

## the golden hour

A great night out might be the stuff of legends, but it starts with the little details. *Kathleen Baird-Murray* takes you through the definitive party preparation from dusk 'til dawn, with red-carpet-worthy advice from the experts who reveal their secrets to a beautiful night

Photography by *Chris Colls*

## the night before

*Take comfort in the fact* that despite the bandying about of phrases like 'effortless glamor', 'effortless hair', 'effortless *everything*', the true art of effortless is anything but. The legions of behind-the-scenes therapists, makeup artists, stylists, PAs, nannies and hairstylists, who are the hidden force field at any red-carpet event – even among the women who always appear looking naturally radiant – is something rarely alluded to publicly, but it is always very refreshing to hear when it is.

Vicky Vlachonis, based in Los Angeles but a veritable globetrotter when it comes to administering her osteopathic skills, and the author of *The Body Doesn't Lie* (Harper Collins), arrives at the homes of Gwyneth Paltrow and Cameron Diaz and realigns their spines the night before a big event, as, she explains, "Some cranio-sacral osteopathy and a little acupuncture gets the blood flowing and assures they get a good night's sleep, which is essential." The night before the big night out, have a bath with two cups of Epsom salts, adding 3-5 drops of black pepper oil, her tip for getting a good night's sleep. "It is also a good thing to do for the night after if you have leg pain from standing in high heels all night." She also recommends avoiding sugar, wheat and dairy – foods that can trigger inflammation (and bloating, the enemy of the clinging evening dress) and starting the day with a glass of warm water and lemon to ease digestion.

While nothing beats the spontaneity of deciding on your look at the last minute, for big occasions planning in advance is usually more expedient. The hairstylist Ken Paves once arrived at the hotel suite of Jennifer Lopez to get her hair ready for the Oscars only to find

the floor piled high with gowns. "She wanted to get her hair and makeup done first and then choose the dress afterwards. That was a lot of pressure!" he says, laughing. "But do you want to know one of the best things you can do in this age of the selfie? Try the dress on, put your hair up, take a picture, and then think about it." A-list makeup artist Charlotte Tilbury agrees on the importance of taking your cue from your outfit: "The color of the dress is the lynchpin to the look, but also you need to consider how it flows – does it cling to curves or skim over the body? What shall we play up? Can we afford to be bold or should it be softer?" she says. "I always consider texture, too – whether it is diaphanous and chiffony or something strong like leather."

Not only is planning ahead more time effective, but some things just work better if you can do them in advance. Cate Blanchett's colorist and red-carpet hairstylist, Nicola Clarke, is speed personified when it comes to creating the much praised tousled up-do the star has become famous for, but she puts the time in to always making sure her color is fresh beforehand. "Even if we don't have time to do the full head, we work on the parting and the hairline." Washing hair the night before, and keeping conditioner to the mid-lengths down, will also save time, and makes it easier to style if you're putting it up. "Blow-outs always look better the day after, so get it done the day before, then refresh with tongs or barrel curl rollers on the day," suggests Paves, who kept Victoria Beckham's Met Ball straight hair looking modern by adding a slight bend at the ends with straightening irons – the perfect accompaniment for her ivory column Victoria Beckham dress. >

## COME AS YOU ARE

"The secret to prettily disheveled hair that gives a nod to occasion dressing lies in getting the base right," says hairstylist

Tina Outen, who applies a volumizer (try Frederic Fekkai Full Blown Volume Mousse, £20) to wet hair, before drying and curling around a barrel tong. Apply a finishing spray (try Serge Normant Meta Sheer Dry Oil, £23), then pull hair back into a loose ponytail and twist into a knot.

Pure Radiant Tinted Moisturizer in St Moritz, £29, Matte Multiple in Cappadoce, £30, Matte Multiple in Copacabana, £30, Himalia Dual-Intensity Eyeshadow, £21, and Larger than Life Long-Wear Eyeliner in Via Veneto, £19, all by NARS; K.I.S.S.I.N.G Lipstick in Nude Kate by Charlotte Tilbury, £23

Dress by Dior, £8,900; earrings, model's own



## 60 minutes and counting

**GOLDENEYE** “You can’t beat a metallic gold for a sense of the dramatic,” says Fredrik Stambro, who created the makeup on these pages, “but it needs to last the whole night.” Prep eyes with a base like Smudge Proof Eyeshadow Base, £19.50, followed by Single Eyeshadow in Euphrate, £18, both by NARS, using Kevyn Aucoin The Base Shadow Brush, £32. Finish with liberal coats of waterproof mascara.

Supreme Cils Mascara by Chantecaille, £45; Oural Brow Gel by NARS, £16.50; Rouge Baume in Star by Dior, £26

*In the rush to be ready*, it is easy to wonder – as you chase the late taxi, worry when the sitter will arrive, find the missing black tie for your partner, fasten aforementioned black tie for your partner – whether it is actually all worth it. Why are you going to this party anyway? (An optional expletive may be added at this point). “To have fun!” says James Boehmer, director of global artistry for NARS. “The whole lead-up to the event should be fun, and if you’re not having any, you likely won’t enjoy the party.”

