

Smile with confidence

Improvements in orthodontic treatments mean a perfect smile is now not just the prerogative of A-listers

EVERYONE knows that first impressions are all-important. Having confidence in yourself and the way you look can make all the difference when meeting people for the first time and a big part of this is having a smile that you are not afraid to show off.

Although many of us will have been fitted with braces while still at school, years of neglect as well as general wear and tear means a surprising number of adults are going around with a smile they are ashamed of.

However, orthodontists are now offering more discreet dental work that can improve your smile without the embarrassment of clearly visible and unsightly metal braces – an ideal alternative for adults wanting straighter teeth.

The new and improved technology, called Lingual Appliances, means that braces are fitted to the inner side of the teeth making them completely hidden. Alternatively, patients can opt for tooth-coloured braces – famously championed by Tom Cruise – that are far less noticeable than the usual metal variety.

Limited Edition's Head of Magazines, Samantha Donald, had never been happy with the shape of her teeth and in February of last year decided to get a brace fitted.

"I have always been self-conscious about my bottom teeth as they are a bit crooked," explains Samantha.

"In the past, I have been told by dentists that I would need metal braces on both sets of teeth which really put me off as I hated the thought of having something so unsightly on my teeth, especially as I was happy with my top teeth. But when I discovered I could have a tooth-coloured brace on just my bottom teeth, I decided to give it a try."

An initial consultation took place where the procedure was carefully explained and an impression made of her teeth. Samantha then paid a return visit to have the brace fitted.

"It only took half an hour to fit. I was really worried that it would be painful but the whole process didn't hurt at all and I only felt a little discomfort after each tightening, which I had every six weeks.

"The main plus point was that it was completely unnoticeable – none of my friends even noticed and I only had to be careful not to eat really chewy or hard food. I was also given some wax to put over the brace if it began to rub."

At the end of ten months, Samantha's bottom teeth were perfectly straight and she was able to have the brace removed.

"I cannot tell you how pleased I am. It has given me so much more confidence – I feel as if I have a bigger smile. I would recommend it to anyone."

Where: Samantha had her orthodontic treatment by Dr Shaunak Popat at the Chorleywood Orthodontic & Well Being Centre, 19 Main Parade, Whitelands Avenue in Chorleywood. 01923 283461. **Cost:** The price varies between patients.



Teeth whitening

To complete the look, Samantha took the plunge and tried out BriteSmile, a teeth whitening treatment that has been helping celebrities get rid of those unattractive red wine and coffee stains and achieve the obligatory dazzling white smile.

To begin with, whitening gel is spread on the teeth which is then activated by three 20-minute sessions of exposure to a new blue-light. The results were startling, with Samantha's teeth being brightened by eight shades.

"I had never thought of getting my teeth whitened before as, in the past, people had often commented on how white they were, so when I saw the results, I was really surprised at the difference," says Samantha.

"I actually found the whole process very relaxing. I didn't feel any pain and you are able to watch a DVD while it is being done so it was actually quite enjoyable."

The BriteSmile system can take teeth up to nine shades lighter in just one session and the results can last for up to two to three years, ensuring you can smile with confidence for longer.

Where: Samantha had her teeth whitened by Dr Popat at the Rosebank Dental Practice, Shire Lane in Chorleywood. 01923 282691. **Cost:** £500 for one session.

Samantha's teeth whitening – before and after



Reader offer - save 50%

Any adult who books orthodontic work at the Chorleywood Orthodontic & Well Being Centre will receive 50 per cent off a BriteSmile session. Quote "Limited Edition" when booking.