

CRAFTING SMILES



Photos courtesy of Pristine Dental Centre.

When is a smile not a smile? When it becomes a work of art, as Chan Li Jin finds out.

How would you define 'perfect teeth? For most people, it means pearly whites perfectly lined up in a straight row. But for perfectionists like cosmetic dental surgeon Dr. Suresh Nair and dental technologist Mr. Nasser Shademan from Pristine Dental Centre located at Jalan Gasing, Petaling Jaya, a perfect set of teeth goes beyond that.

"Perfect teeth", says Dr. Suresh, "has character and personality. They are like works of art."

Both Dr. Suresh and German-trained Nasser are like 'Dental Artists'. Together, they work on sculpting their patient's teeth as though they were literally master-pieces.

To better understand what that means, I was shown a photo of a pretty lady with perfectly straight and good-looking teeth. To the untrained eye, they looked perfect enough. Yet, her after-treatment photos took me by surprise: she now looks... different. More elegant, more sophisticated.

The only things that changed were her teeth. How could they make such a difference?

TOOTH FAIRIES AT WORK

It all began four years ago at an international dental event, where Dr. Suresh viewed Nasser's work for the first time. "I had been doing dental veneers for 15 years, yet I was never happy with the technological support we had. When I saw what Nasser could do, I knew I had to work with him!"

It's a revolutionary approach, he ex-

plains. "We design a smile according to a patient's personality, characteristics and profession. For instance, a lady who holds an upper-management position might want a smile that shows authority, whereas another, like this lady here (pointing to photo) wants a smile that makes her more feminine."

This is possible through intensive teamwork between the dental surgeon and an artistic, innovative master technologist. It helps that Nasser, who has made Malaysia home for the past seven years, is an artist who has been drawing, painting and sculpting since childhood.

Known worldwide as a Smile Design Specialist, Nasser is the founder of an international aesthetic concept known as the Oral Museum. A Master of art and dental technology, he is renowned for his creative dental aesthetic solutions and has fabricated fascinating smile designs for high-end dental centres in Europe, Australia and Asia.

To begin with, Nasser looks at each tooth like an unpolished diamond. "Nature itself is a work of art, with shape, form, colour and shades," he points out.

He elaborates on how men and women have different body shapes. Men are typically more angular, whereas women are generally more rounded – at the shoulders, waist and hips, for example.

Other factors include career, personality and image. All these and more explain why some people's teeth may look good but not 'perfect' – because they simply do not suit their lifestyle. Nasser terms it

'Artistry for Dentistry'.

Dr. Suresh adds, "It's like clothes, art, architecture – people are getting increasingly discerning. You will appreciate the difference only when you see the results."

PICK A SMILE!

During the first visit, Dr. Suresh will take photographs, X-rays and go through a detailed list of your expectations. He and Nasser then get down to business in creating a series of up to four smiles, which is part of Nasser's self-developed new range of up to 12 artist smile designs.

This normally takes a few days to a week. These simulations allow you to see a three dimensional view of your teeth after treatment – from the front, top and side.

Once you have made your choice, a Trial Smile (temporary veneers, crowns or a combination of both) will be created immediately. You get to test-run this Trial Smile for about two weeks while the permanent set is being manufactured.

GOING NATURAL

"My focus is on creating teeth that look as natural as possible," says Nasser, showing me photos of some of the crowns and veneers that have been magnified 10 times. For instance, in an elderly patient, he might add minor imperfections such as tiny kinks because "no one would believe someone that age would have perfect teeth, so they'll know those are dental crowns."

Each case is a challenge, admits Dr. Suresh, particularly for patients who have



Dr. Suresh Nair says that people are getting increasingly discerning in everything – teeth as well.



'Smile Design Specialist' Mr. Nasser Shademan says his focus is on creating natural looking teeth.



TOOTH ART

Fancy getting portraits sculpted onto your tooth – famous personalities, your loved ones or your zodiac sign? It can be done. They might not be obvious from a distance but they can be seen by those with whom you share a close relationship. These sculptures enhance a person's prestige as an art connoisseur who sees value in microscopic art, says Nasser Shademan, the German-based master dental technologist. Who says cosmetic dentistry has to be boring? For more info, go to www.pristinedental.com.my.

only one or two teeth that need repair. They have also done a lot of remedial work on crowns and veneers that are discoloured or of a different shade from the rest of the natural teeth.

Examples include a single or a few sparkling white crowns in a mature person with yellowed natural teeth that stand out like a sore thumb. Then there are also crowns that are created totally white, when in fact a natural tooth is opaque nearer the gum but becomes increasingly more translucent at the edges.

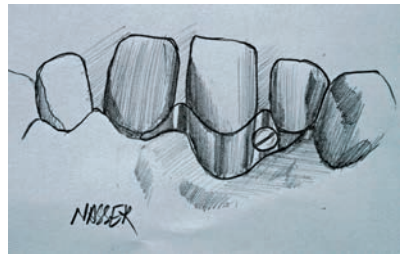
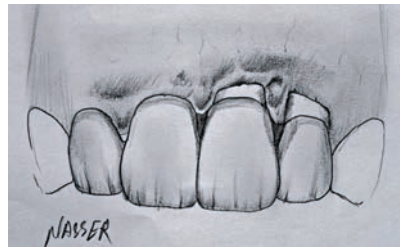
"The shape of your teeth affects the way your lips are curved at the sides, giving you the perfect smile," Nasser adds. "And this is where the expertise of the dental surgeon comes in. Once I'm done with the fabrication work, it needs to be cemented on securely and accurately. Teamwork is crucial."

In recent years, Nasser has also developed a unique surgery-free solution for gum replacement that looks natural and attractive. The prosthetic gum is simply screwed to the gum area with a tiny little screw, giving patients both function and aesthetic satisfaction.

Dr. Suresh plans to start a dentistry revolution in the region, where more dentists and dental technologists work together. Right now they work through remote communications, where technicians never get to see the patient. What usually results is a lack of engagement for the dental technician.

It may take three times longer to get the desired results when working together with a technician like Nasser, but the results are also significantly improved because it enables the team to see the patient as a person and not as just another name on the computer screen.

Each tooth costs RM4,000 (US\$1,250). The cost of a total mouth reconstruction can range from RM40,000 to RM60,000, depending on the complexity of the case.



Mr. Nasser has developed a surgery free solution for gum replacement where the prosthetic gum is simply screwed into the gum area.



A range of smiles before and after treatment by Dr. Suresh Nair and Mr. Nasser Shademan.