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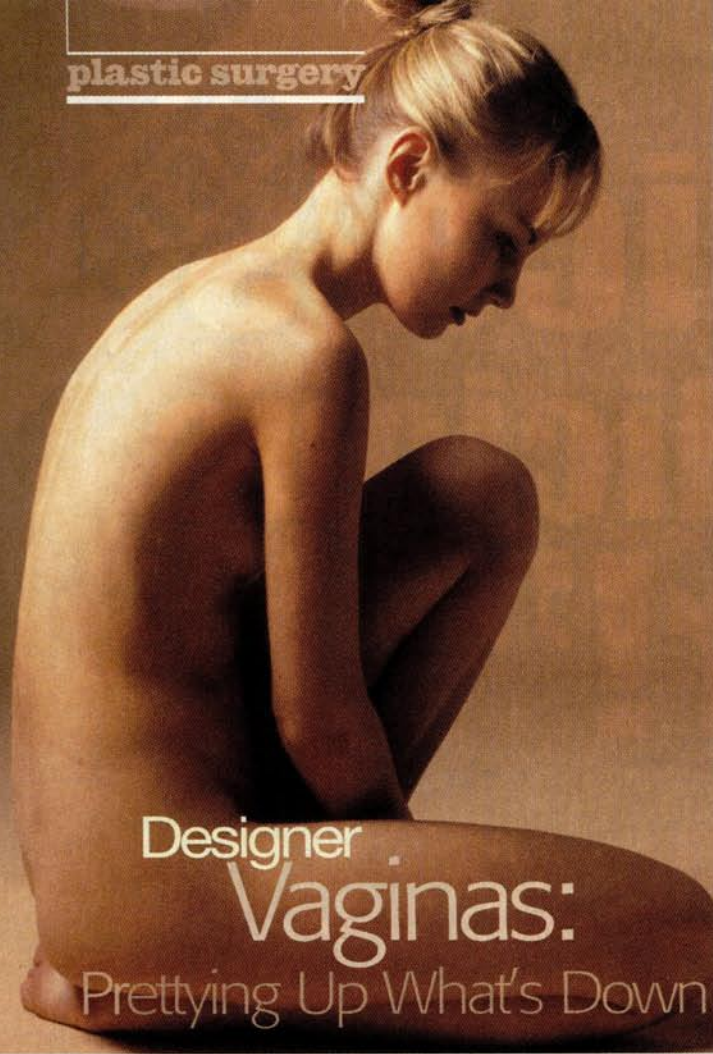
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Designer Vaginas: Prettying Up What's Down There

Meet three women who went under the knife to improve their sex life...

BY MANDY APPELYARD & NATASHA COURTENAY-SMITH

Lisa, 27, is flipping through a magazine. She's saved up \$4,500 to have cosmetic surgery and is deciding exactly what look she's going to go for. But she's not looking at beautiful bodies and faces in a fashion magazine; she's looking at full-frontal shots of vaginas in *Playboy*.

Lisa had overheard her boyfriend telling his friends he had to "do the Mr. Whippy" when they had sex. She didn't know what that meant, but thinking he was probably bragging about his bedroom antics she persuaded him to tell her. It turned out that by "doing the Mr. Whippy" he meant that he had to rotate his hips in circles during sex, because if he simply moved straight in and out, he couldn't feel himself inside her. Her vagina was larger and looser than other girls he'd had sex with and just to make it extra clear, he also told her that she was a "bit of a bucket."

"Obviously, I dumped him after that. I didn't see how the relationship could work and I really didn't want to have sex with someone who thought I was a 'bucket,'" says Lisa. "But what he said about my vagina stayed with me."

Like any of us, Lisa had dreamt of being slimmer and having cellulite-free thighs, but she'd never imagined there might be something wrong with her vagina. She'd always assumed

it was fine. Once she knew she was looser than other girls, everything else she'd always thought was wrong with her body seemed insignificant. She decided to dump any ideas she'd harbored of having liposuction one day and get her vagina tightened instead.

Vaginal cosmetic surgery has been available in America for over 10 years. Los Angeles based cosmetic surgeon Dr. David Matlock turns out about 30 new vaginas a month on women aged 19 through 70, and describes his surgery as a "fine art."

"I Give Most Women's Vaginas a Two-Finger Diameter"

"A lot of women bring in *Playboy*, show me pictures of vaginas and say, 'I want to look like this,'" says Dr. Matlock, who runs the Laser Vaginal Rejuvenation Center of Los Angeles (visit drmatlock.com). "We're usually able to help everyone."

The process is very simple—you choose your ideal shape or look from a selection of pictures and leave your vagina in Dr. Matlock's hands. Within an hour, he'll have re-sculpted and redesigned it to your demands. And yes, should anyone ask, your new vagina is "a Dr. Matlock."

There's no shortage of things you can have done. Your inner or outer labia can be shortened, made fatter or made thinner. If one labium is longer than the other, you can have them equalized. Skin can be taken away from around your clitoris so it's more exposed, making it easier for you to reach orgasm. Areas of hyper-pigmentation or blemishes can be removed. Your vagina can also be made tighter and stronger.

"I ask women how tight they want to be," says Dr. Matlock. "Some say they want to have the vagina of a 16-year-old, but on average, I give most women's vaginas a two-finger diameter, which is the width of the average penis." He can even reconstruct your hymen.

