

# whata**NEW**

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Unexplained  
Phenomena

**WOW**

Them with  
Hair Extensions

What Makes  
**DUBAI** Unique



# WOW

## Them with Hair Extensions



Tired of having the same hairstyle year after year? Or having to deal with thin, stringy, falling hair that's getting worse day by day? The solution is simple; go for hair extensions to give yourself a complete makeover and add pizzazz into that old hairstyle of yours. As Buffy Cortese investigates...



Milena before

Milena after

photos of actual clients not models and ask as many questions as you need. Extensions are an art form and good technicians will be happy to talk about the extension application and results in an unhurried and informative manner. Make sure the staff at the salon are wearing the hair - if not why not! Ask to see the bonds, touch them. Avoid glue and weaves they are damaging."

Good extensions will grow out and need changing in four to six months. While the hair itself is sourced from India, Julie says it is pre bonded in Europe - and therefore cannot be re used. The application of new hair can be done safely and immediately after the old extensions are removed. "At Gold Salon, our technicians are highly specialised. They work as an extension assistant for at least one year before being trained in the art of extensions. They are highly specialised and perform four to five heads each per day and a client can get a full head of hair, cut and styled in as little as 90 minutes," informs Julie.

## REAL LIFE TRIED AND TESTED

Nadia Malik from Dubai very recently had hair extensions put in and this is what she had to say about her experience:

"I have had short hair for the past five years so the thought of having longer hair meant either trying to grow out my hair or else leaving it short. I have always admired the long flowing locks of celebrities but I thought who has the time and budget for that? Still I was sceptical—how natural can they really look? They must be uncomfortable and it must take hours to put them in were all thoughts I had running through my head as I stepped into the Gold Salon in Dubai. The extensionist Maryam Orbista sat down to explain how she could add some length and volume to my thinning hair, matching a few colours to get the perfect mix of base colour and highlights which were already present in my natural hair colour. Once we mutually decided on the colours dark brown, caramel and a lighter shade, my hair was shampooed using a special Great Lengths shampoo number 4. Then my hair was blow dried to make it completely dry. Next Maryam made sections in my hair beginning from the back of my hair. She explained as she worked that Gold Salon used Great Lengths hair extensions which are superior in not only quality but look and feel like your own hair. Maryam began explaining the procedure to me as I had no idea—the special machine they used is the GL 3200 heated machine which is a common machine

used in the Middle East. Maryam says that with this machine not only are the extensions put in faster, but the hair stays in longer and that they are able to attach the extension closer to the natural roots. Using the extension, Maryam carefully and briskly held the section and placed the hair extension under it so that the keratin bond would cover all of the natural hair. She used the special machine and once the two clicks sounded she told me the extension was attached. She used her fingers to roll the bond and make it a little neat. Since we had opted for volume and length, Maryam bonded extensions in the back of my hair to the nearer the crown and sides.

She chatted amicably explaining that being in a position to make women happy with their amazing transformations gave her immense pleasure and job satisfaction. Also the business can be tricky as Maryam says that in the consultation stage is where she needs to assess not just the length but also it depends a lot on the client's budget. Also the shape of the face, what length is desired, volume and really she needs to assess how she can achieve the look the client is looking for based on that particular budget. As extensions were applied, I saw my short hair suddenly looking long and silky and we were not even finished yet! Excitement was creeping in and two hours later the extensions were all in... Now for the haircut; Maryam explained that cutting is tricky since they are cutting the extensions to match with your natural hair to create one hairstyle. Once the cutting was complete, next came the final step—the blow-dry. Natalie, another extensionist came in and painstaking blow dried my hair all the while explaining how to take care of the extensions. It was paramount to brush my hair daily with a special brush that was meant just for hair that had extensions in them and that to brush the hair meant brushing from the crown and then holding the ends and brushing it gently. Also for the first two days, I was told not to shampoo my hair in case the bonds loosen. Also there was even a special shampoo to avoid using oil based hair products in case the bonds loosen up. Also Natalie told me that it would look and feel just like my own hair but that in time it would grow out and the bulbs may begin to show. Also when it is time to remove the extensions, a special solution is applied and the extension bulb is soaked in the solution which loosens it and then a special tool will remove it.

After the blow-dry I took one look in the mirror and was literally wowed by what I saw! I had thick and luxurious hair to mid of my back with just the right amount of volume! I looked like a completely different

person! For me, a first timer at extensions, I must say that hair extensions are addictive! I was transformed from drab and boring to suddenly looking more glamorous and young! If you want a change or just need a quick fix for a wedding, party or any other occasion, then head over to the Gold Salon in Dubai where expertise is more than just extensions but a complete package of over the top service, friendly ambiance and skilful hair extensionists ready to transform you into anyone you would like to be!"

