

This book is a guide to esthetic procedures in the "big seven" countries that offer the best quality at the best price. This can be from 70 to 90% less than one might pay in the U.S. often with a free vacation. Includes interviews.

The Vanity Factor:
Beauty Inside & Out - A Guide for Aesthetic Surgery From A To Z
By Sherri Andrews

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The background of the book cover features a close-up, split-face image of two women with dark hair and light skin. The left side shows the face of one woman, and the right side shows the face of another, both looking directly at the camera with neutral expressions. The text is overlaid on this image.

THE VANITY FACTOR

BEAUTY INSIDE & OUT

A Guide to Aesthetic Surgery From A-Z

SHERRI ANDREWS

FEATURING "THE BIG SEVEN" COUNTRIES IN MEDICAL TOURISM

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CHAPTER 1: LADY DIANA SAVED ME FROM LOOKING LIKE FRANKENSTEIN

Most significantly, I am no stranger to surgery, cosmetic or otherwise. As a 25-year-old, I suffered a horrific bike accident on April 4, 1987, which landed me in the shock trauma unit of a hospital in Washington D.C. for a month. Emergency plastic surgery saved my face from looking like Frankenstein for the rest of my life. It's a good thing that I lost my memory from temporary amnesia for several months, and that I was not permitted to see a mirror during those first few weeks in the hospital because I might never have survived it psychologically.

Most of my injuries were traumatic head wounds because I was not wearing a helmet when my racing bike hit a large crack in the sidewalk, under a bridge, which catapulted me into rush hour traffic. My face collided with the side mirror of a luxury automobile at a combined speed of 60 miles per hour. At the time, I was a flight attendant for Eastern Airlines. My livelihood somewhat depended on my appearance, and I will be forever grateful to the plastic surgeons who were called in from other hospitals to repair the damage as best they could during the 1980's when laser technology, and more advanced plastic surgery techniques were just beginning to evolve. The result was far from perfect, with significant scarring, but it was the difference between looking like Frankenstein in the immediate future and the possibility to have corrective surgery.

The hospital administration had no idea who I was (I had no identification with me at the time of the accident), or if I had insurance to pay for the surgeries, nor could any consent forms

be signed. No one in my personal circle knew where I was because friends, family, and even the boyfriend I lived with at the time just assumed that I had been called out for a busy flight schedule. We didn't have cell phones then. I required emergency surgery but not necessarily the esthetic kind, at least not right away. "Frankenstein stitches" as I called them due to the large and jagged nature of the sutures, might have been adequate as an immediate repair, and yet a plastic surgeon was called in from another hospital to perform a more aesthetic version. I am grateful.

The funniest part of the story, if there can be one, is that I believe that the doctors surmised that this type of surgery might be important from information they gathered from the EMT's in the helicopter that transported me to the shock trauma hospital unit. I later learned from witnesses, that during the flight, I was barely coherent but semi-conscious, with my left eyeball hanging from the socket, but I was able to mumble that I was related to Lady Diana (Princess of Wales) when they asked me who I was. At that time, "Lady Di" was all over the news, and I adored her spirit (yet I am in no way related to this woman). I was clearly out of my head, but maybe I was mistaken for a VIP. I will never know. However, as mentioned, I will be forever grateful for those surgeons and the surgery they performed.

However, the important part of the story for me, is that I was identified in the hospital, not by a family member but by a dear high school friend after almost two weeks. My friend was at a party chatting up one of the nurses in the shock trauma unit where I was. He asked her where she went to university and she told him JMU (James Madison University), which is where I also attended. He asked if she knew Sherri Andrews, and she

looked at him curiously and said, “there’s a girl in the shock trauma unit who knows her first name (after two weeks) is Sherri, but doesn’t know her last name, and she has not been fully identified.” My friend asked her what I looked like, and she told him I was blonde, tan and very polite. My friend then told the nurse that it was probably because I was a flight attendant and that I had been MIA for two weeks. They called the hospital with the information that I worked for Eastern Airlines and after some investigation, my identity was confirmed. The significant part of the story for me is that during high school, my friend was diagnosed with cancer and lost all his hair during treatments. My group of girlfriends and I supported him emotionally during that difficult time. Now he was able to reciprocate in this act of kindness for me. That’s karma.

EVERYTHING I KNOW I LEARNED FROM MY MOTHER

Just a few years prior to this accident, my mother, a beautiful woman who had me at 16 during the “beauty pageant” era in 1962, convinced me to have a breast augmentation at 21 years old, because she thought it was the only thing holding me back from being the next “Miss Alabama” (a title which ironically, my best flight attendant friend did hold in the year before she started flying). Being a beauty queen was my mother’s dream, not mine. I wanted to compete in a beauty pageant like I wanted a hole in the head. Besides the fact that I had no talent other than writing and training my multiple dogs how to sit heel, come and stay, I was shy growing up as an only child and wanted no part of being in front of a camera. I always wanted to be a journalist and a writer...a serious profession from my POV, not the stereotype of a beauty pageant winner.

Of course, it is not a beauty contestant requirement to have an ample bosom, but during that era, it undoubtedly helped to have that hourglass figure, and my hat is off to all those beautiful women who endeavored to be the type of female that we could all admire, not only for their looks but for their talents. Beauty inside and out.

Consider also that two years later, at 23, when I became a flight attendant, every time I checked in for a flight, I had to be weighed, and in full makeup. It was a requirement for the job. If I was over my optimal weight limit, I was “written up”, and if I was not fully made up in red lipstick, and painted nails, I was also written up. “Lips and tips” our flight instructor called this process. So, there were appearance standards that went along with this job during my generation as a flight attendant and it was something that I readily accepted since I wanted the job. Additionally, as a newly designated adult and young woman, I did want to be the best I could be and quite honestly, I was NOT well-endowed in the breast department. So, I took the opportunity because it fulfilled my vision of what a beautiful woman’s body should look like. Brainwashed? Perhaps, but we are all the sum of our experiences and subject to society’s fashion, beauty and generational standards, even if we don’t realize it. Besides, hey, it was free!

Let me interject here. Mom and I were basically two uneducated but enthusiastic “pioneers” of cosmetic surgery. My breast implant surgery was free because it was part of an experimental program in Washington D.C. for saline solution filled implants...the newly discovered alternative to silicone implants. Although saline implants were created in 1964 in France, it wasn’t until the early 1990’s that they gained popularity with American surgeons...and as with most things

in the U.S. medical community, this involved clinical trials. The surgery changed my self-image vastly for more positive feelings about what my mother and I considered a deficiency in my appearance. So basically, I was a guinea pig for all future breast implant patients. You're welcome y'all!

Later in life, when I turned 47, I woke up one day and looked in the mirror to see the inevitable effects of gravity and years of too much sun. For me, and many American women I know, the 1980's was a decade of "the healthy tan." What an oxymoron! During my teenage years, I spent summers at the beach slathered in baby oil baking away for hours in the midday sun so I could get that golden tan and sun-streaked blonde California girl look. This was in addition to being outside every day in the Caribbean sun from 27 to 34 years old, while working as a sailor, chef and yacht hostess on a sailboat. It was a beautiful life, but it came with a price. It wasn't until I left the Caribbean for France, that I started to recognize that the sun was not always your friend as you age. From what I could see in observing French women, they were much more conservative with sun exposure and better understood the importance of skin care. This may be a generalization, but there's no doubt that living in France for five years is what changed my sun goddess philosophy.

