

Step out of a high rise on the Strip at 2 pm in August and you understand why Las Vegas skin is a category of its own. Dry desert air, brutal sun, recycled casino smoke, sleepless nights, gallons of coffee or cocktails. By the time many clients slide into my treatment bed, their skin has been through more in a weekend than some faces see in a month.

That is exactly why the hours before a facial matter as much as the hour on my table.

You can book the most popular facial treatment in town, choose the newest device, spend \$300 or more, yet sabotage half the potential results with a few rushed, well intentioned choices. The wrong workout, the wrong active ingredient, or a “just this once” spray tan can leave your skin red, reactive, or simply unable to fully benefit from what you came for.

This is a polished guide to what not to do before a facial, written from the perspective of a working Las Vegas esthetician who has seen every pre-appointment mistake, from aggressive retinol use to clients walking in directly from the pool deck with sunburned cheeks and a yard-long cocktail in hand.

Why what you do before a facial matters so much

Skin is not a passive surface. It is an active organ responding every minute to what you eat, apply, touch, and expose it to. When you book a high end facial, especially in a climate as intense as Las Vegas, we want three things:

1. A calm, intact skin barrier that can tolerate professional exfoliation and extractions without trauma.
2. Hydrated tissue so massage, lymphatic drainage, and device based work can genuinely lift, smooth, and brighten.
3. A clear understanding of what your skin has experienced in the days before, so we can choose the right treatment and intensity.

If you overdo retinol, spend the day at a pool party, wax your upper lip, or get a strong peel the week before, your barrier is already on high alert. That is when a facial that should have taken 10 years off your face temporarily can instead leave you inflamed, peeling, or underwhelmed.

Think of the pre-appointment period as setting the stage. Even the best kind of facial treatment cannot work gracefully against a backdrop of irritation and dehydration.

The non negotiables: what not to do before a facial

I will start with the habits that routinely derail results. Most estheticians in Las Vegas would agree on these, even if we phrase them differently.

Avoid retinol and strong actives in the days leading up

Clients often ask, “Can I get a facial while using retinol?” The answer is yes, but only if you respect timing. Retinol, prescription tretinoin, retinaldehyde, glycolic acid, and at home peels all thin the layer of dead cells at the surface. That sounds great, until we add professional strength exfoliation on top of that.

For most skin types, pausing retinol and other strong actives 3 to 5 days before a facial is ideal. If you are on prescription strength tretinoin, we may extend that break to a full week. When clients ignore this, I usually see

diffuse redness, stinging from even gentle products, and a limited ability to perform extractions or use devices safely.

A related question I hear often is, "Should a 60 year old use retinol?" For many, yes, as long as the skin is introduced to it slowly and buffered with moisture. The real key is coordination. Use retinol strategically around your facial schedule, not randomly, and never apply it the night before you lie on my table.

You may have seen claims about something that "works 11 times faster than retinol." Most of those headlines are marketing shorthand for ingredients like retinaldehyde or prescription tretinoin, which can be more potent but also more irritating. If you are using any of those, full honesty with your esthetician is essential so we can adjust any resurfacing steps.

Do not sunbathe or get a spray tan

This is the desert. Clients arrive bronzed from pool parties or spray booths and hope for deep exfoliation to "really make it pop." That is a recipe for a damaged barrier and patchy fading.

Sun exposure inflames the skin, even if you do not visibly burn. Fresh ultraviolet exposure plus professional exfoliation can lead to hyperpigmentation, uneven tone, and prolonged redness. If you are asking how to make your face look 20 years younger, the real answer begins with disciplined sun avoidance and daily high SPF use, not a last minute tan.

Spray tans create another problem. I cannot safely exfoliate or use certain devices without streaking or stripping the tan. Pigment from a tanning solution can also make it harder to judge your true skin tone and pigmentation, which matters when choosing peels.



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Preferably avoid both direct sun and spray tans for at least 3 days before your facial. If you must attend a pool event, prioritize a hat, sunglasses, and diligent SPF.

No waxing, threading, or depilatory creams close to your appointment

Hair removal and facials are both controlled forms of injury. When you combine them too closely, skin can respond unpredictably.

Waxing or threading the brows, lips, or chin within 24 to 48 hours of a facial makes the area more vulnerable. Enzymes, acids, and even gentle massage can feel like fire on freshly waxed skin. Depilatory creams are even riskier since they chemically break down hair and can leave micro burns.

A safe window is usually 48 hours between waxing or depilatory use and your facial, ideally longer if you have sensitive skin or use retinoids. If you forget and wax the night before, tell your esthetician so we can avoid those zones.

Skip intense workouts right before you arrive

Las Vegas hotels fill with people rushing straight from the gym to the spa so they can “get it all done.” While I admire the efficiency, your face does not.

