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CHEAP THRILLS

Looking like a million bucks doesn't have to mean spending that much. Here, the best tricks for saving cash without sacrificing style. By Erin Flaherty

Talk about schadenfreude. When *The New York Times* recently ran an article on how the ultrawealthy were tightening their belts, it soared up the most-emailed list. Millionaires sneaking into Sotheby's to sell estate jewelry; trophy wives deliberately rescheduling for times they know their pricey trainers aren't available—ha! But once we finished rolling our eyes at their methods,

we had a thought: Maybe the rich aren't so different from you and me. It's one thing to fall on hard times, but no one wants to look it.

So what's a thousandaire to do? With beauty, there's probably never been a better time to make the best of things. Drugstore shelves are now full of products with top-notch ingredients and pigments that deliver results once promised only by pricier brands. And with a few smart strategies, there's no reason you can't look like money—regardless of the value of the dollar.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY NICOLAS MOORE

Bargain Hunters

Looking as good as the clientele is a job requirement at New York City's hottest hotels, bars, and boutiques. The paychecks, however, usually aren't so glamorous. We asked some stylish employees how they allocate their dollars.

ELISA CHACON, 27, sales manager at the Hotel on Rivington

LOW: "I'll usually buy Maybelline or Cover Girl green or purple eye shadows. I don't use them every day. It's like, for cute tops I won't wear often, I go to Forever 21."

HIGH: "I splurge on Nars for my basic brown and tan eye shadows. I like the subtle combination of shimmer and color when you apply them lightly."

PRICES: Maybelline New York Eyeshadow Single, \$4; Cover Girl Eye Enhancers 1-Kit, \$3.47; Nars Eyeshadow, \$22.

VANESSA VICENTE, 25, buying associate at Ina, a designer consignment store

LOW: "Dove Frizz Control shampoo and conditioner have good moisturizers—they keep my hair from being too frizzy."

HIGH: "The daily skin peel from MD Skincare is pretty amazing. It gives you a clean glow—like having a facial."

PRICES: Dove Frizz Control Therapy Shampoo and Conditioner, \$4.99 each; MD Skincare Alpha Beta Skin Peel, \$75 for a 30-day supply.

MOLLY SCHULMAN, 21, saleswoman at Zachary's Smile, a vintage boutique

LOW: "I always wear Cover Girl blush and undereye concealer. I'm pale with freckles, so it's hard for me to find the right shade. Their selection is best."

HIGH: "Bliss's foaming face wash is one of the few I've found that's not greasy at all. I follow it with an Olay astringent."

PRICES: Cover Girl Cheekers Blush, \$4.21; Cover Girl TruBlend TruConceal, \$7.82; Bliss Fabulous Foaming Face Wash, \$22; Olay Dual Action + Toner, \$6.99.

ADRIANA QUEZADA, 24, maître d' at Gemma restaurant

LOW: "L'Oréal HIP eye shadows come in diverse colors. They pop almost as well as the ones from M.A.C."

HIGH: "One thing I must have on my skin is Biotherm body lotion. It makes your skin glow, but not in a fake way; it's how your skin looked when you were a child."

PRICES: L'Oréal Paris HIP High Intensity Pigments Shadow Duo, \$7; Biotherm Ultra-Rich Body Balm, \$30.

KYLIE CASE, 30, maître d' at Bar 44 in the Royalton Hotel

LOW: "Maybelline Great Lash Mascara—I like to replace it once a month."

HIGH: "The Hermès perfume Méditerranée conjures up memories."

PRICES: Maybelline New York Great Lash Mascara, \$6; Hermès Un Jardin en Méditerranée perfume, \$125 for 3.3 ounces.

—KAYLEIGH DONAHUE

Money to Burn

The world has grown outrageously wealthy," says La Prairie's latest press release, touting a platinum-laced cream that costs \$1,000 for 1.7 ounces. Cellular Cream Platinum Rare's timing seems incongruous. "Its antioxidants and peptides are outstanding anti-agers—but all but the platinum can be found in less expensive products," says dermatologist David H. McDaniel. "Platinum is a known catalyst, which could help fight free radicals—but I haven't seen independent studies on it." —JILLIAN MACKENZIE



Free for All

As Kato Kaelin, Kevin Federline, and Turtle can attest, there's a subtle art to being a successful freeloader. In that spirit, we set out to sample all the free beauty products and treatments we could find in New York City. Here's what we learned about getting something for nothing.

DON'T BE CHEAP. It's particularly bad manners not to tip generously. After an excellent trial brow shaping at our local Benefit Brow Bar—which ordinarily costs \$25—we tipped \$10.

TIME IS MONEY. At the Bumble and Bumble University in Manhattan—and at many local beauty schools—you can get your hair styled, cut, or highlighted by students free. But you pay with your time: A recent blowout took two hours.

IF YOU DON'T WANT IT, "FREE"

DOESN'T MATTER. Completely Bare, New York salons that specialize in hair removal, offer free test sessions with a laser. And now we have a small bare patch on our left underarm.

YOU WILL COMPROMISE. Some cosmetics counters offer facials. We signed up for one at the Lord & Taylor Clarins counter, which took place in a bright atrium just above the noisy beauty floor. Sometimes the ultimate luxury is getting true relaxation—even if you have to pay for it. —SARAH HORNE

Hair Cuts

His clients include some of the highest-paid actresses in Hollywood, but Chris McMillan of Chris McMillan, The Salon in Beverly Hills isn't above saving money on hair products. Here are his choicest deals.

SHAMPOO, CONDITIONER, AND REPAIR TREATMENT (FOR DAMAGED HAIR): Chris McMillan Hair, \$29.99 for the set.

"I took price into account and made my new line as affordable as possible."

HAIR SPRAY: Sunsilk Hold Me Forever Strong Hold Hairspray, \$3.69. "It really holds, but it gives a soft texture, too."

PASTE: V05 Extreme Style Texturizing Gum, \$3.49. "Love it! It's strong,

and it's perfect for short styles on both women and men. In fact, I would compare it to any expensive hair paste."

POMADE: Murray's Pomade, \$3. "I swear by this stuff! It creates fabulously chunky hair, and it's a basically foolproof hairdressing product. Rub a small amount between your hands to warm it, then start at the ends of your hair and work your way up. Just remember: It's strong, so go easy."

FRIZZ FIGHTER: Garnier Fructis Style Brilliantine Shine Glistening Drops, \$3.99. "This is a great, light smoothing product, and I love the smell."

CURL SPRAY: Aussie Sprunch Catch The Wave Hair Spray, \$2.99. "OK, this is maybe my favorite ever. It really works for scrunching wavy and curly hair. Plus, the smell makes me nostalgic. I've loved it since I was young."