What all this is leading up to is that in keeping with my "maintenance plan" as I call it...which is just trying to do what you can and not more than you have to, I opted to have an SMAS lift which is basically a mini face lift (see the dictionary at the end of this book for a full description). It was done under twilight sedation (heavily sedated but not put to sleep by an anesthesiologist) as an in-office, out-patient procedure, by a qualified American plastic surgeon in Jacksonville, Florida. My

mom talked me into this surgery and paid for it as well because she was also going to have some surgery, and she wanted us to recover together as a bonding mother-daughter experience. That may sound weird, but we were only 16 years difference in age and extremely close.

She really had no one to take care of her during her recovery and the surgeries she would be having were debilitating, at least for a month. I went first and had an easy, basic recovery within seven days. Then it was her turn. The price for that surgery over 15 years ago, is indicative of the point I am making in this book about the range of choices, and price ranges outside of the U.S. This will be explained in subsequent chapters.

MUCH later, in 2014, I had a breast cancer scare which turned out to be “stage zero breast cancer”, also known as ductal carcinoma in situ (DCIS) which occurs in the breast milk ducts. The doctor recommended that I have surgery to “scoop out” these abnormal cells. This required replacing my original saline implants (which were essentially over 20 years old) with the most state of the art silicone implants nick-named “Gummy Bear” implants. This type of implant has a thicker, more cohesive gel for softer, more natural looking breasts. So, basically, I’ve been around the block twice in the breast surgery department.

The rest of what I knew about esthetic surgery came from my mother’s own experiences. Mom was a beautiful, successful, self-made woman who fully lived the adages “be your best self” and “always look the part”. Many called her a force of nature. Having a child at 16, in Montgomery, Alabama during the 1960’s was tough for working women, and as a

teenager, she had to work two jobs to support us. For some people, such as she, growing up in the deep South meant being raised on a diet of fried chicken and low-cost, carbohydrate rich foods. Later, as a single mom, there was no time for exercise. Eventually, she remarried and became the number two agent in the state of Virginia at a very reputable real estate company. As an agent who worked day and night to achieve that status, yo-yo dieting became a way of life. All of this took a toll on her in the form of a weight problem that she had struggled with all her life. Years later, when she did get her weight under control while following a professional diet program, she reduced her weight from over 200 pounds down to 118 pounds. This left her with the aftermath of loose, hanging skin that can be a result of dramatic weight loss.

Physical appearances were important for her self-esteem, and for her career. She had her first and only face lift at 50 and later a tummy tuck as well as extensive arm, leg, and breast lift surgeries to correct skin laxity. At 60, she had a CO2 laser facial procedure in addition to cosmetic injections. Remember that all of this was over the course of her lifetime, and in today's world aesthetic procedures are considered by some as acceptable in the quest for self-improvement. All these surgeries and procedures were performed for an extravagant sum of money, with the best surgeons she could find given her limited knowledge. Medical tourism on a large scale didn't exist then, so she saw no alternatives. I was her care giver, who attended every consultation and follow-up appointment with her, and thus was privy to those experiences and recovery periods firsthand. She had spared no expense for her procedures, never regretted any of them and remained a stunningly beautiful woman until at age 71, when she was taken from me with by environmentally related cancer. God rest her beautiful soul.

So, people have cosmetic, esthetic, or plastic surgery for many different reasons and in addition to beauty, including for example, cleft palate deformities in children, or reconstructive surgery after a mastectomy, an accident, or extreme weight loss, not to mention the increasingly popular “mommy makeover”, or just to feel better about themselves. I was horrified to learn about the number of acid attacks on women in India by controlling husbands, and so grateful to learn of pro bono surgeons who help these women to improve their appearance and save their dignity. No one can stand in your shoes, nor should anyone judge you for deciding to have elective surgery.

You also might want to read this guide because in addition to my own experience and that of some close personal friends who have had aesthetic surgery outside the U.S., including the “big seven” ...Turkey, Thailand, Colombia, Mexico, India, Brazil and South Korea. you will read about the experience of many people, of many different nationalities, from all walks of life. I use the reference “outside the U.S.” because although the most cosmetic surgeries worldwide are performed in the United States, these are not always performed by the best surgeon at the best price or under the best conditions. This is not to say that you cannot find some of the best surgeons and techniques in the U.S. because you can. However, you also have many other choices that might give you a lot more value, with a little vacation thrown in. Additionally, there are some operations that cannot be performed in the United States which are available elsewhere.

When considering the number of procedures relative to population size, South Korea leads the world with the highest rate of plastic surgery per capita in the world. Brazil has the second-highest number of cosmetic surgeries performed,

accounting for 10.7% of all procedures worldwide. With few exceptions, you will pay 50%-90% lower prices and with equal or better-quality care than you might receive in the U.S. Most importantly, some countries specialize in a certain type of surgery, such as hair transplant for men in Turkey, or the Brazilian butt lift, naturally from Brazil. All of this will be outlined in future chapters of this guide. Keep in mind that medical tourism is not just for aesthetic surgery. This can be also for costly procedures such as hip or knee replacement which are far more expensive in the U.S. unless you are covered by an excellent insurance policy or Medicare. In countries with social medicine, wait times can be prohibitive and medical tourism can offer some faster options. Some videos and reference links will also be listed in the guide for your perusal.

Finally, as I have mentioned many times so far, the most valuable part of what you will read here is the collective experience of other likeminded people. You will have a list of surgery procedures, recovery times, names, websites, addresses and contact information for clinics, hospitals, surgeons from all over the world. Again, everyone's journey, desired outcomes, and price points different, but after interviewing these people who have had various procedures, in various places, I can pinpoint some specific information that will be valuable to you before making your decision. So, let's get started.

CHAPTER 2: THE BIG SEVEN

When examining the top countries in the world for affordable, high-quality cosmetic surgery or other procedures, according to researchable sources, seven of them stand out. Let's first examine the general information regarding the options and the reasoning behind their popularity. Then, each country/category will be discussed in more detail with testimonials and interviews, in the following chapters.

- 1) **TURKEY:** Renowned for its skilled surgeons and advanced medical facilities, Turkey offers a wide range of cosmetic procedures at competitive prices. The country performs approximately 2,000 cosmetic/plastic surgery and dental procedures per day. (*US-UK bookimed.com*). Turkey is most renowned for the following cosmetic surgery procedures; #1 for HAIR TRANSPLANTS (FUE—Follicular Unit Extraction) and DHI (Direct Hair Implantation), RHINOPLASTY (Nose Job), LIPOSUCTION (Vaser and laser lipo) TUMMY TUCK (Abdominoplasty), BREAST AUGMENTATION (implants, lifts, and reductions), BLEPHAROPLASTY (Upper and lower eyelid surgery), FACELIFT (mini, deep-plane and non-surgical using threads or fillers), DENTAL AESTHETICS (Veneers, “Hollywood Smile” makeovers, dental implants).

***Most clinics in Turkey offer 5-star luxury recovery experiences with spa settings and post-surgery wellness care. It is a top medical tourism destination because it has a well-established medical tourism infrastructure.*

COSTS: Typically, 50-70% savings as compared to U.S. prices.

