GQ APRIL 2013

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OUR VERDICT

56 TIPS FOR NAUTICAL STYLE WITHOUT GOING OVERBOARD

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BE A BETTER MAN | READ GQ

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GROOMING

READY FOR A CLOSE SHAVE?

STRAIGHT-BLADE RAZORS ARE MAKING A WELCOME RETURN TO THE MALE REGIMEN. WHY? BECAUSE THEY ARE MIGHTY FINE TO LOOK AT, CUT CLEANER THAN ANYTHING ELSE, AND LEAVE YOU FEELING SHARP. LOOK ANY FEARS IN THE BATHROOM CABINET – A SHAVING RENAISSANCE IS UPON US.

THEIRS ISSARD
'Flower Decorate Spine' straight razor, $250.

EDITED BY DAVID SMIEDT • PHOTOGRAPHY EDWARD URRUTIA

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IN OUR SUPER-FRENZIED, HYPER-HURRIED WORLD, SPEED REIGNS

supreme and the 'that'll do' results of safety razors dominate most men's shaving routines. By contrast, like most undertakings of merit, the use of a straight razor demands patience, preparation and practice. Get it right and your shave will look better and last longer.

THE PURCHASE

"If you're just starting out, opt for a Shavette razor," says Matthew Sheldrick of Sydney's Barber Supreme. "They're a good alternative to traditional cutthroats in that they look and feel similar, but have interchangeable blades so you don't have to put in the time honing and sharpening." A wide selection of Shavette razors can be found at The Shaver Hut.

Check out the Dovo Solingen stainless steel straight Shavette razor, $58, and throw in a pack of Dovo Solingnen long straight razor blades, $20.

- "Newcomers, look for a blade with a round point. You're a lot less likely to cut yourself in tighter areas," Sheldrick adds.
- Pay $100-$150 for a quality blade. You can always pay more but know you're paying for a more ornate handle instead of better quality steel.
- Before buying a traditional cutthroat, be aware that they require dedicated maintenance in the form of honing (keeping sharp) and stropping (aligning).

"YOUR FIRST PASS SHOULD ALWAYS GO WITH THE GRAIN. YOUR SECOND WILL BE ACROSS THE GRAIN SO YOU CAN GET CLOSER TO THE SKIN."

THE STORAGE

Don't keep the blade in your bathroom — you need a dry area to prevent rust and corrosion. If it's on hiatus, a light coating of oil every few months is a good idea.

THE KIT

Key cutthroat brands include Dovo, Thiers Issard and Giesen & Forsthoff.

BRUSH — opt for the stylish Acqua Di Parma in pure badger hair with stand ($400).

BOWL/LATHER — Try Geo F Trumper's eucris soap, presented in a reusable 80g wooden bowl ($47.50).

DOVO SOLINGEN
'Inox Stainless' straight razor, $180.

ACQUA DI PARMA
Pure badger hair shaving brush & stand, $400.

THE MAINTENANCE

Here's how to keep your straighty in good, ahem, nick.

HONING

Through repeated use, the microscopic saw teeth on the edge of a blade lose their sharpness, uniform direction and consistency of size. A hone — a natural or synthetic stone block designed to sharpen razors — will deal with the first issue quicksmart. Take a look at the Shapton Glass stone range, (from $85). To use one, lay your blade flat on the hone. *GQ* recommends 8-10 strokes in each direction, and remember to turn the blade in your hand at the end of each stroke. If your blade is wider than your hone, move it in a diagonal direction to ensure even coverage.

STROPPING

A strop — a flexible strip of leather or canvas — will align the microscopic teeth on the blade, smooth them out and ensure a consistency of size. We like the Dovo Solingen extra wide Russian leather strop, ($140). 15-20 strokes in each direction will do the trick. Important: when stroking the razor away from you, the blade's edge should face towards you, and vice versa.

When drawing your blade along both the strop and the hone, minimal pressure is required. The surfaces do all the work for you. Carry out both processes before using your razor for the first time. Lasts for at least 10 shaves.

THE SHAVE

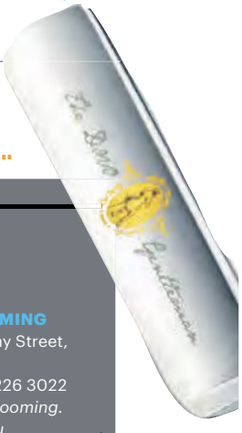
"SHAVING AFTER A SHOWER IS BEST AS YOUR BEARD IS SOFTER AND LESS RESISTANT TO THE BLADE," ADVISES SHELDRICK. A HOT, WET TOWEL PLACED OVER THE FACE FOR A FEW MINUTES IS ANOTHER PRE-SHAVE OPTION. GET A GRIP. THE AREA NEXT TO THE BLADE — THE SHOULDER — IS WHERE YOUR THUMB SITS. YOUR FIRST THREE FINGERS REST ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OF THE SHOULDER, CALLED THE SHANK, AND YOUR LITTLE FINGER SITS ON THE TANG — THE CURLY-END BIT.

