



A FINE LINE: Eyebrow threading has been used in the Middle East and South Asia for centuries.

3 eyebrow threading

RESHAPE YOUR BROWS
WITH A PULL AND A TUG

COST: \$20

WHERE: Shobha Spa, 594 Broadway, New York City; 212-931-8363

THE PROMISE: Precise brow grooming in minutes, without hot wax or plucking.

THE REALITY: While I tend to be a little overzealous with my tweezers—I've been known to whip them out in Gap dressing rooms—I've never managed perfectly symmetrical brows. I've tried waxing, but it always seems to leave tiny pimples behind. So threading seemed like a good option. The procedure is tough to describe; you really have to see it to believe it. But here goes: I reclined in a barber-style chair under a blazing overhead light as Rumana, my aesthetician, took out a few yards of sewing thread and put one end between her teeth. Holding the other end in her left hand, she made a loop in the middle and held it in her right hand. Then the choreography began. With the thread still in her mouth, she placed the loop over the hair she wanted to remove, twisted it, and briskly jerked her head (thus explaining the thread between her teeth), pulling out a horizontal row of strands in the process, or just single strays. Rumana was methodical and fast, tugging about 20 times across each eyebrow. The sharp, stinging pain was more intense than that of waxing or tweezing, especially around the sensitive skin at the tails of my brows. But the process is blessedly brief: Rumana finished the job in about five minutes.

WAS IT WORTH IT? Definitely, especially if you've had problems with waxing. And because thicker eyebrows are in style right now, this targeted method is a much better bet than tweezing. The effects lasted for several weeks, with just a little at-home plucking in between.

EXPERT'S OPINION: Threading is just as effective as tweezing or waxing, since all the methods yank the hair out by the root. Baumann also points out that threading may be preferable to waxing if you take Accutane for acne or use an antiaging cream containing a vitamin A derivative, such as Retin-A, around your brows. The retinoid can make skin sensitive to heat—and, obviously, wax is hot.

For a salon or spa in your area that offers eyebrow threading, visit www.spafinder.com or www.1800thesalon.com.

WAS IT WORTH IT? Yes. The bronzer contains dihydroxyacetone, the same active ingredient found in over-the-counter products, but the application method removes the inevitable mistakes and mess from the process. To maximize the mist's effect, I waited four hours before I showered. When I finally did, I was relieved to find out that none of the tanner had rubbed off on the inside of my clothes, and even more pleased after showering, when the convincing color didn't wash down the drain. In fact, it lasted more than a week—a bit longer than traditional self-tanners.

EXPERT'S OPINION: Anything that keeps people out of the sun earns doctors' approval. "This machine is great," says Leslie Baumann, M.D., director of the Division of Cosmetic Dermatology at the University of Miami Medical School. But, she hastens to add, "spray-on self-tanner gives you no protection from the sun. You still need to apply sunscreen daily."

To find a salon or spa in your area that offers airbrush tanning, log on to www.mystictan.com or www.mistontan.com.