



# Finding Euphoria on the Boulevard

*Euphoria Face and Body offers a relaxing retreat in the heart of the city*

BY JOHN HOBBS

Being a corn-fed Indiana boy, I've never really been one for vanity services like massages, manicures, or facials. They were just looked upon as unnecessary extravagances in the no-frills, blue-collar neighborhood in which I grew up. Everything changed, though, one day when I stumbled upon Euphoria Face and Body. Feeling adventurous, I threw caution to the wind, embraced my inner Angeleno, and treated myself to my first facial.

Upon entering Euphoria's cozy interior, I felt immediately at ease. Serene music filled the intimate space, which was scented with the soothing fragrance of eucalyptus. Gabriella Phillips, the salon's effervescent owner, greeted me with a beaming smile and led me to a dimly lit treatment room. She began to ask me questions about my beauty regimen (does soap and water constitute a beauty regimen?) and prepared me for my balancing facial treatment.

Euphoria's story begins long before the studio ever opened its doors. As a youngster, Phillips discovered her passion for beauty when she would tinker with the different grooming products in her mother's beauty cabinet, studying the ingredients in each one. "My friends would come over to my house and I'd have a little treatment room set up in the bathroom area," she remembers. "I'd make them lay down and I'd analyze their skin and make sure that, if they had any imperfections, they were taken care of." It wasn't long before Phillips found herself at New York's Fashion Institute of Technology, studying cosmetics and fragrance marketing before taking a position at Estée Lauder in product development and marketing. "Once I decided that I didn't want to be in the corporate environment anymore, I started studying different facial lines and got a license as an aesthetician," Phillips says, who then opened Euphoria in West Hollywood.

"I decided to open my studio in West Hollywood because I knew that I would be able to meet fabulous men that wanted to look good and take care of their skin," says Phillips, whose clientele is 99 percent men. "I really wanted to create a comfortable atmosphere for men because I know a lot of men feel intimidated about stepping into a place where there may be a lot of women hanging out," she adds.

Now, Phillips is surrounded by men as West Hollywood's gay set flocks to one of the neighborhood's best kept secrets to indulge themselves with treatments like hot stone therapy, deep tissue massages, and incredible facials—all done in the

comfortable setting that Phillips strives to imbue in her spa. "I have noticed a lot of spas in this area are all about what connections you have, who you are, or even what designer you are wearing," she says. "When people walk in here, I want them to feel comfortable. Whether they are in sweat pants or pajamas, that's not the issue. The issue is that we are here to take care of them, and really give them a good quality service."

Phillips doesn't shy away from any challenges posed by her bumpy faced clients, either. "It's my favorite thing when someone comes in and they have a serious acne condition because that's when you see the biggest difference, not only in their skin, but in the way they feel about themselves," says Phillips who is smitten with the rewarding nature of her job.

"I don't even need an alarm clock to wake up in the morning because I cannot wait to see who is booked for the day," she beams. "I am excited to see their skin, what it's going through, and how I can change it. It's just so rewarding."

After analyzing my skin under magnification, Phillips tailors the rest of my 60-minute session to best suit my individual needs. She begins with a gentle enzyme peel to remove several layers of dead skin cells, allowing the healthier brighter skin below to surface. She follows with a few extractions to take care of whatever is going on beneath the surface, hydrates my skin using an ultrasound machine, and tops it off with an extraordinary scalp massage. Now this is living.

Phillips tells me that, with a regular regimen of facials, my skin cells will be much brighter and newer, any fine lines I had will be diminished, and my skin will be more taut and firm. "So basically, you will have a really healthy, nourished complexion and your skin will feel comfortable and look gorgeous," she says.

I was completely hooked—and even more so when I saw how clean and clear my face looked afterward. Before leaving, I grabbed a few products from Euphoria's brand new product line, which uses natural botanicals like fruit and plant extracts, flowers, chamomile, lavender, and eucalyptus—all of which are gentle for the most sensitive of skin, and made an appointment for my next visit to Euphoria.

*Euphoria Face and Body is located at 8253 Santa Monica Blvd., W.Hlywd. For more information, go to [www.euphoriafaceandbody.com](http://www.euphoriafaceandbody.com). Call (323) 656-9944 for an appointment.*