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## WHY LIGHT SHOW

inflammatory lesions eight months after treatment. “Acne was still present, but dramatically improved,” says dermatologist Gilly Munavalli, director of Dermatology, Laser & Vein Specialists of the Carolinas in Charlotte, North Carolina, who took part in the trial. Sebacia estimates the cost will be around \$500 per treatment, with follow-ups suggested every eight to 12 months. The company also has plans to use its oil-gland-zapping technique to shrink large pores, a common hallmark of older complexions.

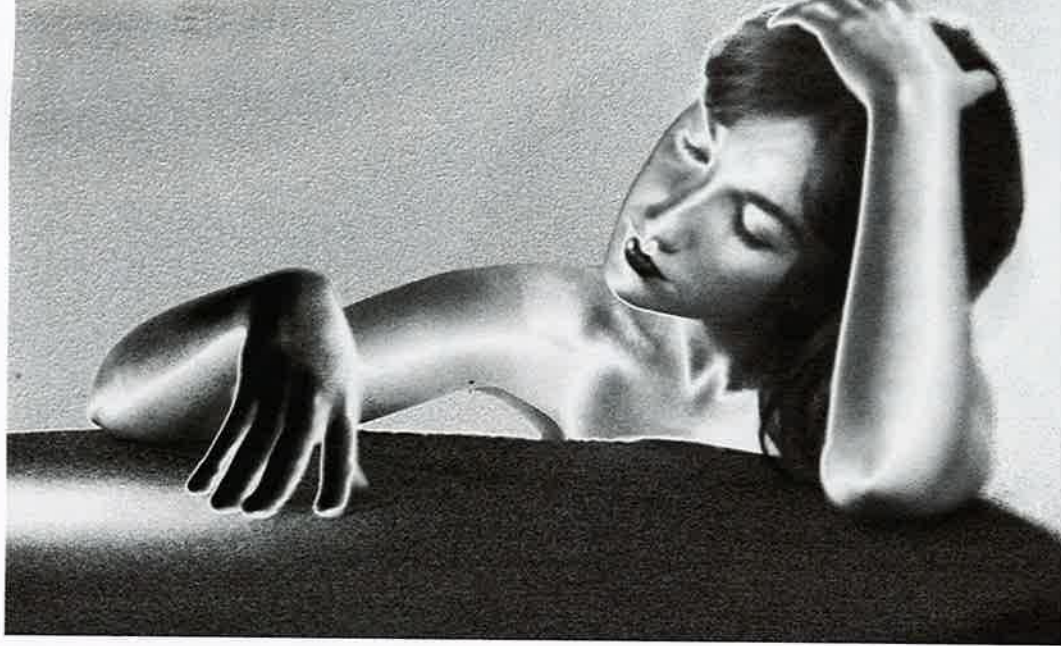
### INVISIBLE INK

It turns out that removing your ex’s name from your body can be more difficult than the actual breakup. Typically, tattoo removal requires multiple sessions, and fading can plateau with certain inks, leaving a ghost image. But the picosecond laser, often referred to by its brand name, PicoSure, pulses light much more quickly than typical lasers, allowing it to break down ink into smaller pieces, which are easier for the body to absorb. The upshot: cleaner removal in half the time. There is some discomfort involved, but, thanks to topical anesthetic, “it’s not as painful as getting a tattoo in the first place,” says dermatologist Robert Weiss, the director of the Maryland Laser Skin and Vein Institute, in Cockeysville, Maryland.

Happily, the “photo-rejuvenation” facials that doctors are now performing using the same laser are even less ouch-inducing. The Focus Lens Array is an add-on to the PicoSure that redistributes the picosecond beam into hundreds of microbeams to smooth the skin and even out tone. In a study funded in part by Cynosure, the makers of PicoSure, researchers noted that after four treatments, patients had a 50 to 75 percent reduction in wrinkles and hyperpigmentation. On a scale of one to 10, patients reported the pain level to be about a two and needed only two to four hours of recovery.