*****This is the country where I chose to have my deep plane face and neck lift with VANITY ESTETIK as well as a cosmetic dental procedure and this will be explained in detail in the next chapter.***

- 2) **MEXICO:** With its proximity to the United States, Mexico provides cost-effective cosmetic surgeries without compromising on quality. The country's medical facilities are equipped with modern technology, attracting numerous international patients. Mexico is most renowned for the following cosmetic/plastic surgery procedures; RHINOPLASTY (Nose job), LIPOSUCTION (Vaser and Laser), TUMMY TUCK (full or mini), BREAST AUGMENTATION (Implant, lifts and reductions), BBL (Brazilian Butt Lift), FACELIFT, BLEPHAROPLASTY (Eyelid upper and lower), MOMMY MAKEOVER (Usually a combination of tummy tuck, liposuction and breast surgery for women who seek to restore their pre-pregnancy body), DENTAL AESTHETICS (Hollywood Smile, veneers and implants)

COSTS: Typically, 40-70% lower than the U.S.

*****The proximity to the U.S. makes Mexico even more affordable for U.S. patients.***

- 3) **THAILAND:** Known for its hospitality and advanced healthcare system, Thailand offers a variety of cosmetic procedures at affordable rates. It is listed by ChatGPT as the number one country for medical tourism, but remember medical tourism includes more than just cosmetic, esthetic or plastic surgery, such as hip & knee

replacement, etc. The country's medical tourism industry is well-established, catering to patients from around the globe (*MedicalTourism.com*). #1 GENDER-AFFIRMING SURGERY (Sex Reassignment Surgery SRS), Male to Female (MTF) or Female to Male (FTM), BREAST AUGMENTATION, LIPOSUCTION & BODY CONTOURING, RHINOPLASTY (nose job, specializing in Asian rhinoplasty techniques that enhance nasal features while maintaining ethnic identity), FACE LIFTS (Mini, deep-plane and non-surgical), BLEPHAROPLASTY (specializing in Asian patients), TUMMY TUCK, MOMMY MAKEOVER, DENTAL AESTHETICS (Hollywood Smile and Veneers). **Most clinics in Thailand offer 5-star luxury recovery experiences with spa settings and post-surgery wellness care. It is a top medical tourism destination because it has a well-established medical tourism infrastructure.

COSTS: Typically, 50-70% lower than U.S.

- 4) **INDIA:** India's healthcare sector is recognized for its skilled professional and state-of-the-art facilities. Cosmetic surgeries in India are priced competitively, making it a favored destination for medical tourists. HAIR TRANSPLANT (FUE Follicular Unit Extraction, FUT Follicular Unit Transplantation), RHINOPLASTY, LIPOSUCTION & BODY CONTOURING (VASER, LASER and High-definition), BREAST AUGMENTATION (Lifts, reductions, implants), TUMMY TUCK, FACELIFT (Mini, Full-plane, deep-plane, Mid-face lift, non-surgical; ex: Thread lifts and fillers),

BLEPHAROPLASTY, MOMMY MAKEOVER, DENTAL AESTHETICS.

COSTS: Typically, 50-80% lower than U.S. prices.

***India also offers luxury recovery facilities, VISA assistance, and holistic post-surgery care and the medical tourism infrastructure is well developed.*

- 5) **SOUTH KOREA:** Often dubbed “the plastic surgery capital of the world,” South Korea is renowned for its advanced techniques and high success rates in cosmetic procedures. While costs may be higher than the other countries listed, the quality of care is exceptional (*MedicalTourism.com*). RHINOPLASTY (nose job and revision rhinoplasty, Specializing in Asian patients seeking dorsal augmentation, tip refinement or alar reduction), BLEPHAROPLASTY (but specializing in double eyelid surgery creating a more natural looking double eyelid crease), FACE CONTOURING, V-LINE & JAW REDUCTION SURGERY, GENIOPLASTY (Chin surgery), ZYGOMA (Cheekbone reductions), SKIN WHITENING & ANTI-AGING TREATMENTS. #1 in non-surgical treatments such as BB glow, laser toning, glutathione injections (for even-toned, brighter skin), HIFU=High-Intensity Focused Ultrasound, Thermage for skin tightening, BREAST AUGMENTATION (using autologous fat transfer which is a more natural enhancement than implants), LIPOSUCTION & BODY CONTOURING (Korean style focusing on enhancing femininity and symmetry vs. just removing fat), FACELIFT (SMAS/mini face lift and threading w/PDO threads), BRAZILIAN BUTT LIFT (BBL using fat grafting for a more natural looking curves), HIP DIP CORRECTION (for an hourglass

shape). KOREAN GLASS SKIN TREATMENTS (Laser resurfacing, exosome therapy which Korea is world-famous for), SMILE LIPT (Lip Lift Surgery. This is a Korean specialty involving a unique surgical technique that lifts the corners of the mouth creating permanent slight smile appearance for patients to correct a downturned mouth shape).

COSTS: Typically, 50-60% lower than U.S. prices

***South Korea offers comprehensive medical tourism support, and services include luxury recovery facilities, airport pick-up, English speaking coordinators and holistic post-surgery care. Additionally, S. Korea's aesthetic philosophy focuses on subtle, harmonious beauty, avoiding overdone or exaggerated results. Some of state-of-the-art clinics use 3D scanning, robotic-assisted surgery and AI-powered consultations.*

- 6) **BRAZIL:** With a long-standing, rich history in cosmetic surgery, Brazil offers a wide range of procedures performed by experienced surgeons. The country's reputation in the field attracts numerous international patients seeking quality health care at reasonable prices. (*MedicalTourism.com*). #1 for BBL (Brazilian Butt Lift, but of course! Brazil is the birthplace of the BBL, a fat transfer procedure that enhances the buttocks' shape and volume while sculpting the waist and hips.), LIPOSUCTION & HD BODY CONTOURING, BREAST AUGMENTATION (with implants or fat transfer, Mastopexy/breast lift—with or without implants), TUMMY TUCK, LIPOABDOMINOPLASTY (combines liposuction with abdominal definition for a more sculpted look, (i.e.: 6-pak abs), RHINOPLASTY

(nose job including ultrasonic which minimizes swelling and bruising which is a common approach in Brazil), FACE LIFT (mini, and deep plane often including fat grafting to the face as is available in most other cases of facelift anywhere), BLEPHAROPLASTY (Eyelid surgery), BROW LIFT, MOMMY MAKEOVER, GENDER-AFFIRMING SURGERY (specializing in FFS Facial Feminization Surgery and body contouring for transgender patients). **COSTS: Typically, 70-90% lower than the U.S. or Europe.**

***Brazil also has an advanced medical tourism infrastructure and, in many clinics, luxury recovery accommodations as well as English speaking staff, and concierge services. While NOT the least expensive, Brazil offers high-quality procedures at lower cost than the U.S. and Europe.*

- 7) **COLOMBIA:** Emerging as a popular destination for cosmetic surgery, Colombia combines affordability with high standards of medical care. The country's clinics are equipped with modern facilities, and its surgeons are known for their expertise. (Medical Tourism). BRAZILIAN BUTT LIFT (being a Latin country, cosmetic surgeons here are well skilled at the BBL, although Brazil is still the #1 country for this as the originator of the procedure), LIPOSUCTION (specializing in the "Colombian waist" look with a tiny waist and sculpted abs), BREAST AUGMENTATION, TUMMY TUCK, RHINOPLASTY, FACELIFT, BLEPHAROPLASTY, CHIN & JAWLINE CONTOURING, GENDER-AFFIRMING SURGERY,

COSTS: Typically, 50-70% lower than prices in the U.S. and Europe

IMPORTANT SIDE NOTE: Other countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Costa Rica, Israel and many more, are also top destinations for medical tourism and cosmetic surgery, however the countries listed are generally the most frequented by international patients and include the most specialized types of surgery which often are not offered in the United States.

