

emirates

Woman

# beauty

Summer 2006

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The  
ultimate  
**Spa  
Guide**

**Bad  
Girls**  
Guide  
to Beauty

What makes a  
**woman  
Beautiful?**

Do you  
really need  
**botox?**





Before

“

It's changed my life," declares Michelle Zdrzynski as she flounces a lustrous long strand of hair behind her shoulder. The 22-year-old model is not talking about a new personal organiser or even a miracle face cream, but rather her beautiful blonde hair extensions.

"I walk into a room and feel confident," she says. "I feel sexy and beautiful. I would never ever go back to a life without them." With 24-inches of golden tresses flowing down the length of her back, it's easy to see why Michelle is beaming. Her stunning mane looks anything but fake, instead she looks like a modern day Rumpelstiltskin.

For Michelle, the decision to ditch her shoulder length hair was not taken lightly. Like the rest of us, she had heard about disastrous mishaps where extensions had gone wrong. While a regular hairdresser may be a Picasso with a pair of scissors, they may not necessarily be as skilled in the art of hair extensions. "It's really important to do some research instead of just walking into any salon," she explains. "I wanted real hair, not synthetic, and someone who would not use glue. You don't want to damage your hair, or even worse, go bald because someone's done a bad job."

Photographs: Vikram Gawde

After

**What do Sienna Miller and Kate Beckinsale have in common? Apart from being among the world's hottest celebrities, both have hair extensions to thank for their fabulous locks. Leisha Petrys reports on why Dubai women are saying goodbye to bad hair days forever**



# The long

With a reputation of being the place to go in the UAE for extensions, Michelle entrusted The Gold Salon with the job. Up to five women walk out of the Karama salon each day with luxurious longer locks and some even fly from as far a field as India and the UK for the specialist service. Owner Julia Powell, who is the exclusive distributor of Great Lengths products in the Gulf, says celebrities like Julia Roberts, Kate Beckinsale and Jennifer Lopez have helped foster the popularity of hair extensions. "Women spend a very long time styling their hair trying to make it look good and that's particularly hard if your hair is fine. Women want red carpet hairstyles and extensions make their life easier."

The trend to extend has also skyrocketed with improvements in the actual quality of hair and application methods. Top-end extensions will not only add length, but also fullness, highlights and texture. Gone are the nasty artificial fibres that were once worn by women desperate for long hair. Even Victoria Beckham these days manages to pull off an almost natural look... well maybe her hair at least. "When I first started out in the industry human hair wasn't available and we used mono-fibre nylon which was designed to mimic hair," Julie recalls. "We all thought we looked fabulous, but now I know better!"

The secret behind the success of modern extensions is the use of

## What you need to know:

❖ **DO YOUR HOMEWORK**  
Approach women who already have extensions for advice. Look on the Internet there's plenty of tips to help find an expert.

❖ **ASK FOR A CONSULT**  
A consult will help you to decide what style of extension is best for your hair type. Some of the selections available include natural, straight, wavy or curly.

❖ **DEMAND PROOF**  
The salon should also be able to provide testimonials or photos of their work. Any amateur can show celebrity magazine pictures to illustrate the quality of the extensions but often the best proof is photos of their actual clients.

❖ **SAVE YOUR PENNIES**  
Just because one salon is cheap does not mean it's necessarily a good idea. Avoid synthetic products. Only human hair will give you a natural look.

❖ **MAINTENANCE**  
Invest in a good brush. Great Lengths has a specifically designed brush for extensions but a Mason & Pearson would also suffice.

virgin hair. Especially sourced from Indian women who donate their hair to temples, it's among the best kept strands in the world. "For Indian women their beauty is associated with their hair. As young girls they are taught to take care of it, how to brush it, how to oil it, and it's usually never coloured or permed."

The bonding process avoids damaging glues, but instead uses a mixture of keratin and protein that mimics and reacts with your natural hair. In doing so, you can cut, style and colour as you please and even swim without worrying about the consequences.

Up-keep is also easy and replacement extensions should be applied around every six months. Depending on the desired length of hair, the price would cost anything between Dhs3,500 and Dhs10,000 (Michelle's cost Dhs8,000).

Application times also vary with a visit to the salon taking anywhere between two hours and five. But beware of any hairdresser that offers heavy discounts. "Quite often a girl comes to us in need of help after she's taken a cheaper alternative. There are lots of salons jumping on the bandwagon who are not qualified and it's important to do your homework," Julie warns.

Is the timely application process and cost worth it? Well, according to Michelle, absolutely. "I see it as an investment that keeps on paying. Not only do I feel better about myself, I've had so many more modelling jobs because of these extensions." And what about the dreaded bad hair day? "Never. There are some days I don't even need to brush it. I wake up and it looks perfect." ●

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# story