

10 QUESTIONS with

DR COSIMA KARLBURGER

The Sydney based Cosmetic Physician is renowned for her natural results. Let's get to know her a little better.



1. Why did you become a cosmetic physician?

It literally is just something I fell into! I started my internship at St Vincent's Hospital in Sydney in 2007 and immediately fell in love with the plastic surgery specialty. I was completing my senior residency in surgery when a colleague asked me if I would like to cover some shifts for him at a cosmetic clinic. It wasn't long before I was so busy doing cosmetic injectable treatments that I no longer had time to work at the hospital and I've never looked back. I find work as a cosmetic physician the ideal combination between aesthetic artistry and sculpting, but with having my patients awake! I love the long term relationships that I build with people, the trust and their life journey that I am privileged enough to share with them.

2. What has been the highlight of your career?

I have always found the Eastern European Aesthetic incredible with their gorgeous high cheekbones and the women always seem to age so beautifully, so in 2013 I decided to attend the 1st Anti-Aging Medicine World Congress in Moscow, Russia to find out more. Not only did I learn novel injecting techniques and new skillset from an injecting point of view, I also met my now husband! Well worth the trip :-)

3. What is one of the biggest challenges working in aesthetics?

Working in an unregulated industry. When I first started injecting 14 years ago, there was a trend towards having that one-on-one training with a mentor and working only under supervision for a considerable amount of time before progressing to injecting unsupervised. Since the launch of the chain clinics there has been a significant undersupply of experienced injectors to deal with the demand of the consumer so it is natural that injectors with less experience who haven't had the in-depth one-on-one training have been brought on board, however considering the risks and complications associated with these types of treatments I am shocked that no 'official' training is required before working unsupervised in

this industry. A big shout out to all the injectors out there who have worked incredibly hard to educate themselves doing courses and regularly attending conferences, but it is still a pain point that I think the industry needs to address.

4. What is your favourite treatment to perform and why?

My favourite treatment is when someone asks me to do what I think they need – these are usually my happiest patients because it allows me to make them look 'harmonised'. Often I'll see patients that have had their face as a whole neglected. They have repeatedly had a single area treated, for example cheeks or lips, and other areas such as temples or the perioral region completely ignored. Having had these treatments doesn't make them look any better or more youthful, it just makes them look strange and often they're not sure why they don't feel happy with their results. That's why my passion is to provide the harmonisation of the face as well as addressing the two other areas that are often neglected – the neck and décolletage. It's really only when I create a harmony of youthful curves and symmetrical proportions along with improved skin quality and texture that I feel like I have provided a good service. I love to combine my dermal filler and Matrix PDO thread treatments with Byonik Laser facials to improve skin quality, healing times and skin tightening.

5. What does your perfect Sunday look like?

Waking up early to my little son for cuddles and then heading off to discover a fun new playground (our current favs are Chifley Sports Reserve, Chifley and Dickson Reserve Playground, Bondi). These playgrounds are also great for adults to get a workout so it's a 2-in-1, which every mum needs! After a busy morning play, brunch at Bills in Bondi is always a winner. In the afternoon a BBQ with friends and family followed by drinks at Bondi Icebergs with the girls (on my rare Sundays off) would be the icing on the cake!

6. Do you have a mentor?

I am very lucky to have had a few amazing mentors during my career but in saying that I have not had a mentor every step of the way. Part of the challenge of working in a small practice is not always having someone to bounce your ideas off so I think it is really important for everyone to have someone to turn to, look up to and to be inspired by although this person doesn't necessarily need to be from the same industry. Recently I attended an event and was incredibly inspired by Tracey Spicer who courageously shared her life story so rawly. Her passion for empowering women was a true motivation and inspiration for me and it can be these snapshots in life that can be incredibly powerful.

7. What is your favourite app and why?

Instagram of course! Now I'm not great at posting – admittedly I'm an over thinker and it takes me about an hour to create an idea for a post, edit it and then not post it (haha!). But it is an invaluable way to learn from others, be informed and occasionally get sidetracked by some amazing holiday resorts. I've recently started following Dr Tim Pearce who has raised some very interesting topics regarding injecting techniques which might make me change some of my treatment recommendations in the future. We are so lucky these days to have such broad access to information and so many people willing to share their knowledge and experience. I just love soaking it all up!

“... a BBQ with friends and family followed by drinks at Bondi Icebergs with the girls...”



8. Where will your first international holiday be once borders open?

Italy for sure! A country close to my heart since I was a child. Having relatives in Europe meant that my mother always took me for extended travels to countries that she thought were most full of history. Perhaps that is where my love of beauty and aesthetics came from; I spent many days exploring Baroque churches and in a fantasy world of museums contemplating how incredible sculptors like Canova and Bernini could make marble sculptures look so full of life, so soft yet from a piece of stone – truly incredible.

9. What do you do to relax/recharge?

At the moment I don't get much time to relax whilst juggling being a wife, a mum and running a business but when I do get a chance for a weekend away I love to connect with nature. My usual escapes are to the Hunter Valley or Southern Highlands to revitalise and remind myself of what is truly important, to appreciate nature and life for itself. I did, however recently discover a new all inclusive "glamping" resort called Marramarra Lodge on the Hawksbury River which is accessible only by boat or seaplane. They had so many great nature inspired activities like fishing (turns out it's actually fun!), kayaking, paddle boarding, hiking, swimming – it made a weekend away feel like two weeks – it might be my new fav.

10. Coffee or wine?

My son is two years old so at the moment it's coffee, but wine does come a very close second for that very same reason (especially during lockdown)! 🍷