

# GOODLIVING

The secrets of well-being

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YOU'LL STICK TO

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GRUB FOR GREATNESS

**SYDNEY  
CELEBRATES**  
NEW YEAR'S EVE WITH AN  
INFLATABLE CROCODILE

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IN THE 80S**  
Shoulder pads  
strike back



**PARKOUR**  
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HOW TO BE A MENTALIST  
SPA FOCUS  
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HYPNOTHERAPY  
+ MUCH MORE

# Going to great lengths

**H**air extensions have become a Global phenomenon, with Magazines and TV shows dedicated to the celebrities who wear them, and dinner party conversations dominated by whether to weave, microbond, or stitch in hair sourced from Chinese school girls or Russian prisoners.

GOODLIVING seeks out Julie Powell, the Regions most experienced Extension Specialist, to sort out the facts from the fiction, taking a look at the cutting edge world of hair extensions right here in the Middle East

**Julie, you are now in your third decade in this business – what changes have you seen?**

In the late 1980s in London, fibre was used, not real hair, soldered into the hair of London's pop music crowd led by people like Boy George. Hair was always very funky, green, blue and purple, I remember seeing hair applied in Camden market and it being burned in with a lighter – I was horrified.

**How was the fibre compared to real hair?**

Initially we worked with monofibre, and it took hours to apply. As the strands were manmade, they didn't blend with the hair, and it was difficult to style. All that changed with the arrival of natural hair early in the

1990s. Suddenly, we were working with the real thing – it was amazing, the hair looked and felt great"

**How did you get involved with real hair?**

Hundreds of companies emerged to offer hair to women who previously could only have dreamt of achieving length and volume. I experimented with a few of these new companies, but was particularly impressed with David Gold, a British inventor who had come up with a revolutionary technique in 1991 to maintain the luxurious quality of untreated hair.

The hair for extensions was sourced from India, and was almost always virgin, completely undamaged and beautiful – and whilst other companies set about bleaching and colouring the hair to send out to Salons in an assortment of colours required to suit the European market, David and the team at Great Lengths put years of experience in the garment industry to good use to create the finest quality hair in the business. You could feel the difference as soon as you touched it.

**How do you achieve the different colours if you don't bleach the hair?**

In order for the hair to change colour, whilst maintaining the quality of the hair, it must first undergo a lengthy de-pigmentation process, whereby the

entire colour molecule is removed from deep inside the hair. At Great Lengths we never bleach the hair; instead the hair is gently treated using a highly sophisticated formula, similar to those used to treat cashmere. This part of the process can take up to 15 or 20 days to remove all traces of the black pigment. The pigmentation process then implants the complete colour molecule, which sits firmly in place guaranteeing the colour will not fade out.

**Why do we hear all these horror stories about extensions?**

Sadly, there is little regulation in the industry. Unscrupulous salon owners see the prices charged for top quality extensions, and want a part of it. What they and discerning clients should understand is that price is relative to quality. Great Lengths is the Rolls Royce of the Industry, and our hair is sold at a premium, because of that quality. What saddens me is when I see cheap hair, glued in for the same price or more than is charged by the professionals at our Great Lengths approved salons.

**How can a prospective client be sure she is getting a good deal?**

When you walk into a Salon look around. Are the staff wearing the extensions – if not, why not? True extensionists are passionate about their trade and wouldn't be seen without

them. Touch the hair, feel it, see how it looks not just in the bag, but on heads. Ask to speak to satisfied clients. Ignore glossy model shots supplied by hair suppliers – this is not always indicative of the standard of work in all Salons. Ask to see before and after pictures of actual clients of the Salon. At this Salon (we are interviewing Julie at The Gold Salon, part of her Group of Companies which is home to the Great Lengths Academy and Dubai's first dedicated Hair Extension Salon established in 1996) we have hundreds of before and after pictures taken in the salon, and we encourage first time clients to approach other ladies they see in the salon for their feedback.

**What do you think is behind the phenomenal Worldwide success of Great Lengths?**

Three things make Great Lengths Great. The hair, the bond and the technician.

No one works independently of the others, and when all three come together you have the perfect head of hair. We don't supply hair to any salon that doesn't have our machines or training. Likewise we don't share our industry leading education with anyone not using our products, or sell machines without hair. This unique policy is what keeps us in control of the standard of service offered. Whilst we are operating a business, it is not just about money. We are very selective about the salons we choose to partner with, simultaneously protecting the consumer and our reputation.

We also operate a Great Lengths Hotline in Dubai, just call +971 4 3215162 or + 971 50 5355527 and we are most happy to confirm that the Salon you are dealing with is Great Lengths approved, or to refer you to the nearest salon in your home country.

By choosing A Great Lengths approved salon you are afforded the security of dealing with extension professionals at the highest level.



**[PREVIOUSLY, IN THE 80S AND 90S THE MARKET WAS ALL ABOUT LONG, THICK HAIR. IT WAS A NICHE PRODUCT, USED BY PEOPLE IN THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY]**

**Tell us about the Great Lengths hair?**

Great Lengths ethically source all hair from Indian Temples. It is the finest quality, untreated, virgin hair, and most suited to the extension process. Strands are available in three thickness levels and 11 lengths ranging between eight and 32 inch long, in 62 colours from blonde to platinum, vibrant reds to perfect plums, wonderful blondes and browns in warm and ash shades, and a pastel, jewel and crazy collection that is stunning. Hair is available in

3 textures, natural - which can be dried straight or left to fall with body and natural movement; our unique Kashmir strands are the envy of the industry – hair that is poker straight, silky with super shine – it gives you that just walked out of the salon look straight out of the shower! Our curly and afro textured hair creates soft natural barrel curls that are stunning and for the first time create real options for curly haired Women who want longer, thicker hair.