Obviously while these countries offer cost effective surgeries, it's crucial to conduct thorough research and choose reputable clinics and surgeons. Consulting with medical professionals and understanding the potential risks and benefits are essential steps before undergoing any procedure abroad. Anyone can go on *YouTube* and find cosmetic surgery disasters or great successes, in just about any developed country on the planet. That is why this guide is being created; to give you some well-established clinics in each of these countries outlined which have been utilized by people that I have interviewed, in addition to my own experience and conversations with surgeons, and various personnel associated with the clinics listed. Also please note that although the listing of the procedures each country is well-known for, each of them most likely can and do perform surgeries not listed. Verifying is only a matter of inquiry directly with the clinics listed.

More detailed information will be covered about each of these medical surgical destinations in subsequent chapters, but if you would like to read a little more on the subject of health tourism, I suggest you read an article which is readily available on the internet called "Health Tourism Isn't Just For Influencers

---Here's What to Know Before you Book" (available at www.popsugar.com) as one example.

OTHER SOURCES FOR MEDICAL TOURISM EDUCATION

One of the first times I had ever heard of medical tourism was after watching Morgan Spurlock's *Inside Man* series (specifically the *Club Med* episode in 2015) where he traveled to Thailand's Bumrungrad International Hospital to seek treatment for a shoulder injury and had a colonoscopy. He found that the treatment at Bumrungrad cost \$3,000 while the equivalent in the U.S. would have cost approximately \$14,000. The overall cost of the trip including treatment, travel and accommodation was about \$4,300. Watch the full episode of Morgan Spurlock's *Inside Man*, *Club Med* episode on Amazon Prime video.

OTHER RESOURCES

---*The Rise of Medical Tourism* #medicaltourism, #travelbusiness, #healthtourism (YouTube)

NETFLIX also has several documentaries dedicated to medical tourism including

---"*Beauty and the Beach*", a series following people undergoing cosmetic surgeries in a true-story observational documentary. The show features Phuket, Thailand, exploring the experience of medical tourism in a cosmetic context. Beautiful You Holidays was featured on season two (2017) in Phuket Thailand.

---*Medical Mecca or Mirage?* Explores the world of medical tourism where patients travel for treatments that are either too expensive or unavailable in their home countries.

**References from www.factualamerica.com, News Agencies
& Various Groups on YouTube
(Documentaries that investigate the world of medical
tourism)**

- The Medical Tourist* by BBC (2012)
- Under the Knife Abroad* from National Geographic
- Global Surgery and How It Can Heal the World* by TedX
- Travel for a Cure* by PBS (2023)
- Wellness Without Borders* by CNN (2018)
- Understanding Medical Tourism* on YouTube
- *The Rise of Medical Tourism* on YouTube

CHAPTER 3: TURKEY; VANITY ESTETIK HOSPITAL

I begin with Turkey, and specifically Vanity Estetik (also known as Vanity Cosmetic Surgery Hospital) because this is where I had my most recent esthetic surgery in February 2025 (full-plane face lift, neck lift, fat transfer and teeth whitening), which could not have been a better experience.

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR VANITY ESTETIK HOSPITAL

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LINKS TO MEDIA

<http://www.vanityclinic.com>
<https://www.youtube.com/vanitycosmeticsurgery>
<https://www.instagram.com/vanitycosmeticsurgery/>
<https://www.tiktok.com/@vanitycosmeticsurgery>
2,730 reviews on Trustpilot
<https://www.trustpilot.com/review/www.vanityestetik.com>

Background/company description: Vanity Cosmetic Surgery Hospital was founded in 2016 by plastic surgeon M.D. Guray Yesiladali, and the clinic offers a wide array of esthetic beauty solutions at a level of accessible luxury, with a team of highly

qualified professionals. The wide range of cosmetic procedures offered include (but not limited to) facial procedures such as rhinoplasty, blepharoplasty, full and mini face & neck lifts, bichectomy (cheek fat removal), otoplasty (ear reshaping), chin & jawline surgery, all breast procedures, including gynecomastia (male breast reduction), and body procedures (liposuction, tummy tuck, Brazilian butt lift, arm & thigh lift, mommy makeover). Specialized services include 360-degree liposuction, vaginoplasty & labiaplasty (intimate areas surgery) and post-bariatric surgery for patients with excess skin after major weight loss, as well as advance hair transplant procedures.

Located in Istanbul, Vanity Cosmetic Surgery Hospital combines the 10+ years of experience of its ten full-time surgeons specializing in different areas, with new methods and technologies and patient satisfaction as the top priority. These doctors are some of the best plastic surgeons in their fields, and they are internationally certified and acknowledged by global core institutions such as ISAPS and EBOPRAS. The surgical team includes plastic, reconstructive, and aesthetic surgeons Dr. Guray Yesiladali (founder), Dr. Bora OK, Prof. Dr. Sinem Eroglu, Dr. Can Zeliha Gul, Dr. Mert Sizmaz, Dr. Cagatay Oner (this was my surgeon), Dr. Aysel Pasazade, Dr. Baris Kanik, Dr. Anil Hismi (ear, nose and throat specialist) and Assoc. Prof. Kadri Ila (ear, nose and throat specialist). For more detailed information about the medical team, you can visit the dedicated page for doctor information “Vanity Cosmetic Surgery Hospital Doctors” on the official website: www.vanityclinic.com. The website provides photos of each surgeon and detailed information about each surgeon’s credentials.

Vanity has earned several prestigious national and international accreditations, including affiliations with the International Society of Plastic Surgery, the American Society of Plastic Surgeons, and the Turkish Medical Association. Vanity Estetik has been honored with “What Clinic Best Patient Service Award” four times. The clinic offers a wide range of hair restoration techniques tailored to individual needs including follicular unit extraction (FUE), direct hair implantation (DHI), FUE Gold (an advanced version of FUE that employs gold-tipped instruments to minimize tissue trauma and enhance healing), follicular unit transplantation (FUT) and body hair transplant (BHT).

Vanity Hospital covers an area of 3,800 square meters and is nine stories tall. It includes six operating rooms, six outpatient clinics, and three hair transplant rooms. Vanity Bosphorus offers a personalized and holistic healthcare experience with a total of 25 rooms six of which are VIP rooms which not only provide patients with a spacious area compared to standard rooms but also feature a separate room and bathroom for a companion, ensuring extra comfort and privacy. In addition to face, body and hair transplant operations they also provide other medical operations, beauty services and dental care. There are online consultation and examination opportunities for our patients before and after the operation. Their multi-lingual patient advisory team is ready to support you 24/7 for all questions and requests. A written and verbal outline of your personalized treatment plan is also provided.

