



Enrique Ramirez founded his elite oasis spa, **Face to Face NYC** in Manhattan 14 years ago. A graduate of the prestigious Swedish Institute and the Christine Valmy School of Esthetics, he's a master of the Chocolate Wax (reported to cause fewer breakouts, since the yummy-smelling wax is not hot) and the mini-microdermabrasion treatment with oxygen mist facial that he calls "The NY Minute" (it actually lasts a half-hour).

He's also adamant about the need for accountability in the beauty biz. A beautiful salon experience, he explains, begins with salon management and policies. One of the primary keys is fair hiring practices, starting with compensation for licensed professionals. Ramirez says, "A major percentage of salons hire people below the minimum wage, specifically for nail services, with the promise of making above and beyond cash tips, with free services for themselves and their families. These promises end up being mostly untrue. Business owners train the employees, which often adds to the problem since the majority of the owners themselves need more training and knowledge on actual salon/spa treatments. Aside from doing the actual nail work, many owners require nail technicians to sweep, mop and dust the salon, with no extra pay. All for 5 dollars!"

He also cautions consumers who are seeking the "fountain of youth" to beware of coupons and other discount offers which may jeopardize not only the customer's beauty, but safety—cut-rate laser treatments conducted without the required presence of an MD, for example.

Ramirez shares these pro tips – the first one may surprise you-- for keeping skin healthy this summer:

- Avoid at all costs eucalyptus and menthol in any of your skincare products. "They may smell fresh, but are extremely drying. Very common ingredient in lip balms."
- When flying, skip the in-flight Bloody Mary—canned tomato juice is super-high in sodium, which contributes to skin dehydration. All alcoholic beverages can be dehydrating, but a notoriously salty drink especially. Ramirez recommends green tea and water. Cheers!
- Onboard a plane, don't aim the air vent directly into your face. The air itself is recycled, so it's not the freshest, and the full-face hit will parch the skin.

Ramirez notes that most sun-damage occurs on the face and neck, which are exposed year-round. So if you have clients who just love their convertibles, build powerful sun-protection products and sun-relief treatments into their skincare recommendations.