## ABOUT GREAT LENGTHS HAIR EXTENSIONS

Great Lengths hair is sourced from Indian temples where it is customary for people of this culture to give their hair to temples as part of a ritual offering. Genetically, Indian hair is very similar to Caucasian hair in its basic structure. It is of extraordinary quality since it has never been exposed to harsh chemical treatments. Indian hair is optimal for the manufacturing of hair extensions. Great Lengths utilises only remis hair which means that the cuticle layers are all facing the same direction from root to end and, therefore, do not tangle. This also ensures that the extensions behave exactly like your own hair, blending in superbly with yours and looking super natural! The raw hair travels from India to Rome to undergo a patented Osmosis process to gently remove the natural colour pigment, before they colour and apply bonds.

## PRICES:

The price starts at Dhs 23 per strand for 12 inch, Dhs 24 for 14 inch and Dhs 25 for 16 inch and so on with strands available up to 30 inches long, in almost 80 colours. The Gold salon is unique in the region in that it holds a permanent stock of all the colour and lengths, and so you can do your hair immediately without waiting for the hair to be ordered. A rough guide for a full short to long transformation would be Dhs 3500 to 4000 and onwards for longer thicker hair.

Julie Powell, Owner  
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## The Beginning

A pioneer in Dubai's burgeoning extensions market, Julie Powell from Dubai's Gold Salon is the foremost expert in hair extensions and explains how it all began; "In the late 1980's I was publishing a magazine in the UK. I went to interview Lucinda Ellery who was instrumental in making extensions famous in the UK. It seemed so exciting to be able to change someone's appearance so dramatically in just a few hours. The following day I was booked into her studio to have my own hair done, and within 10 days had signed the lease on my first salon in Berkshire England." But it was only when Julie got married and came to live in Dubai and after the subsequent birth of her first two children that she resumed her career with the first Gold Salon in Dubai which opened in September 1996. "There was a huge demand as nobody was offering extensions - and many ladies were flying to London to get their hair changed every three to four months. We became very well known very quickly with lots of referrals. Within a year our reputation had spread and we had clients coming in from all the Gulf states, India and Pakistan.

For Julie, hair extensions are not just a job but a passion; "I love my work- from the first day I was introduced to extensions I saw how wonderful this industry could be simply because of the difference it could make to the looks and confidence of the clients who wear them. In these days of the recession, our business has remained relatively unscathed as so many of my clients simply will not be without their extensions," says Julie, pointing out, "I once had a client who was a nurse and spent two months salary, three times a year to do her extensions; I was intrigued and asked her why she would be prepared to spend half her annual income for hair and she said they made her so happy about her appearance that she wasn't prepared to give them up. Until you have worn them it is quite difficult to understand, but extension wearers simply love the feeling of thicker, healthier, longer shiny hair."

## Great Lengths

According to Julie, good extensions mean nobody ever knows it is not your own hair. "There is no one look - we tend to create something that looks good and blends with the natural hair and the client's lifestyle. For a dramatic transformation you can use length, colour and texture to create a completely new look. Extensions create volume, bulk in specific areas to enable a stylist to create a hair style that may not normally be achievable for your hair, colour without chemical, and camouflage hair loss in specific areas of all over the head," she says. Using Great Lengths hair extensions, Julie says that in 1991 David Gold patented the keratin bond and revolutionised



Samanta before



Samanta after

the industry. "By working with human hair for the first time we could create exquisite natural looking styles. We could cut and colour the hair on the head - there were limitless options - it was a turning point and I only wanted to work with Great Lengths from that time forward as they were and continue to be the innovators of the industry. They are the only company with 3 options of application, and are available in over 60,000 salons," she says. Since the quality is so high, it requires very little maintenance and many clients come from overseas; "We see them every four months or so for removal and reapplication same day. The only really important tool is the extension brush although there is a

great range of shampoos and conditioners from Great Lengths although not essential.

## Misconceptions

Julie says that a big misconception people have about hair extensions is that they are damaging; "There are many cowboys in our industry who are just in it for the money - they use inferior products that can damage the hair and as a result give extensions a bad name," she says, advising, "Always go to an extension specialist and use a high quality brand. Ask to see a certificate, ask to speak to existing clients about their experiences, ask to see before and after