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THE LUXURY PACKAGES OFFERED:

- VIP transfer service to and from the airport and hotel and between the hotel and clinic as **Translation services
- 5-star hotel accommodation of between 5 & 7 nights, (depending on procedure) for our international patients (may vary). The hotel is in a central area of Istanbul. (Asian side)
- Patient advisory team of two personal assistants, available 24/7
- Free online & in person consultations with your surgeon & multiple follow-up visits
- A personalized treatment plan.
- Hospital stays of 1-2 nights (depending on procedure) in our private hospital, with private room, adjoining private bath, with in-room safe and TV.
- Pre-operative tests.
- The Surgical procedure, or non-surgical treatment.
- Final check-ups.

ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES AND DETAIL

Hair Transplants for both men and women (Sapphire/blade precision FUE, DHI Direct Hair Implantation, Hair Transplant Sapphire FUE+Stem cell treatment, DHI + Stem cell treatment, Stem cell treatment only, Beard & Hair Transplant Sapphire FUE, Mustache or eyebrow Transplant FUE)

Nose Operations: Septoplasty (Deviated septum correction)

Face Operations: Fox Eye Lift, Brow and Forehead Lift, Ultherapy, Dimple Creation, Under-Eye Light Filling, Lip Augmentation, Eyelid Surgery, Corrective surgery, Mesotherapy, Face and Neck Lift, Fat Transfer

Body Operations: Hyperhidrosis Treatment, Genitals Plastic Surgery, Injections (Stem Cell & fillers)

MY PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

From the minute I arrived at the airport in Istanbul, I was already impressed that with the detailed instruction I had been given by my personal patient advisor, I could easily locate a representative from the Vanity Hospital holding a sign with my name on it. This is relief for someone in a different country who does not speak the language. With great courtesy and efficiency, he greeted me by name, in English, and took my bags as we proceeded to one of the vans, well-marked with the company logo.

The driver took me directly to the hotel as it was early evening, and the hospital was closed for the bloodwork that I needed to have done pre-op, scheduled for the next day. In some cases, patients are taken directly to the hospital for bloodwork, pre-op and consultations with the surgeon, but it depends on the time and day of arrival. The driver helped me with my bags and check-in. The hotel, Mercure Umraniye Hotel exceeded my expectations because although I am very familiar with the Accor Hotel chain, from which you can expect a uniform standard of quality (as with Marriot and other hotel chains), I was delightfully surprised to learn that there was also a luxury spa with heated pool, steam room, Turkish bath and massage options at my disposal. A nice option since I would be spending

seven days there, fully paid by Vanity. The room was comfortable, room service was always available, and breakfast was included.

After a light meal, I prepared my affairs for the trip to the hospital the next morning. Of note is that even though I would be offered a one-to-two-night stay at the hospital, my room was available for me during those two nights where I could leave all my things arranged for my return. So, I prepared an overnight bag with pajamas, habitual medications, toiletries, paperwork, payment for the operation and my cell phone. I was in constant contact with Gizem, my international sales coordinator and Berfin, my patient coordinator. Both coordinators work together; one for the sales, details about surgeons, accommodations, etc. as well as any questions before and after arrival. The other, a hospital coordinator is specifically for the hospital experience and the multiple trips between the hotel and the hospital. Vanity has coordinators who speak English, Turkish, German, Italian, French, Arabic, Serbian and Spanish (other languages can be accommodated upon request).

I have to say that these two assistants were absolutely what gave me the most confidence in the efficient operation of this company, and the tipping point for my decision to go with Vanity. There was never, not one time, that Gizem didn't get back to me within 24 hours with a thorough answer to my questions prior to my arrival, and Berfin was equally on point for my needs and questions regarding preparation for and during my hospital stay.

Breakfast the next morning was both torture and a delight. Displayed before me in the size of a ballroom were so many culinary delights.... that I could not eat ...because I had to be

fasting prior to my lab tests, I walked around the exquisitely displayed buffet offering a vast array of eggs, cheeses, meats, yogurts, fruit, vegetables, potatoes, pastries, cakes, special Turkish dishes, and even spaghetti! Accompanied of course by coffees, teas and juices of every variety. As a former flight attendant, I seen a LOT of hotels, but never have I seen such elaborate breakfast buffets as I saw in Turkey (except in Cuba at the Nacionel Hotel...and no doubt there are other countries doing the same—I'm speaking from personal experience). A fellow patient joked in the van to the hospital with me that morning that she couldn't wait to get to that buffet the next day, and that she's "lived vicariously" through her husband who had a hair transplant the day before, who could eat/drink all that we could not on that morning.

"I told him, honey go over and get some of that pomegranate juice and drink it for me! Tell me what it tastes like! Then go back for the fresh orange juice.... oh, just hold it close to my lips!", she said, like a starved lover.

Ah yes, the Vanity van experience. I think one of the most interesting and comforting experiences I had all happened during the Vanity van trips between the hotel and the hospital. You are in that van with other patients in a double three-seater couches face-to-face configuration during the 30–40-minute trip. Usually in my case, these were female passengers. It's like being in a cab with strangers but you are all going to the same place, for the same reason, so there is a certain intimacy. I am an open, but not overly overt conversationalist, but this morning, I was blessed with a warm and funny Canadian woman who happily opened the conversation.

“Oh my God, are you just dying to eat after that breakfast buffet?” she chirped. The young girl sitting across from me started to laugh and said no, that as a flight attendant she was usually on a diet but that tomorrow she was going to dig in.

We all asked each other about the procedure the other was going to have and if they were afraid. The 27-year-old flight attendant was having a rhinoplasty. The 55-year-old Canadian blonde, with tattoos from wrist to neck (very artistically designed I must say despite not being a tattoo fan) was having a mini-face lift. I looked at both women and thought to myself, wow, you are both beautiful! You don’t need to change a thing! I said this to the 55-year-old. To which she replied “it isn’t what you or anyone else thinks. It’s about what I think, and I feel I should do it before it’s really time to do it, so I don’t miss a beat of my exciting life with my husband.” Bravo. I couldn’t have said it better myself. Suddenly I realized that is what they might think about me too.... that I didn’t really need to do this. Yet, I knew I was making the right decision for me, for so many reasons.

Another thing that we discussed in the van (and remember, this is pre-surgery for all of us) was the fact that we felt a little freaked out by the fact that we were about to undergo surgery before ever having met our surgeon face-to-face (except via zoom), having lab tests and paying on the day of surgery. As an American who is all about guarantees, warranties and consumer protection, I was more than a little apprehensive. However, prior to deciding to go with VANITY, I consulted with a private Turkish surgeon recommended by a friend. While texting, he gave me a price. Then after a video conference call, he doubled the price. With no offers of a luxury hotel stay, and all the things that VANITY offers right up front. I decided it was obviously

better to go with a well-established, successful operation that offers clear services, at a set price and the resumes of each surgeon, versus an independent who could change prices at any time, without my having seen his credentials, etc..... based upon advice of a friend.

