



In Plane Sight

Now that everyone is talking about their facelifts, the deep plane has emerged as Hollywood surgeons' technique of choice — for those ready to pony up. By Elycia Rubin

When 70-year-old **Kris Jenner** unveiled her fresh 40-year-old face last spring, she didn't just catapult her New York-based plastic surgeon, **Steven Levine**, to stardom. The momager also almost single-handedly ignited a worldwide facelift frenzy that has helped normalize the chatter around cosmetic surgery. Did-she (or he)-or-didn't-she threads pop up after nearly every celebrity appearance, from **Bradley Cooper**, who recently addressed rumors on *SmartLess*, to such ageless paragons as **Julia Roberts**, **Fran Drescher** and **Minnie Driver** and even more youthful stars like **Emma Stone** and **Jennifer Lawrence** at the Golden Globes.

With Jenner, however, there's been debate around the exact type of facelift performed by Levine. He is known for a hybrid approach of SMAS (Superficial Musculo-Aponeurotic System) and deep plane. But what's certain is that deep plane now reigns as the overwhelming favorite of the two dominant facial-rejuvenation techniques, especially in and around Beverly Hills.

Fellow board-certified plastic surgeons **Ritu Chopra** and **Marc Mani** break down the differences between the two approaches. "The SMAS is the thin but strong layer just beneath the skin," Chopra tells *THR*. "A SMAS facelift lifts and tightens this layer by folding or plicating it, improving

jowls and lower-face laxity, but provides a more surface-level correction." Among its selling points is that it's a quicker surgery with a shorter recovery, but Chopra specifies that it doesn't address the midface, and the results don't last as long as a deep plane facelift. Adds Mani: "Because a significant amount of skin is also separated from the underlying tissue, blood supply can be cut off, and this is what you want to preserve for proper healing and to avoid complications."

Deep plane goes, well, deeper. "It requires more work, but the results are more natural because we're lifting from the deeper structural layers, not just the skin," says

"It's like paying for a Birkin bag. Some people want to say, 'I went to so-and-so.'"

Julie Obst, co-founder of LA Beauty Connect

Mani. "We go beneath the SMAS and release the ligaments — bands of connective tissue that anchor the skin to the underlying bone or deeper tissues — which is the hallmark of the procedure. By bringing up all the layers of the face back where they used to be and with less tension, we restore lost volume and youthful contours to the cheeks, jawline and neck."

For many surgeons, the advantages of deep plane are hard to argue with. "Having

performed both, I love the deep plane and will not be going back to the SMAS," says renowned facial plastic and reconstructive surgeon **Babak Azizzadeh**. There's a difference in longevity, too. "On average, SMAS [effects last] eight to 10 years and deep plane 10 to 15 years," he adds.

As demand for facial overhauls soars in Hollywood and elsewhere, surgeons have raised their fees dramatically. Not long ago, typical prices ranged from \$50,000 to \$75,000. Mani says he now charges up to \$250,000 for full-face rejuvenation. In justifying the exorbitant rate, Mani emphasizes the difficulty of the procedure: "Facelifts are a right-brain surgery, and you're thinking with your hands," he says. "This is hard to teach as it's inherent, it's in your heart."

Heaps of other costs are baked into the price. "There's the prestigious Beverly Hills office space, the staff and surgery center, various insurances, the latest and greatest tools and technology, and higher-level incision protocols," says **Alana Ungvari**, co-founder of LA Beauty Connect, a plastic surgery consultancy and concierge company. "These are all investments, and a facelift is not a one-and-done appointment — you'll have a year's worth of follow-up appointments, which are all included."

Higher prices don't automatically mean better work. Says **Julie Obst**, co-founder of LA Beauty Connect: "Some of our clients pay upward of \$150,000, and some pay between \$35,000 and \$60,000, and we can't say one facelift is necessarily better than the other." In other words, don't be

discouraged by eye-popping fees.

As with any luxury purchase, many fixate on the label and bragging rights of facial restoration. "It's like paying for a Birkin bag," adds Obst. "Some people want to be able to say, 'I went to so-and-so.'" Several surgeons have even adorned their deep plane techniques with catchy names — because nothing says expensive and exclusive like a facelift with its own trademarked brand. **VIII**



HOLLYWOOD'S DEEP PLANE DA VINCI

Meet the celebrity-approved plastic surgery artists at the forefront of facelift revolution

Dr. Babak Azizzadeh
facialplasticsh.com
Double board-certified facial plastic and reconstructive surgeon and president-elect, American Academy of Facial Plastic + Reconstructive Surgery
Years in practice 23

Deep plane brand name None. ("This isn't a cookie-cutter surgery.")
Price Between \$120,000 and \$180,000 depending on the complexity. Azizzadeh also specializes in highly intricate facial nerve procedures.
Consultation fee \$500
Facelifts performed per month Eight
Expert advice "There is no right age to have a facelift. Timing, approach and your recovery journey are all personal decisions to be made by you and your surgeon."

Dr. Ritu Chopra
gdnchopra.com
Board-certified plastic and reconstructive surgeon
Years in practice 15-plus
Deep plane brand name DEFINE
Deep Plane Facelift Price Between \$75,000 and \$125,000, "depending on anatomy, and if they had a facelift, threads, Sculptra or filler in the past."
Consultation fee \$500
Facelifts performed per month 12 to 15
Expert advice "Take it with a grain of salt when doctors say they have a year waiting list; it's not usually the case."

Dr. Marc Mani
marcm mani.com
Board-certified plastic and reconstructive surgeon
Years in practice 25-plus

Deep plane brand name TCF Lift (open procedure), Scarless Lift (endoscopic procedure)
Price Up to \$250,000, including his MIST procedure
Consultation fee \$1,000
Facelifts performed per month Eight to 10
Expert advice "Patients should ask a lot of questions, and no surgeon should mind that. If a doctor doesn't like questions, it's a red flag."

Dr. Hedyeh Ziai
instanram.com/dthedyehz
Board-certified facial plastic surgeon
Years in Practice Two and a half
Deep plane brand name AuraLift (coined by maestro Dr. Ben Talei, under whom she trained)
Price \$35,000 to \$45,000
Consultation fee \$175
Facelifts performed per month Five to seven
Expert advice "Do a deep dive into the surgeon's before and afters and keep in mind your friend's surgeon may not be the right fit for you."

Dr. Allen Foulad
fouladmd.com
Double board-certified facial plastic surgeon
Years in practice Eight
Deep plane brand name None
Price From \$60,000 — "with the final cost depending on complexity and adjunct procedures."
Consultation fee \$300
Facelifts performed per month 12
Expert advice "It's unusual for me to operate on someone under 45. I politely decline if there isn't enough laxity to justify the surgery." — E.R.