

TREND

A glamour picture worth 1,000 words

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The sight of a camera — lens focused, shutter open, is enough to make most people cringe. The thought of forever imprinting a bad image that will resurface annually in the family photo album is nerve-wracking. Women seem to dread the lens and flash the most. However, when the photography session is combined with a makeover and hairstyle, maybe even a few props or beautiful outfits, their outlook changes. Just another picture becomes something else — a glamorous portrait that eventually is proudly displayed.

"People really want to feel good about who they are," said Diane Dalpe, co-owner with Daphne Nichols of Fantasy Photography in Arlington. "This kind of photography really changes their image of who they are and who they can be."

Glamour and boudoir photography is becoming a big business. Glamourshots, a national franchise, has nearly three hundred stores in five countries, according to area manager James Walsh. "The makeover is a big part of what we do," he said. "Our mission is to take better pictures of people than they have ever had before." Walsh oversees stores in Natick, Burlington, Saugus and Cambridge, all owned by Boston Glamourshots, Inc. Clients in these mall stores are able to see their photos as they are taken on a video monitor. This allows the photographer and the client an instant preview of the finished product.

Karen McCall, owner of Karen McCall Photography in Natick, said she offers a different version of the typical glamour photo. "I do more of an upscale look, without all the glitz." She finds many of her customers are coming a "seductive, alluring yet tasteful picture of themselves."

McCall doesn't do typical boudoir shots, although her clients sometimes have a shot taken with a bare shoulder or a bare back, leaving more mystery with less skin. Part of the problem with sensual photographs, she said, is "people are uncertain if they don't know you."

Daphne Nichols, the photographer at Fantasy Photography, solves this reluctance by encouraging meetings with clients prior to the shoot. Each client comes in for a consultation, allowing both the photographer and the customer to understand what will happen once the camera is shooting. "We only do one sitting a day. It really lets that person know that we care about her and her photos."

All three photographers said the majority of their customers are women getting the portraits done for their husbands or boyfriends. McCall pointed out,

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