Upon arrival at the hospital, which is a beautiful building full of windows and light, with the Vanity Hospital sign clearly displayed, a smiling receptionist and Starbucks type of coffee bar in the lobby, each of us was directed to the waiting area. In less than five minutes, Berfin, my “International Patient Experience Specialist” came to greet me and send me along to the lab, on the lower floor of the hospital for tests and bloodwork. After, I was sent to an upper floor to wait in a private room for the results, triage, and face-to-face consultation with the surgeon. Prior to arrival, I had been sent my surgeon, Dr. Cagatay Oner’s resume. According to his credentials, he completed his medical degree in Istanbul as well as his plastic, reconstructive and aesthetic surgery specialist training, but also worked in Germany and Switzerland to enhance his experience in the field of aesthetic surgery. He has been performing surgeries since 2015. He is a member of the Turkish Society of Plastic, Reconstructive, Aesthetic surgery (TPRECD) and the European Board of Plastic, Reconstructive, Aesthetic surgery (EBOPRAS). He has been published in various national and international journals, and speaks Turkish, English and French. This was a bonus for me because I also speak French, and he spoke to me in perfect French and English. He took an hour to explain very carefully to me what would happen before, during and after the procedure and answered all my questions. Then he proposed an additional procedure which I hadn’t originally contracted but in retrospect, am SO glad that he proposed it. I had heard of fat transfer using your own fat

harvested from your own reserves to inject into the hollows off one's face, giving a much fuller look in the cheeks, temples and around the mouth, which we lose with age. I joked with him that he could take ALLLL the fat from my stomach to use generously! He smiled and quipped, "that's another procedure, called liposuction". A good sense of humor. I liked that. After some 360-degree "before" photos, I left his office feeling very confident that I had made the right choice.

Back in my private hospital room, I completed payment procedures with Berfin. The fat transfer was an additional \$1,000 reduced from the usual \$1,700 since it was an add-on. Vanity offers a 30% discount on any additional procedures you choose to do during your stay which is a nice option. Later I added professional teeth whitening with a dental clinic that Vanity contracts with for a fraction of the price I would pay in the U.S. or Europe. Side note here, is that my original payment of \$6,800 for face and neck lift was paid in cash on the day of surgery.

From the beginning of our negotiations, I was informed that the cash price they offered is always a better deal, because in Turkey there is an additional 20% VAT (tax) they must pay for foreign credit cards. This money is NOT paid upfront, only a \$700 deposit, made with my U.S. credit card (which provides protection). For the remaining payment, I was given a choice of USD or Euros (as I was living aboard my boat in Valencia, Spain). I would never have paid cash upfront before meeting with the surgeon, and being comfortable with the situation, nor should you. Yes, it seems daunting to make all these arrangement on the day of surgery but remember your patient coordinator has been available every day to send you doctor credentials, set up a video call with the surgeon, and negotiate

any prices and extra special requests. So, you do have a choice to opt out without losing money for the surgery.

In the end, my total for the surgery with fat transfer plus 7-night luxury hotel stay and all transportation, follow-up appointments, and 24/7 personal assistant, was \$7,800. I was able to pay the extra \$1,000 with my credit card on the spot. For this same surgery, without the hotel stay, a close girlfriend of my in the U.S. paid \$20,000 which is pretty much the going rate in Florida (**Prices can vary).

On the website, which is well organized and easy to navigate, specials are sometimes offered. For example, during a recent perusal there was a special offer for face lift & breast implants with lifting for 7,200 euros, reduced from 7,850 euros, with an all-inclusive hospital stay/hotel package.

Once back in my private hospital room where I would spend the next 24-48 hours following surgery, I noted my surroundings and prepared my things. The room had a private bath with shower, a window to the outside world, a TV, and closet with a built-in safe for my phone and valuables. Just outside my room, centered on the recovery room floor is a 24-hour nurses' station. My hospital bed was equipped with a call button. I felt secure and confident.

Within 20 minutes a nurse appeared to start the necessary IV, along with Berfin who asked if I had any additional questions. It was 10:30 am. Then suddenly, that peaceful, blissful drowsy feeling came upon me preparing me for a little trip to LaLa land. I just love that feeling you get during surgery when you drift off and in what seems like minutes, you wake up and it's all over. In reality, it was four hours later. Even before I was fully awake, a nurse was beside my bed, adjusting

the IV bags and covers around me. She smiled that perfect nurse smile that says everything is ok and told me everything went well and was there anything she could get me.

THE CATHETER!! Oh, my goodness, I had forgotten how much a catheter can be a necessary but painful part of surgery! She called the doctor in and after an examination and he said it was ok to take it out. Five points for Dr. O! He truly had one of the best bedside manners I had ever experienced with any surgeon (not that I'm an expert).

He said the surgery had gone very well, that I would be required to wear the drains for at least one night, and that I could expect some swelling and pain. My head was encased in a pretty sporty looking black neoprene head brace/compression garment which I was instructed to wear 24/7 for the next two weeks, at least. The Velcro straps attached at the top of my head, around the back midway down and around the back of my neck. It allowed for free hair movement and created an oval where the front of my face was visible until just under my lower lip and covering the sides of my face and ears (where the stitches were). A baseball cap with a scarf was quite effective to make myself presentable.

My first 24-hours following surgery passed quickly and I got plenty of rest and IV pain & anti-swelling drugs, with a nurse checking on me every two hours. The next morning, I awoke to seeing snow falling outside my window! I was charmed. Having spent several years in Florida and the last two years sailing the Med in warm climates on my 50-foot catamaran, I was delighted to see SNOW!!! Snow always represents for me a fresh new beginning, although many friends I met during this surgery adventure who were from Canada,

would beg to differ! Soon after, my surgeon came again to see how I was doing. The drains were less than half full indicating that my body was not producing excess fluid and blood related to the surgery, so he said these could be removed later that day. I was offered a second night in the hospital, but I was feeling quite chipper despite the slightly heavy head feeling which accompanies this type of surgery and opted to return to the hotel. I had my first meal of soup and fruit cocktail, but of course haute cuisine was not really on my mind at that point. I just wanted to go home...I mean back to the hotel that was to be my home for the next seven days and nights.

Many precautions were taken prior to my official release from the hospital. The facial compression garment (which we will call my “spy” mask) was taken off to check stitches and bleeding before being redressed with bandages and put back on. I had to show the nurse that I could get up without effort and go to the bathroom alone. I had to do a few laps around the nurses’ station for 20 minutes to prove I could move about without vertigo or complications, and I had to telephone someone to let them know I was being released.

A shoutout goes to the Vanity van drivers who transport patients between the hospital and the hotel. These guys are a wealth of information about where to find things you might need to buy, an ATM or food store, for example. They will take you to a pharmacy on the way to pick up medications. They physically assist you into and out of the van, knowing that you might be feeling a little wobbly. Probably they are interviewed about their ability to be discreet because oh my goodness, the conversations they hear! Anytime you are in the van, you are with likeminded people who have made the same choice as you....to have elective surgery, and they are free with their

opinions.... about their surgeon, the quality of service or the funny stories about walking around in the outside world after surgery. Instant comradery, which is a gift when you might be alone in a strange land.

Getting back to the Mercure hotel, I felt such a relief wash over me. I was in a safe place, with 24-hour room service, all the comforts of home and a luxury spa just a few floors down for when I was feeling up to it. I sighed a happy sigh looking out over a fresh blanket of snow from my 7th floor window. Alone at last. This may sound funny to some. Alone? Who wants to be alone? Well, I do sometimes, especially when I look like an accident victim. Don't get me wrong, I am not an anti-social person. I was a flight attendant and have always worked with crews and had the gift of gab with passengers. Yet, I love my solitude at times and reading a book and just taking time for me and the whole new person I was becoming. I'm pretty good at taking care of myself when sick or injured...I'm a mother after all, but some of my American friends who chose to go home to an empty house following surgery were not so fortunate. I will share those experiences with you later.

