

Vancouver's Newest Facial Bar Combines High Tech Treatments, Vitamin Shots and Wrinkle Relaxing Injections

By Sarah Bancroft Date May 1, 2019

Come inside Fig, where every aspect has been considered from the stylish staff uniforms to the Japanese barber chairs you recline in that are surrounded by velvet curtains.

The first thing you notice when you walk into **Fig** is the stylish staff uniform: a green botanical-print pyjama straight off an **Olivia von Halle** runway. When you learn that founder Jessica Walsh was once the legendary British fashion stylist Isabella Blow's assistant, it makes sense. Walsh found the 19th century print at London's Royal Albert Museum and had the uniforms made by a South African menswear designer on recommendation from a former colleague at British *Vogue*. As you do. It's this type of design-led customization, attention to detail, and relentless sourcing that epitomizes Fig, which bills itself as the world's first clean, doctor-led facial- and injections-

bar. The business' genesis story is interesting too. Walsh, who moved to Vancouver with her family five years ago, felt uprooted from her London community and was feeling burned out and depleted after having her third baby in four years. Her epiphany came when she decided to try the West coast wellness approach and walked into a naturopathic office as a last resort. She was an instant convert to the efficiency of vitamin injections (such as the B12 "stingers" now offered at Fig, where several naturopaths are on staff) not to mention overjoyed that her skin recovered. But as for facials, there was no option that offered high-tech, highly-efficient results for this busy mom. So she'd start one, she thought.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANICK VIOLETTE

Walsh fought hard and long for the perfect “high street” location for convenience and visibility (“there’s no shame in looking after your skin” she says) in a quirky former ice cream shop on busy Fourth Avenue. She wanted the design to

be sexy and exciting, like walking into a hot new restaurant, achieved via low lighting, an amazing sound system playing energising music, a green marble bar, and tactile finishes like leather and velvet. Even the ceiling is clad in a curvaceous, custom green perforated metal. As for the name, figs are technically an internal flower, an apt analogy for skincare that is taking an inside-out approach. There's also a womb-like all-pink bathroom.

Most important for this multi-tasking mom was taking away all the friction of the process: no endless spa menu or lifeless waiting room, a self check-in, and definitely no product pushing. There are other innovations, too. The facials take place in one of three ultra-luxe Japanese barber's chairs surrounded by floor-to-ceiling velvet curtains. The entry-level LED & Oxygen facial (\$75) comes with headphones that play a 20-minute body scan meditation from local expert Michele Kambolis while 95% pure oxygen blows onto your face. The treatment ends as all the facials do, with LED light therapy, red for collagen boosting and blue for balancing bacteria for the skin microbiome, followed by an invigorating facial massage using Sea Flora's CBD massage oil, SPF and lip balm. Then it's straight out the door (there is a no-tipping policy) or over to peruse the hand-

selected beauty (Li Organics, LXMI) and wellness products (Wylde One, LivOn Labs) many of which are exclusive in Canada, such as **Corpus** natural deodorant. Other facials include diamond-tip microdermabrasion and cutting edge micro-current technology that “re-educates” the facial muscles and lifts skin. All this in a friendly environment (scented by **Vitruvi**) where you might be offered a skin-boosting tea, a collaboration with Vancouver’s **Woash**, or a skin tonic shot from organic restaurant **Kokomo**. The music will be switched up to keep things fresh, though we couldn’t help but notice that the playlist on the day we visited included Alphaville’s “Forever Young.”

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