Intense exercise raises your core temperature and increases blood flow to the skin. If you come in flushed and overheated, even mild stimulation can tip you into full redness. Your capillaries are already dilated, and extractions are more likely to leave marks.

Allow at least a couple of hours between your last heavy workout and your facial. Light walking is fine. Boxing, hot yoga, and long treadmill runs are not.

Do not drink heavily the night before or pregame in the casino

Alcohol is standard in this city. Clients will casually admit they had three martinis at 3 am and are now hoping for lymphatic drainage to erase the evidence.

Alcohol dehydrates the skin, disturbs sleep, and triggers inflammation. The result is puffiness, dullness, and heightened sensitivity during treatment. A glass of wine with dinner is rarely an issue. Multiple cocktails, shots, or bottle service will absolutely show on your skin.

If you are serious about results and wondering how to take 10 years off your face over time, consider your facial days as low alcohol, early bed, high water days. You will look fresher in photos and your esthetician can work to a higher level.

The same day “do not” checklist

For clients who like clear, simple guidance, here is what I tell my Las Vegas regulars to absolutely avoid in the 24 hours before their appointment.

- Do not apply retinol, strong acids, or at home peels
- Do not sunbathe, use tanning beds, or get a spray tan
- Do not wax, thread, or use depilatory creams on the face
- Do not book a deep tissue massage, hot yoga, or intense workout immediately before
- Do not arrive hungover, dehydrated, or with fresh injectable work

About that last point: if you have had fillers or neuromodulators like Botox in the previous 48 hours, always tell your esthetician. We can usually work around them, but some massage techniques and tools should be avoided or modified.

Choosing the right facial when you live or play in Las Vegas

Many visitors step into the spa and whisper, "What is the best kind of facial treatment?" They are hoping for a single, universally superior option, preferably the one that will take a decade off in sixty minutes.

Skin care is not that simple.

The most popular facial treatment right now would probably be categorized as a hybrid: mild to medium level resurfacing, painless extractions, [Eyebrow Services Las Vegas](#) infusion of actives, plus some element of lymphatic or sculpting massage. That might look like a hydro dermabrasion device, a gentle chemical resurfacing, LED light, and a lifting massage.

The best kind of facial treatment for you depends on three things: your skin type, your lifestyle, and your tolerance for downtime.

Clients ask, "How do I know what type of facial to get?" I like to start with the honest condition of your barrier. If you are chronically dry from desert air and travel, we focus on barrier repair and hydration, even if anti aging is your main concern. If your barrier is already strong, I can safely incorporate more aggressive methods.

A quick note on the "7 facial types" and face shapes

Occasionally I hear questions like, "What are the 7 facial types?" or "What is the rarest face shape?" These usually refer to classic shape categories: oval, round, square, heart, diamond, oblong, and triangle.

The rarest face shape is often considered diamond, with a narrower forehead and chin and wider cheekbones. The most attractive facial shape is frequently described as oval, partly because it provides balanced proportions and photographs well.

Why does this matter for a facial? It affects how I sculpt with massage. On a round face, I might emphasize lymphatic drainage around the jawline to give a more contoured effect. On an oblong face, I may work to soften lines and tension that make the face appear longer. A luxury facial is not just about products, but about using hands and tools to enhance the natural architecture you already have.

Newest facial treatments and what actually "takes 10 years off"

Every season, a new device or protocol promises to reverse a decade of aging. Clients phrase it exactly that way: "What procedure takes 10 years off your face?" or even "How to make your face look 20 years younger."

From my chair, instant miracles usually involve trade offs. Strong lasers and deep peels can indeed transform texture and pigment, but they come with downtime, strict aftercare, and not everyone is a good candidate.

Some of the newest facial treatments we use in high end Las Vegas spas include things like:

- Multi step hydro dermabrasion that cleanses, exfoliates, and infuses antioxidants
- Non ablative laser facials for collagen stimulation
- Microcurrent for sculpting and lifting without injectables
- LED light protocols to support healing and reduce inflammation

Clients often want to know, “What do celebrities use instead of Botox?” In reality, many use a mix of treatments: microcurrent for lift, radiofrequency for tightening, retinoids and vitamin C at home for texture, and sometimes soft tissue fillers or subtle neuromodulators. Good sleep, nutrition, and disciplined sun protection support everything else.

Questions about “What has happened to Lady Gaga’s face” or any other celebrity’s appearance float into conversation more than they should. The only useful takeaway is this: faces change with time, makeup, lighting, procedures, weight shifts, and even artistic choice. Rather than chasing someone else’s evolving look, we focus on maintaining your collagen, elasticity, and radiance long term.

If you truly want to know how to take 10 years off your face in the most realistic sense, think in layers. Consistent SPF, a customized retinoid plan, professional facials at regular intervals, and maybe device based tightening when indicated. No single facial appointment, no matter how advanced, can replace that kind of thoughtful routine.

