

## Bra Intervention

**Jane Flanagan**

Shopping

It all started on a very normal day when I was going through our [Shopping Q&A](#) inbox. One of my favourite parts of our Shopping section is how involved readers are. Sometimes, they'll fire off an e-mail just to high-five me on something I've put in "Hot or Not." Sometimes, they'll have a great suggestion. Of course, there are complaints and misunderstandings too, but for the most part our readers approach us with the same mix of fun and information that I try to convey in my columns.



Photo by: Jane Flanagan

In particular, there are lots of questions about lingerie, about Spanx and about jeans that fit. I guess the same things are on everyone's mind. Still, one bra-related question made me sit up and smile like no other question had before. It came from Joan in Grimsby, ON and read:

"I would like to be fitted with a bra. I have never had one that fit properly. I live in Grimsby, Ont. and will shop in St.Catharines, Hamilton or Burlington. Could you please advise if there is a Lingerie shop who measures for bras in these areas? Also I am 73 years old and it is about time for a change. - Joan"

### A Plan is Hatched



Photo by: Jane Flanagan

I could barely believe that a lady of 73 was online reading my columns and e-mailing questions to me. My own mother is not yet 60 and barely knows how to turn her computer on. And I loved the obvious joie-de-vivre that made Joan want to go find the perfect lingerie. Many of us give up on certain things as we age, get set in our ways, or feel like we don't have to bother any more. But here was Joan, at 73, not only embracing change, but hunting it down.

I forwarded the e-mail to our President with a plan. He gave me the green-light and I started making calls. First, I contacted Liliana at [Linea Intima](#), arguably the best lingerie store in Toronto. Then I contacted our good friends at [Rosedale Livery](#) and finally I got on the phone to the [Cosmopolitan Hotel](#). Each company represents the creme de

la creme of their industry. If we were doing this, we were giving it 100%.

I didn't have to work very hard. Upon reading Joan's e-mail, the reaction was unanimous - this was one swell lady who we all wanted to treat to a special day of lingerie shopping and pampering, and the transport? - Stretch limo of course darling!

With everyone on board, it was time to contact Joan. I had no idea what her reaction would be. Was she really 73? Would she want this kind of attention? After all, my readers only expect me to answer their questions in the following week's Q&A. Indeed, Joan was cautious when I contacted her. She wanted to believe me, but I could sense her uncertainty. Nevertheless, she jumped on board. She just had to find a friend to accompany her.

### Joan's Day of Firsts

Finally, the day arrived. Joan and her friend Marion were picked up by a Rosedale 8-person stretch limousine and driven to [Linea Intima](#), where I met them with Liliana, the store owner and Toronto's unofficial "Bra Guru". [Linea Intima](#) is the kind of store that you immediately feel comfortable in. They can cater for sizes ranging from 32A to 44H and are a Certified ADP mastectomy vendor. None of us like walking into a store and finding that nothing fits, but this situation will not arise at [Linea Intima](#).



Photo by: Jane Flanagan

The limo was running a little late (usual Toronto morning traffic delays) so I used the time to myself get fitted for a new bra. This is something every woman should do whenever they sense their body has changed, either through weight loss or gain or just aging. I was measured just over a year ago and my size had changed, which just goes to show that being fitted regularly is the wardrobe equivalent of a regular check-up.

Shortly after my purchase was complete, Joan arrived. After all the correspondence, it was lovely to meet her and we chatted like old friends. It was a day of firsts for both of us. For me, it was the first time I had met one of my readers in person.

For Joan, it was her first limousine ride and Liliana graciously made Joan her first ever espresso (she's hooked now and plans to buy an espresso machine). And then came the fitting itself, also a first. Joan was wearing a 38B and Liliana measured her to be a 36D and picked out a beautiful coral-coloured bra for her to try. The difference was instantly perceptible.

When you wear the right size bra, the back-strap should sit well beneath the

shoulder blades, level with the front. And the bust itself should sit mid-way between our shoulder and your elbow when your arms are by our side. Your top should sit smoothly (no buckling or gaping). And there should be no discomfort.

I'm not going to lie. At over \$100 each, decent bras are not cheap. But they may be the most important item you can add to your wardrobe. Joan's outfit also fit her better when she had the right size bra: Her waist was more defined because her bust was lifted and she looked more slender overall. You can dress stylishly on a budget, but your lingerie is not the place you want to skimp.