### ONE-STOP SHOPPING

The advances in laser science are dramatic, but the biggest game changer might not be a single groundbreaking technology so much as the fact that patients can now have quick, one-stop access to many treatments. Like nail and blow-out bars, laser bars are cropping up around the country. At Pulse Laser & Skincare Center, in New York, the “menu” tackles acne, hyperpigmentation, vascular issues like broken blood vessels, skin tightening, and, of course, hair removal. Its latest express treatment,



*The biggest game changer might not be a single groundbreaking technology so much as quick, one-stop access to many of them.*

the 30-to-45-minute Pulse Triple Perfection, delivers a rosy glow by combining an enzyme peel, intense pulse light (to kill bacteria and reduce hyperpigmentation), and the e-Matrix laser (to tighten).

The efficiency of this approach finally persuaded me to give lasers a try. In an effort to treat the one area of my face that injections haven’t been able to reach—the fine wrinkles beneath my eyes—I consulted with one of the Pulse owners, Michelle Moyer, who suggested the e-Matrix Elos,

which has a special hand piece designed for the eye area. Oddly enough, my first foray into lasers wasn’t technically with a laser but with bipolar radio frequency, which relies on electrical energy, as opposed to a crystal, to heat the skin, plumping under-eye hollows and stimulating collagen growth. Though quick, the 25-minute procedure is more invasive than the typical lunch-hour treatment—the pain level was around a five and subsided within a few hours, but it took three to five days for the raw redness to die down. Initially, I didn’t see much improvement—and was feeling smug about my faithful allegiance to injections—but two months and two treatments later, my freckles are paler, my skin looks brighter, and those fine lines under my eyes are less noticeable. True, I’m not even close to kicking my needle habit, but I am now convinced of the wisdom of a bipartisan approach. ♦

## GLOW GLOBAL *Jane Larkworthy reports on four spectacular spas that work magic with local ingredients.*



**THE WELLHOUSE AT BLACKBERRY FARM, WALLAND, TENNESSEE**  
blackberryfarm.com

This spa opened this past summer, and new treatments are added seasonally. In November, buttermilk is on tap, figuring in facials—its highly acidic and astringent qualities make it great for treating age spots and freckles and tightening the skin—manicures, and pedicures. And Fall Is Harvest Time, a 150-minute treatment, includes a body massage using oil steeped with fresh ginger and an exfoliating facial with two masks: the first boasting pear and fig or pumpkin, the second a nourishing walnut-and-honey recipe.



**SUMAC SPA, PIKAIA LODGE, SANTA CRUZ, GALAPAGOS ISLANDS**  
pikaialodgegalapagos.com

Eco adventurers have a new reason to venture down to the Galápagos. Pikaia, a green, modern minimalist lair, sits smack in the middle of a giant-tortoise reserve. Guests can explore one of several volcanic craters, visit the nearby Charles Darwin Research Station, work up a sweat while mountain biking, go on snorkeling adventures, and, of course, get up close and personal with the ancient reptiles. End the day with a deep-tissue massage with tropical salves and oils.



**SPA AT FARMHOUSE INN, FORESTVILLE, CALIFORNIA**  
farmhouseinn.com

In the heart of Sonoma’s Russian River Valley sits the cozy-chic Farmhouse Inn, whose new \$4 million spa looks like a fabulous stable. The list of treatments reads like a farm-to-table menu, made with ingredients like spring-forest honey, alfalfa hay, and heirloom apple cider. Not to be missed: Catherine’s Favorite, a deep-tissue massage, a lavender-and-orange-infused hair mask, and an invigorating foot scrub. Fortunately, the walk back to your room is only about 50 paces.



**LES SOURCES DE CAUDALIE, BORDEAUX, FRANCE**  
sources-caudalie.com

This gem in southwestern France recently received a serious makeover that included a new indoor pool and a state of the art fitness center. Add in the fact that the sprawling vineyard resort now boasts a wine bar with bites by Michelin-star chef Nicolas Masse, and your bliss is almost complete. Be sure to carve out some time for the Polyphenol C 15 T, a treatment that targets wrinkles with the detoxing power of fresh grapes.