During the course of those seven days, I met so many new friends and had so many interesting, meaningful conversations with people of all ages, nationalities and walks of life, and that might have never happened if I had this surgery in the U.S. To answer a question that I was asked a lot about communicating in a country where I did not speak the language, never, did I encounter a situation where there was no one that spoke English. I am fortunate that I also speak French and Spanish, but most all the people in Istanbul speak English, as it is the international language, so most of the patients from other countries also spoke at least a little English.

In fact, the best part of my experience was the people I met. Every morning in the breakfast room at the hotel, I was surrounded by others wearing the same fashion (imagine that!) as well as men with their heads wrapped in bandages (hair transplant), or nose splint guards with some serious tape (for rhinoplasty) or raccoon like bandages around their eyes (cosmetic eye surgery). During my university years, I was in a sorority and lived in a sorority house. Being in the breakfast room of this Mercure hotel, was like being in a sorority house with a 24-hour pajama party where everyone “gets you” and shares the same choice of “accessories” (neoprene spy masks and bandages)! Some young ladies even wore their silk pajamas down to the room flooded with light from the windows and the warmth of delicious smells coming from the breakfast buffet.

They say that food and sharing meals bring us together. The Italians say that food is love. Mothers show love for their families by the food and nurturing they provide. That’s how this felt. Most of the tables seated four or more, so often patients shared tables which in turn was conducive to some interesting conversation. Many of the interviews I conducted about this particular clinic were in this breakfast room. I learned about pickleball, the health care system in Canada, life as an influencer from some of the fashionistas I met. I learned about a new homeopathic line of health supplements with first-hand knowledge from the creator.

So, let’s talk about recovery. For the first few days, I took it easy, applying ice occasionally, and religiously wearing my spy mask. When I removed the mask, it was to apply an antibiotic ointment to the dissolving stitches in front of and behind my ears and the small incision under my chin. I had all

the pain medications necessary as well as oral antibiotics. Yet, to be honest, I felt very little pain, only a numbing sensation on both sides of my face near the ears and under my chin. Actually, the most discomfort I felt for the first couple of days was from the two miniscule incisions at the bikini line, that the surgeon had made to extract the fat transfer. It felt like I had done 500 sit-ups, but that pain quickly subsided. Also, I am a side sleeper, and it was painful to sleep on either one of my ears was painful and not the way to do it. It is essential, at least for that first week, that you sleep on your back with several pillows for elevation. Don't worry, the pain medications can help with this.

From the occasional injections I've had in the past, I know that I'm usually a bruiser. However, this time nothing, nada, no bruising whatsoever, which I thought was a miracle until I learned that something for swelling and bruising had been added to my IV bag during my hospital stay. I also had started taking Arnica one week prior to surgery and used a topical Arnica gel throughout my recuperation. I highly recommend it. I was surprised to learn that it was forbidden to take vitamin C, E and D two to three weeks prior to surgery, and I was given explicit instructions on what or what not to do weeks ahead by my personal surgery assistants, as well as a specific list of dos and don'ts following surgery. I have slightly high blood pressure for which I occasionally take medication, so I was asked to send my blood pressure readings, taken 3x a day for a week to my personal assistant who passed it along to the necessary doctors.

By day, three following my follow-up visit with the surgeon, I could take a shower, and I felt well enough to do a water walk in the heated spa pool as well as sit on a lounge in a Zen like area of the spa to read a book. I know it's important

to eat a lot of protein, so at breakfast I had eggs, and then took a little “care package” up to my room for later. The hotel staff was extremely accommodating and attended to my every request.

On day two in the breakfast room, I met a new friend named Sandy, which happens to be my deceased mother’s name, so I felt a little karma there. She’s originally from Canada but was living in Houston, Texas. She had her raccoon eye patches on, and we immediately felt a connection, so we decided to set out for the shopping mall together on day four. It was within walking distance and we both enjoyed the crisp, fresh air outside. The clothing and many other items in Turkey are very inexpensive by American and European standards. I was able to buy a leather jacket and leather boots for less than \$50. The days rolled by in easy comfort.

On the sixth day, I had another follow-up appointment with my surgeon who called me a very good healer! Yeah! I get an A+ just like my blood type. I had an interesting conversation with him about different patient experiences and asked him if he’s had any patients that he counseled NOT to have aesthetic surgery. He told me about a lovely young woman in her twenties, who had come in for a consultation to have a mini-face lift. He advised her against it and said that ethically he felt it was not a good choice at such a young age. I appreciated his frankness and was pleased to see that it’s not only about the money. Vanity surgeons also care about the well-being of their patients.

Following my check-up, I was whisked away to my teeth whitening appointment at the Altunizade Dental clinic; Tel. +90 532 216 14 63 (www.altunizade.com) which is one of the dental

facilities that Vanity works with. The whitening process was painless and only about an hour. The price of \$170 was a 30% discount as an add on procedure and compared to the \$500-\$700 options I was offered in the U.S. and Spain, quite a bargain. Vanity offers a dental veneers package for \$3,500 which includes a seven-day luxury hotel stay. I had met several people at the hotel who had opted for this package and were very pleased with the results.

On check-out day at Mercure, I had opted (in advance) to take an additional four days in the hotel because I wanted to give myself a little more recovery time before going out into world to discover the beautiful city of Istanbul. The city has two sectors...one on the Asian side of Turkey (where this hotel was located, as well as the Vanity hospital) and one on the European side, separated by a strait called the Bosphorus Strait. I very much wanted to discover the European side which is characterized as being a bit more cosmopolitan than the Anatolian (or Asian) side, which is favored for its more relaxed, pace of residential life. After my 10 days stay in the Mercure, I had booked another hotel on the European side, very close to the Grand Bazaar and an excellent, above ground (tram) public transportation system. Vanity Hospital was gracious enough to provide me with transportation between the two locations.

In terms of recovery, I can honestly say that on day nine, I was ready to greet the world again with no, real, visible signs of having had surgery (when I didn't have my spy mask on which I was only wearing at night). The stitches in front of and behind my ear were dissolving rapidly and although there was some slight swelling, nothing too out of the ordinary. I felt great and was ready to tour! Arriving at The Hotel Beyaz Saray & Spa where I was booked for the next six nights, seven days, I

felt like a princess.... yet paying a bargain price of only \$371. The hotel is ornately decorated with beautiful curving stairways, large stone balconies and once again, a luxury spa. My fourth-floor room had a balcony overlooking a historic square where every morning and several times a day, I heard the call to prayer. The snow was beginning to melt, and the sun was shining brightly. The square was teeming with cosmopolitan looking people from many different countries. I couldn't wait to get out and about.

