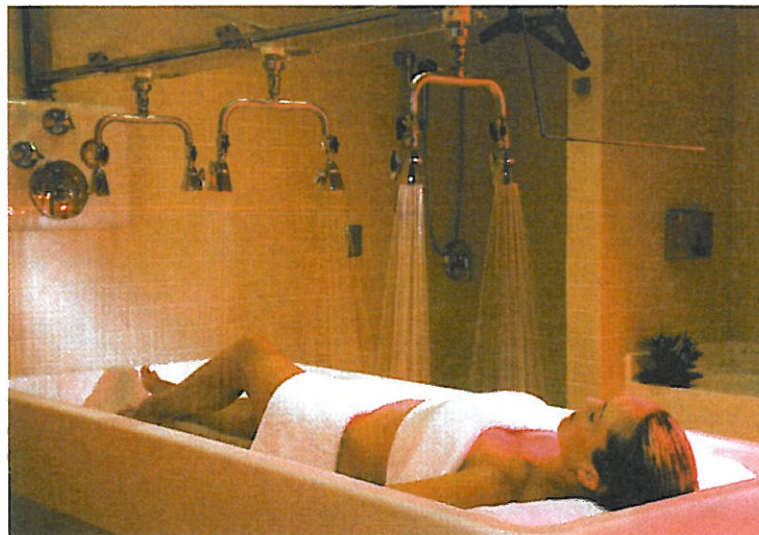


Clients are booked 15 minutes apart to create a one-on-one experience from the moment they walk through the door.

advertisement. The word of mouth and referrals these clients generate are priceless," says Thumel.

And just *who* are these clients? "Who aren't they?" says Gee with a laugh. "Yesterday we saw everyone from a 13-year-old girl to a 30-year-old man to a 70-year-old woman. About 30% of our clientele is male. And we have many surgery recovery patients. No matter who the clients are, we want them to feel that they are our only client."

For Gee and Thumel, however, esthetics goes beyond client care and skin treatments. The two recently crafted and lobbied for House Bill 2510, a two-tiered license for estheticians in Virginia. "We felt like the progress and advanced technology of the equipment and products in the industry demanded a monitored level of education and knowledge. The process was tiring, educational, fulfilling and definitely worth it," says Thumel. "We're proud that we've been able to have such an impact, not only on our clients at IYOS, but also on the entire profession. It's an honor!" One from which the entire industry can certainly benefit.
— *Stephanie Pedersen*



Raindrop therapies customized to each client's needs are offered by this luxe Virginia Beach sanctuary.