



TAKE NOTE :: Anjana grilled the Asian beauty world's leading experts

EXPERTLY DONE

You've loved her since the birth of Asiana. Now our beauty editor **Anjana Gosai** gives you the ultimate New Year's gift – the world's first Asian dressing table book

Anjana Gosai, Asiana's resident beauty editor knew that a Q&A page in the magazine would be popular. But the former model had no idea that she would be inundated with so many letters and emails, her Blackberry would literally buzz away through the night.

From pigmentation problems to hair removal concerns, Anjana received hundreds of queries every week from women of all ages seeking expert advice.

Drawing on her own expertise and a contacts book of hair and beauty experts collated over eight years of working in beauty journalism, Anjana diligently began replying to each query.

But with an ever-bulging post bag and crammed inbox, she realised that taking the time to print every single one in Asiana was going to be impossible and a long term solution was needed.

'I knew right away that I needed to create a resource where Asian women

could find the answers to their beauty dilemmas and that's how the idea for The Ultimate Guide To Beauty came about,' says Anjana.

'I knew from my own experience that Asian women were not being catered for by conventional guides out there.

'Western guides have a caucasian reader in mind, but we have very specific needs – our hair is prone to frizz and our skin tone is more likely to suffer from pigmentation problems, for example.

'While in South Asia, the books are rooted in very traditional beauty principles. There is plenty on henna and herbal remedies, but they do not give women practical tips on how to choose a foundation to suit their skin tone or how to remove unwanted hair correctly.'

Anjana started planning the first ever comprehensive guide for today's Asian woman combining traditional principles, trade secrets and modern tips.

'The idea was to create a book for your

dressing table that would be nice to look at, easy-to-follow and unpretentious. I wanted to make sure that a beauty virgin could pick up the book and learn – from the must-have make-up tools every girl should own to how to apply blusher. Even experienced Asian women will find something here too.'

After securing a deal with a Dubai-based publishing house, Anjana decided to shoot the book in Mumbai, where she'd made plenty of friends after spending a year modelling in the city in 2002.

'Mumbai is at the centre of the beauty industry as far as Asian women are concerned. In the city there are so many talented people who take such pride in their work. Some of the most innovative fashion designers, make-up artists, photographers and experts are based there, and I just had to tap into that buzz.'

Based on the queries made by Asiana readers, she knew what areas the book needed to cover, and set about getting the best experts on board.

'A lot of readers asked about bridal beauty advice and skin care problems while many younger girls wanted to know how to get the Bollywood look.'

Anjana brought in leading Indian make up gurus such as Kapil Bhalla, (Bipasha Basu's artist-of-choice), Mickey Contractor

(MAC India's director of make-up artistry) and the man who created career defining looks for a host of actresses including Madhuri Dixit in Dil To Pagal Hai, Aishwarya Rai in Taal and Kajol in Kuch Kuch Hota Hai) and Cory Wallia, India's king of beauty ad campaigns.

'Directing such true masters of the craft was a bit intimidating – but despite working on so many amazing campaigns and blockbuster films, this was the first time they'd been part of a book dedicated to beauty, so they were really into it.'

Next mission – rope in India's leading models: 'I went for the models who would photograph well, in a variety of skin tones. I found ones that were perfect for the ramp, didn't necessarily have skin that stood up to the scrutiny of close-up beauty shoot.'

'I brought in well known faces such as Dippanita Sharma, Sheetal Mallar, Vidisha Pavate and Tinu Verghese, plus stars of the future like Tania Vakil and Yasmin Ponnappa, although choosing a cover girl was a real dilemma. I was tempted to go for a Bollywood actress, but opted for the universally beautiful Ujjwala Raut (see interview on pg 200).'

With one of India's most highly rated young photographers Manoj Jadhav joining the team, the majority of shooting for the book took place over a gruelling few weeks in Mumbai.

'It was a hectic fortnight,' says Anjana. 'We were shooting in the rainy season and had to cope with powercuts, flash floods and a few tears and tantrums too, but I couldn't have been happier with the final shots.'

In addition to stunning

shoots and illustrations demonstrating easy-to-follow looks, the book is also crammed with tips on how to achieve 'inner beauty'.

'As part of my research I travelled to Rishikesh in the Himalayas and learned about the ins and outs of yoga and meditation at the renowned Ananda Spa and various ashrams. I also spent time in

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Kerala to take lessons in Ayurvedic therapy from some of their most prestigious doctors.

'While I was travelling through India, I read an inspirational book; The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari by Robin Sharma. I got in touch with Robin, a life coach who specialises in advising

people on work/life balance and asked if he would share some tips for my book.'

Anjana also brought together Indian, Pakistani and British experts such as dermatologists from the Kaya Skin Clinic, Bollywood hair stylist Adhuna Bhabhani-Akhtar as well as a pick of the best British Asian specialists such as Ash Kumar, Dar, Nina Haider, Ruby Hammer, Bharti Vyas and Shavata Singh.

'I've been fortunate enough to bring in experts such as trichologist Phillip Kingsley and the top celebrity pedicurist Bastien Gonzalez who have contributed to the book because they believe in it.'

So after three years of exhaustive research, writing, travelling and photo shoots, The Ultimate Guide to Beauty is finally out and available online ahead of a general UK release next Spring.

But Anjana's blackberry is still buzzing away with your emails.

'I'm still bombarded with letters every day, only now a few are from girls who've bought the book and want me to know how helpful it's been for their beauty regime. It's a lovely feeling and makes all the hard work worthwhile.'

• **The Ultimate Guide to Beauty, £19.95 (Glentree Publishing) is available from amazon.co.uk and leading bookshops now.**

Check out **asianamag.com** for a **special offer price.**

For further details, log onto **anjanagosai.com**



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