

Dr. Kurt Wagner

The Original Dr. 90210

Thousands of people remember Dr. Kurt Wagner because they can't look in the mirror without seeing his handiwork. Undoubtedly the original "Dr. 90210", long before the term became part of American nomenclature, Wagner has operated on the rich and famous in Hollywood and beyond for over 40 years. His office walls are jammed with autographed photos of movie stars like Fred Astaire, Joan Crawford, and Ginger Rogers, testifying to the trust placed in his skilled hands by those who wanted and could afford the absolute best plastic surgery to keep them young and camera-beautiful.

Kurt Wagner was one of the first plastic surgeons to have an onsite operating room, commonplace in today's plastic surgery practices. "My parents loaned me \$25,000 in 1967 to build my own practice in Beverly Hills. It had one operating room and two recovery beds, and my entire staff consisted of one secretary who doubled as my surgical assistant," recalls Wagner. "I ran the anesthesia, performed the procedures and, God knows, I cleaned up after plenty of surgeries in the beginning. The operating room itself was situated right behind the reception wall, and since there were only two of us in the office, if someone walked in the door or the phone rang, one of us had to run out there to take care of business. One minute I'm doing a facelift and the next I'm a receptionist. It was like the Keystone Cops!"

As word traveled throughout Southern California, Dr. Wagner's fame grew. "I made about \$100,000 that first year, which was a lot of money in 1967. There I was, an upstart with money and high profile clients pouring in. Suddenly, I was the "It" plastic surgeon in Hollywood," says Wagner.

One day a PR agent called Dr. Wagner about an NBC special: the remaking of a woman. Hairdressers, clothing designers and makeup people were lined up and they wanted a plastic surgeon. Dr. Wagner met with the producers at Musso & Frank, one of the famous old grills in L.A. at that time. They asked him, "Why do you want to be on television?" "Are you nuts?" I asked them, recalls Wagner. "I want to be famous and the fastest route to that is to be on television."

The crew filmed Dr. Wagner as he performed her facelift. It became the prototype for Extreme Makeover and Dr. 90210. He was filmed playing the piano, playing tennis, swimming and talking with wife Kathy, who was the highlight of the show. Dr. Wagner states, "They would flash the before and after shots of the patient walking down Rodeo Drive. Seeing it now, it's just as topical as it was then, but it was earth-shaking in the 60's! There was nothing even close to it — no reality shows and certainly nothing on TV about plastic surgery."

It didn't stop there. Look Magazine did a multiple page spread, he appeared on the Merv Griffin Show, in Cosmo and Time magazines, as a result of his book, *How to Win the Youth Game: The Magic of Plastic Surgery*.

"I've had a fabulous career and now, living and working in Boca at Sanctuary Plastic Surgery, at 75 I'm still having the time of my life!" quotes Dr. Wagner.

Want more? Read Dr. Wagner's upcoming book, "The Original Dr. 90210".



Kurt Wagner, MD

Board Certification
American Board of Plastic Surgery

Medical Degree
New York University

Charitable Giving
Founding Member,
American Breast Cancer Society
in Los Angeles

Founding Member,
Homes for Displaced Families

Media Appearances
Merv Griffin Show
BBC's Wicker's World
Look Magazine
Time Magazine
Cosmopolitan
The New York Times
The Los Angeles Times



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