

The Art of Detail

All over the media from the press to social platforms, we are constantly bombarded with ads and content for off-the-shelf beauty products and services. But when it comes to plastic surgery, finding genuine information that you can trust is something that the internet astonishingly can't provide with ease. It's a laborious process involving hours of research and a whole load of confusion in between. Which is all the more nerve-racking as there's no doubt that having an operation is a huge ordeal.

Physical repair is one thing, but mental exhaustion is another - especially if it doesn't quite go the way you imagined it to be. The only thing that can make your dream transformation as smooth as possible is choosing the right surgeon for you - on a personal level.

The esteemed Katarzyna Mackenzie MD, PhD, FRACS (Plast) is one of the few female plastic surgeons in New Zealand, and evidently, incredibly qualified. Polish-born, she's full of passion, classical grace, and has the best characteristics you would want in your plastic surgeon - honesty and transparency.

As an art connoisseur and artist herself, Dr. Mackenzie is devoted to elevating the beauty of the human body - "My aim is to enhance, not to transform the facial features," Dr. Mackenzie says.

"Plastic surgery is the expression of art and science, which both restores and



improves the norm. It's about blending innate artistry with technical excellence," she expands. With her artistic vision and aesthetic eye, it is to no surprise that she has come to the fore in the world of plastic surgery.

During her third year at Medical University of Warsaw, Dr. Mackenzie did her summer elective with Patricia Eadie, who she describes as "a talented, strong and empowering woman." As the only female plastic surgeon in Ireland at the time, Eadie took Dr. Mackenzie under her wing and taught her that "to be a female plastic surgeon, it takes an

immense amount of courage. People around you will doubt you." However, Dr. Mackenzie shows strength in her candour and humour, "But being Polish... I have three things: passion, pride and diligence."

Following seven years of studying in medical school, Dr. Mackenzie was awarded her Doctor of Medicine (MD). Five years later, in 2003, after moving to New Zealand with her kiwi husband, Dr. Mackenzie began researching and writing a thesis on skin and skin cancers at the University of Otago. Naturally, with her relentless hard work and efforts, she

became one of the four plastic surgeons in New Zealand ever to be awarded a PhD. Then in 2015, after completing a seven-year residency program in plastic surgery in New Zealand, she became a Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, accredited to perform reconstructive, hand and cosmetic plastic surgery.

Dr. Mackenzie's ambition and high-achieving succession did not stop there. In 2016, Dr. Mackenzie moved to the U.K. where she completed her hand surgery fellowship, followed by a breast reconstruction and microsurgery fellowship in Royal Marsden in London the year after. With this impressive experience, Dr. Mackenzie was able to make her way into the creme de la creme of aesthetic surgery fellowships - the Aesthetic Fellowship in London. From Wellington Hospital, Weymouth Street Hospital to the Royal Family's hospital - King Edward VII's Hospital - Dr. Mackenzie had accrued valuable experience working in the top private hospitals in London, speeding towards her blooming career ahead.

Alongside Norman Waterhouse, who is famous as a high-flying facelifter, Dr. Mackenzie learnt his revolutionary stitching technique that 'quilts' the tissue to reduce swelling post-procedure. Although it is commonly used in Europe, Dr. Mackenzie is the only plastic surgeon in New Zealand who uses this facelift technique. "As his fellow, I was involved in the care of A-listers and celebrities in London, and it taught me to maintain tight lips and discretion," she adds.

Patrick Mallucci, renowned for his innovative research into 'The Perfect Breast,' is a globally published icon - another mentor of Dr. Mackenzie's who helped hone in on her skills in aesthetic breast surgery. And during her time in Banff, Canada, Dr. Mackenzie learnt from none other than Elizabeth Hall-Findlay. "Her procedures for breast reductions and breast lifts provide a long-lasting breast shape with fewer scars. I adapted her hallmark drain-free abdominoplasty technique for selected patients using quilting sutures to prevent fluid buildup on the surgical site. Quilting sutures demand more time and skill in the operating room, but patients are more comfortable and have less swelling," Dr. Mackenzie says. "I believe patients



should chase things which are in harmony with their body - bigger or pulled is not necessarily better," she says.

Although she accumulated her accreditations with flying colours and seemingly, so effortlessly without even a breather, Dr. Mackenzie admits it was not an easy journey. "My parents taught me about good work ethic and the importance of perseverance in life. In the end, no matter how many times we fail, what truly defines us is how much we rise after falling," Dr. Mackenzie shares. "There wasn't a day when I wasn't challenged during my training. I wouldn't have been able to do it without my incredibly supportive husband, Tom." Even in the world of prosperous aesthetic surgery, there are smoke and mirrors. The fellowships, surprisingly, did not pay much while she dedicated every second and minute of her day to them. But with resilience and tenacity, Dr. Mackenzie grew into an admired skilled professional in this male-dominated industry.

Returning back to New Zealand, Dr. Mackenzie opened her clinic in Remuera to not only provide aesthetic tweaks and transformations but most

importantly, to help those affected by disease, deformity and trauma. As we know, New Zealand has the highest skin cancer rate in the world and Dr. Mackenzie's PhD in skin and skin cancer provides a second-to-none understanding of this insidious disease.

As a wife and mother, Dr. Mackenzie brings a huge element of relatability and relief to clients in which the majority are, of course, women. Breast reduction surgery is becoming more and more common as large breasts can be an immense physical burden as well as a psychological toll. Fortunately, it is a procedure with a high success rate and one that provides instant gratification.

Although we tend to group plastic surgery with narcissistic motives, this isn't necessarily the case. As we age, functional surgeries such as blepharoplasty (upper eyelid surgery) and labiaplasty are required to alleviate physical discomfort or pain. Dr. Mackenzie's short and long term goal are to ultimately help empower women to live a life of confidence and self-love. "Happiness and gratitude from my clients is what fulfils me and gives me a reason to excel at my work," she says.

www.visageplasticsurgery.co.nz