ASSUME THIS POSITION AND THE HANDLE WILL SIT BETWEEN YOUR THIRD AND LITTLE FINGERS. NOVICES, ALLOW 20 MINUTES PER SHAVE. CAN'T AFFORD THE TIME? USE YOUR CUTTHROAT AT WEEKENDS UNTIL YOU'RE UP TO SPEED. "YOUR FIRST PASS SHOULD ALWAYS GO WITH THE GRAIN. YOUR SECOND WILL BE ACROSS THE GRAIN SO YOU CAN GET CLOSER TO THE SKIN. FOR THOSE WITH AN ESPECIALLY THICK BEARD, A THIRD PASS WILL GO AGAINST THE GRAIN," SAYS SHELDRICK.

Try Lab Series razor burn relief ultra, $50 (100ml).

ALWAYS HOLD YOUR SKIN TAUT AND IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION TO WHICH YOU'RE SHAVING. IF YOU ARE HOLDING NORTH, SHAVE SOUTH. NO MATTER HOW WELL (OR POORLY) YOUR BLADE WORKS, AFTERSHAVE BALM IS ESSENTIAL.

DOVO SOLINGEN
'Gentleman' straight razor, $125.



STILL DON'T TRUST YOURSELF? FEEL THE PRO GLIDE AT ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S BEST SALONS...

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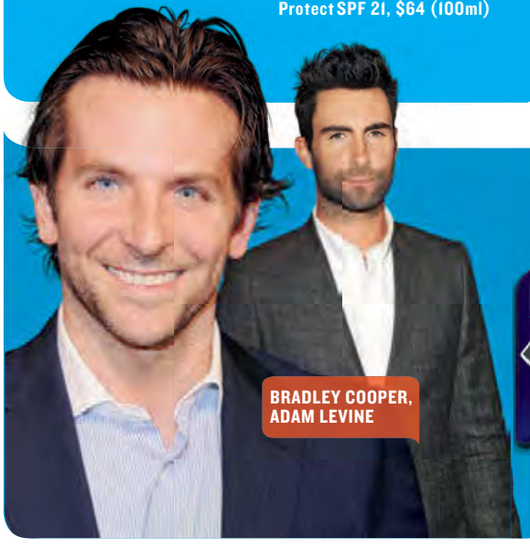
AGE-APPROPRIATE GROOMING

JUST LIKE YOUR WARDROBE (HOPEFULLY) CHANGES TO REFLECT YOUR MOVE THROUGH THE DECADES, SO SHOULD YOUR DAILY ROUTINE.

20s

Welcome to the halcyon days. Hormones have settled, which means less break-outs and blemishes, skin cells produce collagen with the zeal of a new employee on his first day and your complexion easily bounces back from lack of sleep and too many cocktails. But enjoy it while it lasts as one day soon you'll look in the mirror and see hints of your father. The key word to keeping your skin like actor Alex Pettyfer's is protection. The whole ozone-layer issue means embracing an all-purpose suncream with solid SPF and hydrating moisturiser is a must. Use it every day (no excuses) and your face will thank you in years to come.
GO-TO PRODUCT: Clinique Skin Supplies For Men M Protect SPF 21, $64 (100ml)

ARMIE HAMMER, ALEX PETTYFER



BRADLEY COOPER, ADAM LEVINE

30s

At this stage, your production of elastin and collagen — the two factors which keep skin firm and line-free — has begun to rest on its laurels. Genetics also come into play, as do words like 'sallow' and 'puffy'. The phrase you want to remember now is AHA. No, not A-ha, that Norwegian pop band responsible for 'Take On Me', rather an abbreviation for 'alpha hydroxyl acids', which help remove dead skin cells to reveal glowing new ones beneath. Picture Bradley Cooper's skin on the red carpet — that's the look you're after.
GO-TO PRODUCT: Jack Black Line Smoother Oil-Free Moisturiser, $39.95 (97ml)

40s + BEYOND

Long story short? This is when the sins of your adolescence come knocking on your face. Outside assistance is required as your body is no longer making the same quantities of youthful moisture it once did. Should you wish to get your Clooney on, it's now time to enter the domain of potent serums and rejuvenating night masques. Ideally, you're looking for products containing antioxidants, SPF, vitamin C and retinol, which counter wrinkles, moisturise and ultimately firm leaving your skin less Hugh Hefner and more Hugh Jackman.
GO-TO PRODUCT: Chanel's Sublimage Masque, $285 (50g)

HUGH JACKMAN, GEORGE CLOONEY

WORDS DAVID SMIEDT. STILL LIFE PHOTOGRAPHY EDWARD URRUTIA. GETTY IMAGES.