All these alterations are done using Laser Vaginal Rejuvenation and Designer Laser Vaginoplasty. Laser Vaginal Rejuvenation enhances tone, strength and control, and decreases the diameter of the vaginal opening—in other words, it makes you tighter. Designer Laser Vaginoplasty improves the look of your vagina by removing blemishes and skin and changing the shape of the labia. Both procedures currently begin at \$4500.

Dr. Matlock has just one condition: He insists that women must want it done for themselves and not because their partners are pushing them to do it—although men often pay for their partner's operation. Everyone is interviewed at length before being given the go-ahead.

"For some women, age and childbirth have changed the shape, size and tone of their vagina and labia," says Louise Braham from London's Harley Group of Cosmetic Surgeons, who are launching the Designer Vagina program in England later this year. Others, like Lisa, have a naturally loose vagina or large labia."

For many, the problem goes beyond feeling embarrassed in front of their partner. Large labia can make pants feel uncomfortable and they are sometimes visible through swimsuits and leggings. Here are two other women who went under the knife:

Regina: "I Couldn't Feel My Boyfriend's Penis When We Had Sex"

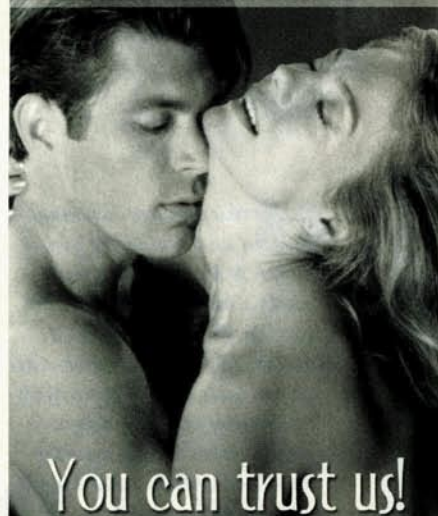
"Before I had surgery, I felt as though my vagina was much older than I was and I hated it," says Regina, 31, a nurse. "I was so much looser down there than I'd been before I had my two

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designer vaginas

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kids. I couldn't even feel my boyfriend's penis when we had sex and he would make comments about it. That made me feel like crying and I didn't know what to do. I felt really self-conscious and began to avoid having sex. This started to take its toll on our relationship.

"He and I never really talked about it until I was watching TV one night and Dr. Matlock came on. I called my boyfriend to come in and watch with me. Up until then, it had been a big problem in our relationship, but once he saw the program he was really supportive and I went to see Dr. Matlock soon after. I was so relieved that I could get help, I booked the operation right after my first consultation.

"I was drowsy when I came to but not in very much pain—probably due to the huge dose of painkillers I'd been given. All I could feel down there was a dull throbbing and I was pretty excited, because I knew it meant something had changed. I was sent home later that day with a catheter and some antiseptic swabs in my vagina to wear overnight. Within two days I was up and walking, and the catheter came out about a week later. There's no scarring at all.

"I don't know the 'before' and 'after' measurements of my vagina, but it feels totally different and exactly like it did when I was younger. Dr Matlock said it would be six weeks before we could have intercourse, but we waited for 12 instead because I was worried it would hurt or that it might stretch my vagina again.

"It was worth the wait—my sex life has improved so much and we have more sex now than we've ever had. It was one of the best things I've ever done. I would have happily paid more than the \$3,500 it cost me. In fact, I've just recommended the operation to my mom and my friends."

Paulina: "I'd seen pictures of women's vaginas in magazines and I knew mine was very different"

"I always had large inner labia that hung down past my outer labia and used to joke to close friends that one day I was going to have them cut off," says Paulina, 37, a saleswoman. "I'd seen pictures of women's vaginas in magazines and I knew mine was very different. But I didn't even know this surgery existed

until I came across an article about it on the Internet. I then found Dr. Matlock's website.

"The way I looked down there really inhibited me sexually. I was very self-conscious and had a major hang-up about my body each time I was with someone new. He'd put his hand down my pants and I'd think, 'Oh no, here we go again.' I had so much extra skin that during sex it would 'grab' the penis and move in and out with it.

"My girlfriends all agreed that my labia were very large, but they said it didn't matter, because they loved me and found me attractive.

"But it wasn't just in the bedroom that my labia were a problem—wearing jeans was painful because they'd dig into my labia, and I couldn't wear tight shorts or even a swimsuit because you could see a bump. I felt I had to get something done.

"When I went for my consultation with Dr. Matlock, I said I wanted to have my inner labia shortened so they weren't longer than my outer labia. My only worry was that surgery might take away some of the feeling, but Dr. Matlock assured me it wouldn't.

"I was in the hospital for less than a day. I had a general anesthetic for my operation (which costs \$5000) and when I came to I was very swollen. It was painful, but not excruciatingly so—I could still move, I just had to sit on ice packs when it hurt. I had stitches all around the labia and around my vaginal opening, which really itched. I couldn't push when I went to the toilet so I was given laxatives for the first week. I was also told not to have sex for three months. I took painkillers for the first few days, but was back at work five days later and in the gym after two weeks.

"On a pain scale of one to 10, I'd give the operation a seven—it hurt, but not as bad as I'd anticipated.

"I'm so pleased with the results. Sexually, I have so much more feeling than I used to. My clitoris is more exposed now and there's much more physical stimulation. I also find it easier to relax and enjoy sex. I have no scarring and I would recommend it to others.

"The operation should have cost \$5,000, but I got a \$1,500 discount after I agreed to have it filmed for an Australian medical journal.

"I've since had a breast enlargement—I've always had a boyish figure and after my labia were reduced and I started feeling sexier, I wanted a more womanly shape, too!"

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