To illustrate what not to do, Liliana likes to point to Laura Bush, seen here, who happily wears couture but ruins the overall impression with the wrong-size bra. Well, today Joan was getting the 5-star treatment that even Mrs. Bush hasn't had - she was finding her perfect fit. We found Joan two delightful bras and also got her some special delicate-washing products that will increase the lifespan of the bra.



Getty Images

### More Firsts



Shizen Spa

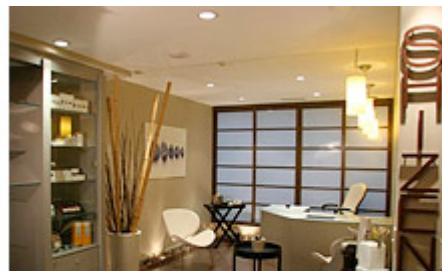
Joan was delighted - she had got everything she had asked for. But her day was not over yet. The kind staff at the [Cosmopolitan Hotel](#) had agreed that an afternoon at the spa would be the perfect way to end this special day of pampering. So, with [Linea Intima](#) bags in tow, Joan, her friend Marion and I bade farewell to lovely Liliana and set off in the limousine.

We grabbed a quick lunch and made our way to [Shizen Spa at the Cosmopolitan](#), where staff had arranged a facial and manicure for both Joan and Marion. This was to be Joan's first spa-day. I'm no regular spa-goer, but I do tend to take the whole thing for granted: The white waffle robe, the plinky-plonky music, the herbal tea. But for Joan, every detail was a discovery. She was a kid in a candy store.

Gilbert, the aesthetician at [Shizen](#), first cleansed Joan's face and neck and then treated her to a light exfoliation, followed by a gentle steam treatment. The steam opened up Joan's pores to allow Gilbert to easily do extractions, without hurting or putting excess pressure on the skin. After this, she massaged Joan's face and neck and applied a mask.

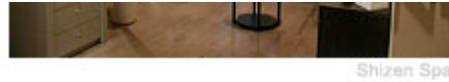
As I quietly observed Gilbert's careful movements, I felt my own body relax. The room, with its gentle fragrance of oils and products, seemed a thousand miles from the hustle and bustle on the street outside. I think Joan dozed off, and I wasn't far off myself.

When Joan awoke from her meditative state of



relaxation, she returned to the lounge area of the spa where we met Marion (who was similarly glazed over in a state of blissful calm).

As they sipped herbal tea (another first) and awaited their manicures, I bid these two lovely ladies adieu. After their treatments were complete, the [Rosedale](#) limousine picked them up outside the [Cosmopolitan](#) and drove them home.



### The Finale



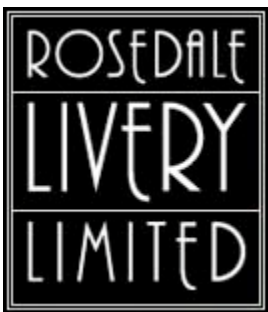
Photo by: Jane Flanagan

For me, this work day was one of the most rewarding I've had. When I write my columns I always hope that they reach a receptive audience and that, in their own way, they help clear up some of the confusion that people often have about shopping and finding the right products. Meeting Joan was confirmation that, at least for one person, I have been successful in this attempt.

But more than that, Joan reminded me that you should always be open to trying new things and to learning. Every woman, no matter what her age, should be wearing the right size bra. And every woman deserves the complete indulgence of a day at the spa once in awhile. Treating yourself to these things doesn't have to be about spending a small fortune. At every age,

it's good for your soul and it's a whole lot of fun.

Special thanks go to:



**Rosedale Livery**

[www.rosedalelivery.com](http://www.rosedalelivery.com)



**The Cosmopolitan Hotel & Shizen Spa**

[www.cosmotoronto.com](http://www.cosmotoronto.com)

[www.shizenspa.com](http://www.shizenspa.com)

And last, but not least, Liliana and the staff at



**Linea Intima**

[www.lineaintima.com](http://www.lineaintima.com)

CLOSE WINDOW

---

Copyright © 2009 CanWest Interactive, a division of CanWest Global Communications Corp. All rights reserved.  
Optimized for browser versions 4.0 and higher.