Istanbul has a whole host of excursions and activities to offer. The Blue Mosque is not to be missed, and I opted also for the Bosphorus strait boating night cruise with dinner show, the Basilica Cistern and shopping at the Grand Bazaar. The Grand Bazaar, which was just across from my hotel, is a huge, cavernous, wonder of the world filled with an array of colors, spices, tastes, sights and sounds. All sorts of tour options are available at www.viator.com. I also visited the famous Gulhane Park (only 3 tram stops away from the hotel), which is full of wild parrots in the trees and gardens full of flowers.... sort of the Central Park of Istanbul. The call to prayer which happens five times a day is a rich cultural tradition that some find disconcerting, but I found to be beautiful. My Turkish friend told me that the voices you hear during the songs or chants are performed by the best. Tryouts for this position are necessary. Overall, I found Istanbul and the people of Turkey to be warm, welcoming and very family oriented. After my four-day tour, I checked in again with my surgeon and assistants prior to my departure. My healing was really going well, and I was happy to discover a whole new culture before heading by to my Cat (as in Catamaran) and little pug puppy Lolita in Valencia, Spain.

I realize that travel costs are also a consideration when considering which when and where to have your procedure and although I would have loved to have traveled back to Thailand, or India, Turkey was an obvious choice for me in terms of proximity since I was flying from Valencia, Spain which is only a 3-hour, 50-minute flight which was about \$400 round-trip. In most cases even the airfare for more distant medical tourism destinations is easily made up for in the savings that you get for procedures and complimentary hotel stays.

VANITY ESTHETIC HOSPITAL is just one of the many fine clinics located in Turkey, and I hope my personal experience with them will give you some confidence to perhaps choose this one. Below are five other clinics which have been established for over five years and also have excellent reputations:

- 1) **ISTANBUL AESTHETIC CENTER**, Istanbul, Turkey; (Tel. +90 552 8088 422). Website: www.istanbulaestheticcenter.com
Specializes in all forms of aesthetic, and dental procedures, including hair transplants and male genital surgery. Staff of 65 with 6 primary surgeons. To accommodate international patients, they offer all-inclusive surgery packages, with airport transfers and language assistance. All the surveys I received from people who have done a procedure at this center were positive reviews.
- 2) **QUARTZ CLINIQUE**, Istanbul, Turkey. www.quartzclinique.com (Tel. +90 212 241 46 24)
This clinic has been in business since 2015. There are eight surgeons on staff in a modern medical facility.

They were awarded “Best Aesthetic Surgery Clinic in Istanbul” in 2018 at the Health Care and Pharmaceuticals Awards. They Offer a range of plastic surgery and aesthetic treatments, with high success rates in procedures like rhinoplasty, angel lip lift, breast augmentation and hair transplant, as well as dental surgery. To accommodate international patients, they offer comprehensive packages that include hotel accommodation, airport transfers, and language assistance. All the surveys I received from people who had done a procedure here were positive reviews.

- 3) **DR. MED GROUP**, Istanbul, Turkey. (Tel. +90 546 583 69 97) Email: info@drmedgroup.com
Website: www.drmedgroup.com

Specializes in all types of plastic surgery, weight loss surgery, penis enlargement surgery, hair transplant as well as dental surgery, with high success rates in various procedures. The clinic has a private, multidisciplinary medical center. The clinic has performed over 270,000 successful plastic surgeries and 18,000 hair transplants. The clinic employs three prominent surgeons who are noted for their expertise in cosmetic procedures. Dr. MED Clinic has received four prestigious awards for high-quality patient care and hold accreditations from the ISO and JCI organizations. To accommodate international patients, they offer comprehensive packages that include hotel accommodation, airport transfers, and language assistance. All the surveys I received from people who had done a procedure here were positive reviews.

4) **VERA CLINIC**, Istanbul, (Tel. +90 542 743 54 08).

Website: www.veraclinic.net

Email: info@veraclinic.net.

Vera clinic is one of the best hair transplant clinics in Turkey according to reviews and advertises the clinic as the “pioneer of hair transplant in Turkey”. The hair transplant alternatives include follicular unit extraction (FUE), Sapphire FUE, and direct hair implantation (DHI) for natural looking results. They also offer procedures for beards, sideburns and eyebrows. The clinic was the grand prize winner in 2021 for “Innovation in Hair Transplant Techniques and Patient Care” awarded in Paris, France. Vera clinic is a state-of-the-art facility featuring OxyCure Therapy (for healing) which offers 5-Star hotel accommodation, personal translator, and VIP transfer, as well as pre and post operative consultations. The website advertises a “return to your country one-year post-op support.” The clinic offers competitive pricing with hair transplant packages typically ranging from \$2,700 to \$3,700, depending on the technique and number of grafts. All the surveys I received from people who had done a procedure here were positive reviews.

5) **THE NOSE CLINIC (CEM ALTINDAG)**, Istanbul, Turkey. (Tel. +90 533 686 25 22)

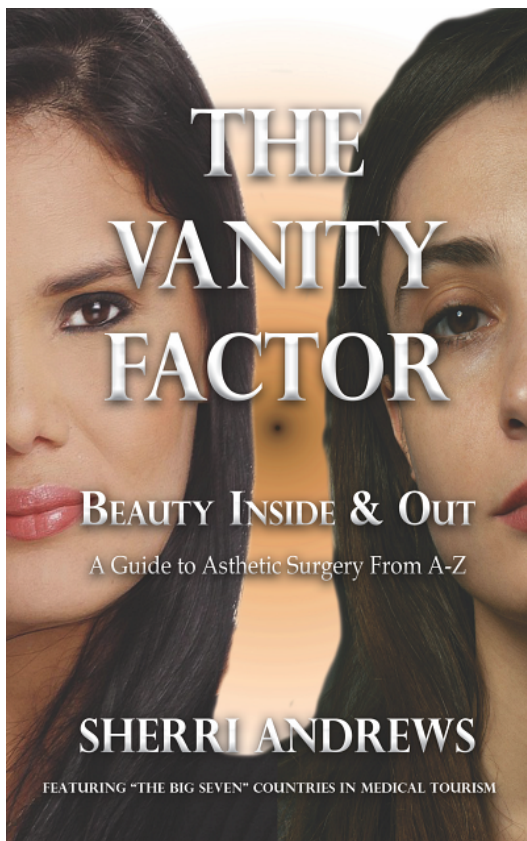
Website: www.drcealtindag.com

Email: caltindaguk@gmail.com.

Surgeon Cem Altindag, who is a member of the Rhinoplasty Society of Europe is a one man show who specializes ONLY in rhinoplasty and revision rhinoplasty, focusing on aesthetic and reconstructive nasal surgery. He has been performing rhinoplasty

surgeries for over 22 years and is renowned as one of the best rhinoplasty surgeons in Turkey. As such, he uses the most up to date technology and specializes in ultrasonic nose surgery (technique that offers less swelling and shorter healing process) and 2D-3D nose analysis. So, for those seeking a specialist, this may be the best option for rhinoplasty. This surgeon offers accommodation in hotels, and VIP airport transfer. Consider that the “primary nose job” package is priced at \$3,356 (at the time of this book’s publication) and encompasses a 4-night hotel stay, VIP transfers, and surgery performed by Dr. Cem Altindag. I did not survey anyone using this clinic because it is highly specialized and concentrates on only one procedure.

SPACE FOR YOUR OWN RESEARCH NOTES



This book is a guide to esthetic procedures in the "big seven" countries that offer the best quality at the best price. This can be from 70 to 90% less than one might pay in the U.S. often with a free vacation. Includes interviews.

The Vanity Factor:
Beauty Inside & Out - A Guide for Aesthetic Surgery From A To Z
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