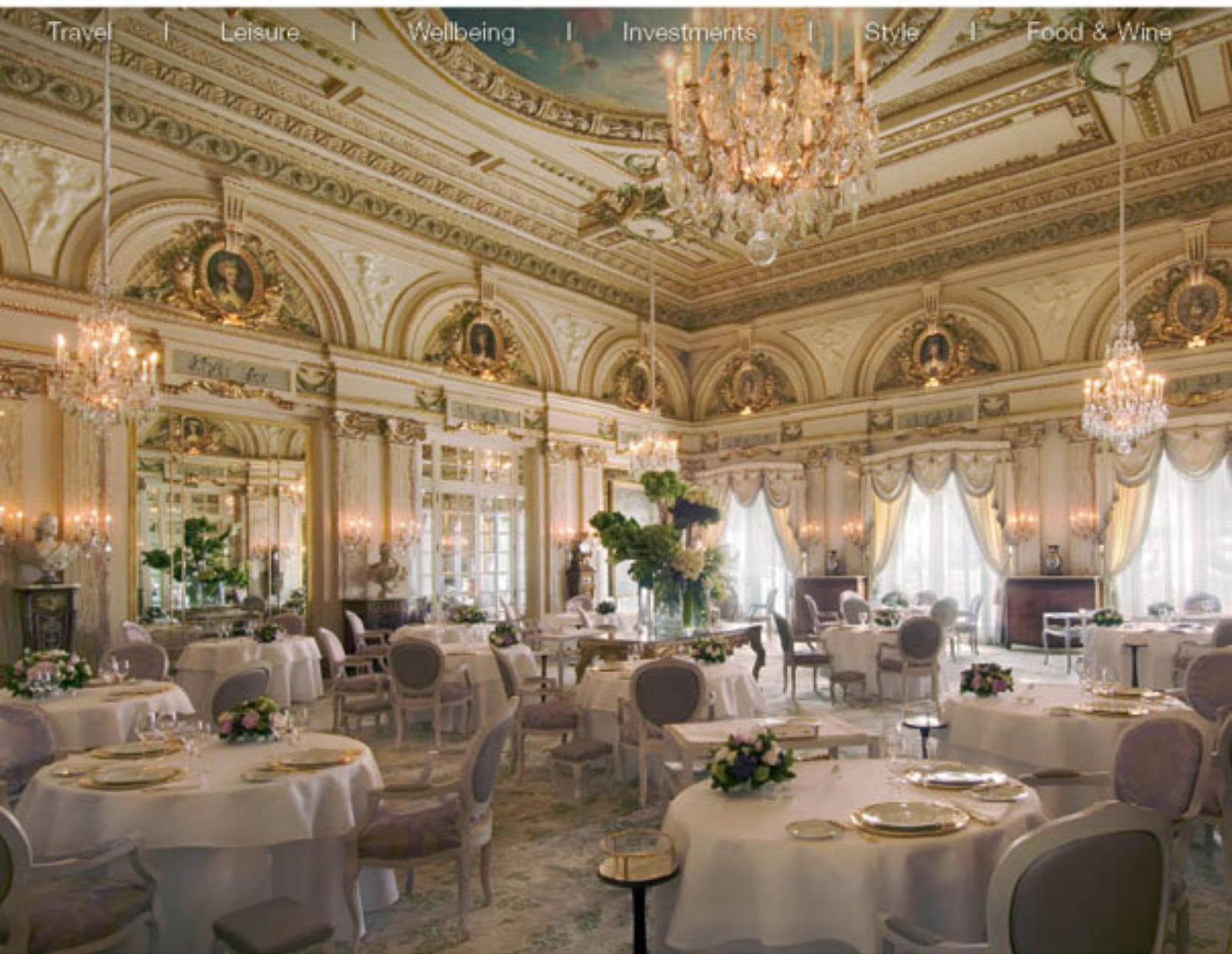


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THE BENEFITS OF RHINOPLASTY

Changing the way your nose looks can change your outlook on life. Shonagh Walker interviews Sarah Burgess about her newfound confidence.

You've only got one nose. Should you be unhappy with it, thanks to advanced surgical techniques, you can easily change the way it looks. It is important to make sure that you seek out a highly qualified, reputable surgeon who will deliver both a great functional and aesthetic result.

