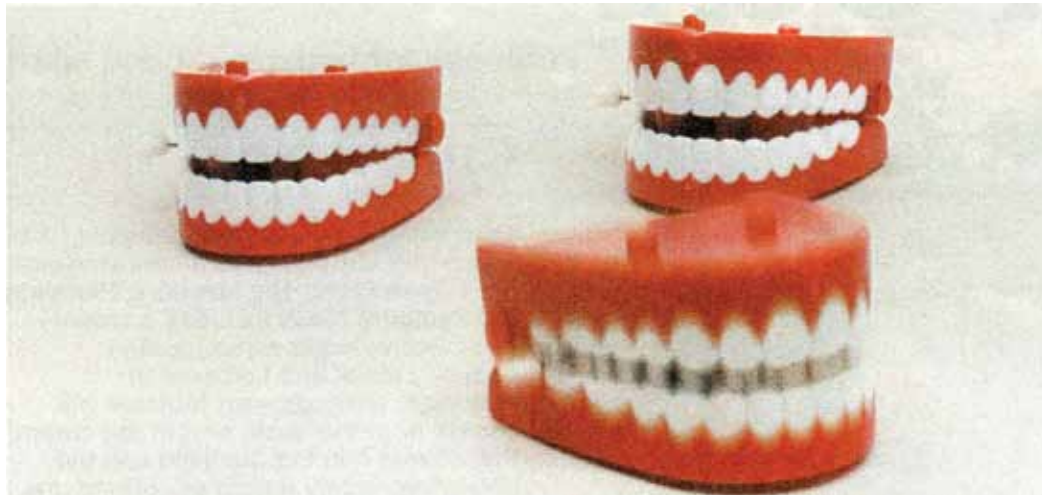


Word of mouth

Options abound in New York for getting your teeth extra pearly. By **Kate Lowenstein**



Self-indulgent

Nomads welcome Jessica Lindy developed LaLicious in 2002 as a Christmas gift for her friends and family. Now, no matter where you go this holiday season, you can take the popular skin-care products with you. The **LaLicious Travel Kit** (\$36) features two-ounce samples of Sugar Souffle Scrub, Body Butter, Body Wash and Body Oil, in any of the line's seven signature scents, including Coconut Cream (pictured). Wrap up '06 with something special for yourself. Available at lalicious.com. —Lianne Zhang

Chill Out

As a growing breed of dental spas takes hold, and franchises of chopper shop Vital Dent pop up with a frequency rivaling that of Starbucks, there is something for everyone these days in the way of tooth whitening. Studies have shown that the results of most forms of bleaching—whether it's done at home or at the dentist, using lasers or just gel—last the same amount of time in the long run. So your main decision is simply how you want to whiten your smile.

If the dentist's office makes your teeth chatter, you might want to try a dental spa. Unlike traditional oral-care spots, dental spas aim to provide a more tranquil, indulgent experience. Be warned: A number of establishments that call themselves spas actually just resemble well-appointed traditional dentists' offices. So if you seek a more calming vibe, your best bet is to have a look before making an appointment. At the newly opened Dental Spa of New York (398 Fifth Ave between 6th and 7th Sts, Park Slope, Brooklyn, 718-965-6298), you can sit in a massage chair and eat freshly baked cookies before receiving your smile-altering treatment. This is done with the Zoom whitening technique (usually \$600, currently on offer for \$300), whereby a laser activates a bleaching agent in the gel applied to your teeth. In Manhattan there's Tribeca Smiles (44 Lispenard St between Broadway and Church St, 212-4734444), which offers swank surroundings—you can drink tea and listen to classical music while using Wi-Fi in the warmly lit waiting room—and a comprehensive tooth-whitening system that includes Zoom, custom-made take-home trays and five

years' worth of follow-up appointments to maintain your alabaster smile (\$1,450). New among the multitudinous bleaching options available is the Cool Blue/Clean White treatment (\$375) offered at the Rozenberg Dental Day Spa (45 W 54th St between Fifth and Sixth Aves, 212-265-7724). The principle behind Cool Blue is similar to that of Zoom—it's a light-activated whitening gel—but unlike its predecessor it doesn't use heat, so it causes virtually no sensitivity. But the 30-minute treatment is not as powerful as Zoom, and is therefore best used for touch-ups on already white teeth. At the Spa—which is really more of a nice dental office equipped with chair-side TV screens—you'll also find the laser-free Opalescent whitening treatment (\$350–\$375), for people with ultrasensitive teeth, and of course Zoom (\$675; with take-home trays and gel

for maintenance, \$975). High-end establishments aside, cosmetic dentistry is now for the masses, too. The Spanish chain Vital Dent (vitaldent.com) prides itself on accessibility. With 13 NYC locations and six more under construction—not to mention the option of a five-year payment plan—it's become possible to drop in for Zoom whitening (regularly \$660, currently \$300) on a whim. And then there are the less expensive at-home whitening treatments such as the newly relaunched TresWhite Supreme (call 800-552-5512 for a dentist in your area), whose flexible trays (ten treatments \$75–\$100) are meant to be worn 30 minutes a day for six to ten days, and are filled with a potent peach-, melon- or mint-flavored gel—perhaps as delicious as (and certainly more tooth-friendly than) those ubiquitous Frappuccinos.



Critics' pick

Lady matters A yoga class in which only men can chant "om" seems silly today, but that restriction was once one of many imposed on female practitioners. Janice Gates, founding director of Yoga Garden Studio in San Anselmo, California, illuminates the yogic role of the fairer sex in her new book, **Yogini: The Power of Women in Yoga** (Mandala Press, \$20). Gates begins with a compelling overview—including the story of how women's role in the practice diminished once the Brahmin culture took hold in India in 1500 B.C.E.—before profiling 17 contemporary yogini pioneers, including Sharon Gannon, the director of megastudio Jivamukti, and Gurumayi, Siddha Yoga's beloved leader. With handsome reproductions of yoginis in Indian art, the book uncovers a story that's rarely told: Women were once valuable teachers and spiritual guides in yoga—and now finally are again.—Joelle Hann

Bleacher beware

- 1 Laser-activated whitening doesn't always work on the first try. In order to lighten your teeth, gel must enter millions of microscopic pores. Condensed enamel (which can occur naturally or be brought on by grinding) is more difficult to penetrate and thus doesn't readily whiten.
- 2 "There are three versions of the Zoom machine," explains Dr. Lana Rozenberg, D.D.S. "The second one made, Zoom 2, does not work as well as Zoom 1 or the latest one, Zoom AP." Make sure to ask your dentist which machine he or she is using.

- 3 "People don't want to hear this," says Dr. Rozenberg, "but having white teeth is all about maintenance." Even the most effective in-office bleaching will have long-lasting results only if you follow up with at-home treatments approximately every six months.
- 4 The pores in your teeth stay open for about two days after whitening, which means you'll be extra sensitive to hot and cold foods. Some people experience serious discomfort. Fluoride is the antidote, so stock up on ACT mouthwash, Sensodyne toothpaste and—if things get really bad—ibuprofen.—KL