Retinol, aging, and timing facials around your actives

We have already touched on “Can I get a facial while using retinol?” and the short term timing. The long term relationship between retinoids and professional treatments is worth its own focus.

Retinol and its cousins are some of the only ingredients with decades of evidence behind their ability to smooth lines, even tone, and build collagen. Used well, they are one of the best tools to slow what many people mean when they ask, “What is the #1 mistake that will make you age faster?”

Neglecting daily sun protection is still the number one culprit. The second is chronic inflammation and barrier damage, often driven by inconsistent use of strong actives, including retinoids used without guidance.

That is why, for clients of any age, including those asking, “Should a 60 year old use retinol?”, my advice is to integrate these products with respect for recovery. Start slowly. Use a moisturizing buffer. Do not layer them with other strong actives at home. And always coordinate their use around your facial schedule, pausing several days before and after more intensive treatments as your esthetician recommends.

Retinoids are powerful. Used thoughtfully, they amplify what we do in the treatment room. Used recklessly, they can limit how much we can safely do.

What not to do emotionally and mentally before a luxury facial

Not every “do not” is physical. The mental space you bring into a session influences how well your body responds.

Try not to treat your facial like a task crammed between meetings or a quick pit stop between the blackjack table and dinner. High stress floods your system with cortisol, tightens muscles, and can even make extractions more uncomfortable.

Plan to arrive a little early. Let your phone rest. Do not schedule a difficult conversation or high pressure meeting to begin the moment you leave the spa. Your nervous system needs space to downshift so massage and lymphatic work can truly de puff and soften your features.

Clients are often surprised how directly stress shows on their face. Jaw tension etches lines near the mouth. Furrowed brows deepen between the eyes. Part of what makes a good facial look like it “took years off” is simply the release of that chronic holding.

Tipping etiquette for high end facials and peels

Money questions come up just as often as product questions, especially when spa prices climb. People Google, “How much should you tip for a \$300 facial?” or “Is \$10 a good tip for \$100 salon?” and rarely get context that feels human.

Within the United States, in a luxury setting, tipping norms for facials often fall between 18 and 25 percent, similar to fine dining. That suggests around \$54 to \$75 on a \$300 facial, assuming service, expertise, and experience matched the price.

Is \$10 a good tip for \$100 salon? In a casual setting where the facial is light, quick, and inexpensive, it may be considered adequate. In a high end environment with advanced devices, extra care, and extensive customization, it is on the lower side.

Clients often whisper, “Do you tip on a peel?” If you have booked a chemical peel as a standalone service and your esthetician is taking the time to cleanse, prep, apply, monitor, and counsel you thoroughly on aftercare, then yes, tipping is customary. If a doctor or nurse practitioner performs a medical grade peel in a clinical context, tipping norms may differ. When in doubt, it is always acceptable to ask the front desk discreetly.

Here is a simple framework many of my guests find useful:

- For a luxury facial or advanced treatment in the \$200 to \$400 range, 18 to 25 percent is standard
- For basic express facials or add ons, 15 to 20 percent is common
- If service feels extraordinary, personal, and transformative, tipping above the range is a thoughtful way to acknowledge that

Remember, you are never obligated to tip beyond your comfort. But in cities like Las Vegas where service professionals rely heavily on gratuities, your tip is part of the experience you are providing for yourself. It sustains the level of care you value.

How to arrive so your facial truly feels and looks luxurious

Avoiding the “do nots” is only half the story. The other half is how you show up.

Arrive clean faced if possible, or at least with minimal makeup. There is nothing wrong with removing makeup in the treatment room, but heavy waterproof formulas can steal time from the work that changes your skin.

Hydrate generously that day, especially in the desert. Skin that is internally hydrated responds more beautifully to massage, masks, and device work. If you struggle with puffiness, ask about gentle lymphatic techniques or microcurrent instead of jumping straight to injectables.

When you are choosing among treatment menus, resist getting distracted by every machine. Ask instead: given my age, skin history, and lifestyle, what is the best kind of facial treatment today? A good esthetician will weigh your barrier health, your current actives, and your schedule. If you cannot have downtime, we will avoid aggressive peels. If you have a shoot or event the next day, we may opt for lifting and glow over deep extractions.

Most of all, treat your appointment like a partnership. Share what you have put on your skin that week. Tell me if you are using prescription retinoids or tried a new product that tingled. Mention that you were at a pool party or had a recent injectable. The more I know, the more precisely I can work.

Walk in as hydrated, rested, and honest as possible. Avoid the common pre-facial mistakes. Within that space, even in the dry, neon lit intensity of Las Vegas, your skin can look years fresher with nothing more dramatic than a well chosen treatment, skillful hands, and the quiet luxury of an hour devoted entirely to your face.

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