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Pictures: ROSIE HALLAM

# Make-up wizard women wait nine years to meet

**ANNA MAY MANGAN** has a makeover with the most in demand man in the business



MAGIC TOUCH: John gets to work on Anna May's complexion

IT'S a good job that John Gustafson can create a look that takes 10 years off a woman, because as the make-up artist with the longest waiting list in the business, that's almost how long clients have to wait for an appointment.

Women and a few men ("They tend not to want to wait, men have no patience," says John) are currently waiting nine years for a session with this make-up mastermind.

So in demand is he that some primary school girls are on his waiting list, put there by their mums.

Ladies are dying to meet John. Literally. When their turn for an appointment finally rolls around John has contacted some ladies only to hear that sadly they have passed away.

Clients who make it off the waiting list and into John's elegant, cream leather make-up chair get an unhurried three-hour visit which includes skincare analysis and advice plus a make-up lesson.

I needed this man's help. When I have made myself up in the past I looked more like Dame Edna than what John says the right make-up style should achieve: a confident best version of myself.

I'm 53 and my cosmetic bag currently contains just two items, a lipstick and a mascara.

John's consulting room in department store Fenwick's, London, has a dance studio-size mirror along one wall and 200 make-up brushes, each one different, sit in jars on the windowsill.

Meeting John was an experience worth waiting for. I admired his

red patent wrinkle picker boots and multi-coloured vintage Moschino jacket. "It's all about colour!" he told me.

As I tried to figure out what it is that makes him so popular I was struck by his complimentary, sweet way with words.

He described my bonkers curly grey hair as "white fire" and skipped over my wrinkles by cooing that I had an "expressive face".

He isn't a puff merchant. Where he sees faults he isn't afraid to say so and tells me I am a skincare slob.

"Remember the eyes are like tissue paper, the face is like writing paper and the body is

wrapping paper," John says after I confess one of my biggest beauty sins, slapping body lotion on my eye area.

Though he's keen to make sure clients get the right products for their skin John never tries pushing a brand and gets no commission from anything his clients might choose to buy at his £100 makeover sessions.

He is proudly independent and "never accepts freebies".

And so I get to experience his magic touch. His opinion is that a woman's face begins at her hairline and extends down to where the bra cups start.

With the gentlest sweeps he applied his selected cleanser, toner, exfoliator and moisturiser

and my skin felt softer and fresher than it had in years.

Skin prepped John moved on to my make-up. I had confessed all about being a lipstick and mascara only kind of gal so John's regime factored in my laziness and was simple and quick.

**H**E believes in quality products, not always expensive ones, and says that women waste a huge amount of money on skincare and make-up. "Only spend on what works and you'll save a fortune," he advises.

He chose a powder foundation for my berry-red face and it

genuinely gave me an emotional moment. I looked in the mirror and was delighted with what I saw. The red tone I'm usually plagued with was gone and yet my foundation looked and felt natural.

My eyes have always been a forgettable grey colour with a hint of green but John chose a shadow that made me a definite green-eyed girl. He followed with mascara that gave me sweeper peepers.

"Where did my stubby lashes go?" I asked, seeing the magic that hordes of women wait so long for.

The lip colours I usually apply slide off within the hour but John had the solution with a product he said would need to be "chiselled off" at bedtime. I scoffed. Five hours later, after a big kiss for my husband, a frothy cappuccino and a cheese toastie, it was still as good as new.

Brows touched up, a tickle of blusher, and I was done. As I stared at the fresher faced me in the mirror John was chatting away about Angelina Jolie and Andrea Corr being the world's most beautiful women.

I was so on a make-up high that for one fleeting mad moment I imagined myself added to that list because the master that John Gustafson is made me feel that good.

John's waiting time is down to his expertise, his warmth and sense of humour. He's a Professor of Cosmetics and it's just a pity there aren't 10 of him.

I have already booked my next appointment for June 2022.

To find out more about booking a consultation with John call 020 7409 9823

## JOHN'S GOLDEN RULES:

- Always get advice to make sure foundation matches your skin
- Choose a lipstick shade closest to your own lips.
- Spend money on a quality product for the place you most want wow factor results.
- Eat a rainbow of salads, fruits and vegetables. No skincare product can banish the effects of a poor diet.
- Drinking two litres of water a day is the cheapest way to gorgeous skin.

## My new make-up must haves:



Max Factor Mastertouch concealer, £8

Clinique Pronto Pink blusher, £22

Clinique Redness Solution pressed powder, £25

Perricone MD Blue Plasma exfoliator, £88