The ideal is a specialist who has extensive training in both cosmetic and ear, nose and throat surgical procedures.

The real deal

Unhappy with her nose, reader Sarah Burgess found herself in the capable hands of Bondi-based Dr William Mooney, a global leader and specialist in rhinoplasty techniques.

"I was self conscious of my nose, and never let people take a photo or look at me from a profile angle," she reveals.

Sarah's pre-surgery care included two meetings with Dr Mooney, where photos were taken and digitally altered to give a picture of what her finished nose would look like.

Dr Mooney explained to Sarah that best results would be seen six months to a year after surgery, once swelling had gone down completely.

He also performed a nasal function test, which measured Sarah's nasal breathing capacity, and used a scope to look inside her nostrils to determine if the septum was deviated and how badly.

"I then met with Dr. Mooney's practice manager, Brooke Soto, who gave me an

overview of my pre- and post-surgery care, and a 'goody bag' of natural treatments and pain relief, including arnica to help with swelling, vitamin B to boost immunity, two nasal sprays to use post-surgery, antibiotic ointment for cleaning the nose, scar healing gel, oral antibiotics to prevent infection, pain relief and other herbal anti-inflammatories."

A final pre-surgery appointment was scheduled with Dr Mooney to alleviate any of Sarah's concerns.

"I had been given the digitally altered images on a USB to study at home. During this follow up appointment we discussed the shape of my new nose again and Dr Mooney assured me it would be perfect."

The procedure

Sarah arrived at the hospital bright and early on surgery day and was soon whisked into theatre.

Open-structure rhinoplasty begins with a small incision across the skin between the nostrils.

"Typically, the procedure then involves reshaping the bone and cartilage skeleton of the nose. A dorsal hump can be removed, a nose straightened, a tip refined. Then we turn our attention to internal work to address functional issues. Frequently, complex telescopic sinus surgery is used to ensure ideal results," Dr Mooney explains.

Once the procedure is complete, the incision is closed using fine stitches.

There may initially be a tiny scar, but in most cases this becomes almost invisible as the nose heals.

Pain factor

"Surprisingly, rhinoplasty is not a terribly painful procedure," says Dr Mooney. "Most of my patients go home with Panadeine for pain relief only. The anaesthetic used today works to block pain for 24 hours or more, so by the time this wears off, the greater intensity of pain will have subsided."

"Straight after surgery, we started icing my eyes to reduce swelling as much as possible," says Sarah. "After surgery, while in recovery, I got quite a bad nose bleed. This continued during my overnight stay yet had subsided by morning. Sucking on ice helped reduce the bleeding. Aside from that, it was a comfortable stay with very little pain."

Down time

Most patients can generally return to work within two weeks, but bruising and swelling should be expected initially after surgery.

For Sarah, this meant vigilant care for her nose and plenty of icing of the area to reduce swelling.

"At my week two follow up appointment I had my stitches out," she says. "I had to start taping my nose before I went to bed to help drop the tip, as it was still quite swollen, but aside from that, things were looking good."

"In week three, I had a facial at Face

Plus Medispa, included as part of the procedure, and it worked wonders. I was then given instructions to massage areas that were still swollen to release blood and reduce cartilage swelling. This was to be done three times a day and it was a bit uncomfortable."

"I was feeling slightly tired and nauseated from time to time, but other than that I was feeling back to normal.

The best part was that no one has directly asked or noticed any change apart from close family and friends."

Eight weeks after the procedure, Sarah felt like a completely different person.

"I had some steroid injections in the nose to help reduce swelling, but on the whole, I was looking and feeling great! I had landed a new job and was brimming with renewed confidence.

"Confidence wise, I feel amazing.

I don't have to worry about facing someone at the wrong angle. I can keep eye contact when talking to people and not wonder if they're looking at my nose, if they think I have a big nose or if they are questioning when I broke it. Socially, I feel more confident and assertive. I would honestly say it is the best decision I have ever made."

Cost: Expect to pay between \$10,000 and \$12,000, including surgical, hospital, theatre and anaesthetist costs. If a procedure involving functional work is performed, you may even be eligible for a Medicare rebate.

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