Boehmer prioritizes skin over everything else. “Take advantage of low-light situations at parties to further refine your skin and get a polished finish.” There’s a lot you can do to improve skin without booking in for that elusive 90-minute facial. “I always feel better if I can do a quick mask or scrub before I go out,” says Olivia Chantecaille, creative director and face of the French beauty brand her mother created. “I do it in the 10 minutes while I’m picking out an outfit or calling Uber with the baby sitting on my hip, then with a wet flannel I scrub my lips to remove any dead skin. It makes such a difference to everything that follows – foundation sits better, lipstick glides on smoothly.” Try Chantecaille Jasmine and Lily Healing Mask (£60); Flash Rinse 1 Minute Facial by Ren (£32); Omorovicza Blue Diamond Resurfacing Peel (£145); Black Rose Cream Mask by Sisley (£93), or even a quick once over with a Clarisonic cleansing brush (£155) – it all helps to put a glow back in your skin, as does spending an extra 60 seconds on a quick facial massage. Tilbury goes light on foundation, but thoroughly massages in her Magic Cream (£70) from

her eponymous range to “flood the skin with moisture”, then follows with an illuminating product like Tom Ford’s Skin Illuminator (£46), before retouching using foundation and concealer.

Beware the ever-present shiny face finish of the selfie. “When the camera flashes, it can make your powder look whiter than it really is, resulting in a patchy look,” says Lloyd Simmonds, international makeup artist for YSL, who regularly looks after Jessica Chastain, Salma Hayek and Florence Welch. “Apply a matt powder only where needed – tops of cheekbones, places where you’d like to highlight – then keep all the rest as flat as possible and avoid too much shimmer.” Boehmer agrees: “Women are always told they can’t wear shimmer, shine, sparkle and gloss during the day, so they tend to go wild with it at night and end up looking more like a disco ball.” His tip is to avoid it on the skin, but feel free to experiment with shimmer on the eye, swapping your traditional smoky eye with a colored, or metallic finish (as in these pictures) for a more glamorous, nighttime look. “When you’re doing a metallic eye, show restraint elsewhere. Keep the rest of the makeup clean and polished.”

Trying anything new is good, especially if it fits within a framework of your signature look. While Blanchett’s iconic up-do is known for its softness, and she favors a side parting, there is always a subtle difference with each public appearance. “We always try to vary the look and I’ll work a French braid through the back or try something new,” says Clarke. “I joke with her, ‘Cate, it’s not about you, it’s about how many Likes I can get for this look on my Instagram.’” >

## bring on the night

*Some of life's little vanities*, no matter how inured to them we think we are, have great potential to blow out of all proportion, capable of ruining a good night out. Roots – whether they are gray or dark (on blonde hair) – when you're in between salon visits is one of them. "Gray roots is like being caught with a price tag on your shoe or a stain on your dress – it definitely makes you feel bad, even if it is not that bad," says Paves. As the ambassador for Color Wow, the mineral powder root cover-up (£29), he says the trick to applying it convincingly is to really dip the brush into the powder, getting a lot of pigment on it, then push the loaded brush into the follicle and gently sweep the excess across the length of the gray hair, or use the lighter brown shade to blend into blonde.

Worrying that the hairstyle you painstakingly created doesn't suit you, or will fall down because you didn't fix it properly, is another party anxiety. Even the greats don't always get it right the first time. "I once spent ages working on Julia Roberts' hair for a premier," says the legendary hair stylist Serge Normant, "and I realized I'd gone way too far with the twisting and dread-locking effect, even though she liked it. We only had 10 minutes before she left the room, and I knew that I had to take it all out and start over. It looked great in the end, it felt loose, fresh and we had a great reaction to it." As for worrying that it is all going to topple down, he recommends using the right accessories to keep your style in place. "A lot of people think that just twisting your hair and sticking a pin in it is enough, but if you have very heavy hair, it is

better to use an elastic to keep it in a ponytail." For a more modern take on the bun, braid your hair messily, secure it at the bottom, and then wrap it around into a bun shape and pin on to the base of the rubber band – it won't move. Tina Outen suggests using a small foam donut to create a similar knot to the one she created on model Josephine Skriver, opposite. "Choose a size much smaller than you want your finished knot; loosely thread the hair through the donut, then lightly back brush the ponytail before smoothing it over the donut and tucking the ends in with U-pins. The key is to keep it loose."

Normant also believes in going light on touch-ups. A mini hairspray in your evening bag is only necessary "if there's a long journey to the party". With the minimal clutch still the key accessory for FW14, by the time you've taken your smartphone and keys there isn't much room for anything else. "I take a Lip Chic lipstick in Amour (£30)," says Chantecaille. "And for dinner, I always have a Brilliant Gloss lip gloss in Pretty (£26) in my bag. Girls always love to pull out their makeup and show it off, don't they?" Of course, some, including Boehmer (who admires his clients Karen Elson, Tilda Swinton and Rooney Mara for always "portraying their true selves" on the red carpet), would argue that the only thing you need to bring – besides lipstick – is confidence. As he says: "Whatever look you've gone for, you need to wear it like it's a T-shirt and jeans, or whatever you feel comfortable in. You have to own the look and don't feel self-conscious – this is about attitude." ■

### MOLTEN METAL.

Like liquid mercury, moonlight casts a softening glow over what by day would be less flattering. Stambro achieved a highly saturated sheen by dipping the eyeshadow brush into water first, squeezing it gently to remove any excess, then dabbing it on to the eyeshadow and applying to lids for a high-impact effect.

Sheer Glow Foundation in Fiji, £31, Custard Radiant Creamy Concealer, £22, Dual-Intensity Eyeshadow in Interstellar, £21, and Lysithea, £21, and Velvet Matte Lip Pencil in Sex Machine, £18, all by NARS. Rouge Allure Gloss 13 Affriolant (blotted down) by Chanel, £26

Styling: Maya Zepinic. Hair: Tina Outen at Streeters. Makeup: Fredrik Stambro at Streeters. Model: Josephine Skriver at The Society. Thanks to Valley Trunk, Virgin Gordia

Dress by Michael Kors, £4,400