



MATTHEW WILLIAMSON



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EXTENSIONS: WHY YOU GET WHAT YOU PAY FOR

“One of the things people don’t understand is that there are a lot of variables behind the creation of hair extensions,” says Great Lengths’ Thomas Gold. “Our most difficult task has been to teach the salons and consumers how we’re different and why we’re more expensive than the competition, when their hair seems very similar to ours on the surface.” Considering that good extensions should last around six to eight months, it’s worth knowing the facts.

The first and most important difference is the remy factor. The fact that Great Lengths uses 100 per cent Indian temple hair guarantees the hair is remy.


Secondly, Great Lengths uses an exclusive osmosis-based depigmentation process that takes black Indian hair down to the lightest shade of blonde without a hint of bleach or peroxide. This is done by sitting the hair in baths of a top-secret formula for up to 25 days. It’s a slow process because it’s incredibly gentle (so gentle that it can even be ingested!) – which results in hair that comes to you in better condition than any other.

“Other companies use much more aggressive methods of bleaching so they can reach the colour but inevitably destroy the quality of the hair in the process. They cover it up with amazing silicone technology, which gives it back its lustre and shine, so the client is happy initially but after only a few washes, the silicone washes off and the hair becomes dull and brittle,” explains Gold. “It’s mostly because of this that the competition is still light years behind us, especially when it comes to blondes.”

“No one else has anything close to this system,” he continues. “The market is booming so much that other companies don’t see it as a viable option to spend so much time and money when even cheaply made extensions are walking out the door. But we do because we know there’s a market of people who want the most natural and best product out there.”

Behind all the technology there’s also a quality control aspect that comes in to play. Great Lengths hair is ‘triple drawn’, meaning that after the hair is collected, it’s combed through a special

tool called a hackle three times. The hackle separates the lengths, so the consumer can be triple-sure that the strands of extensions are the exact same length from the roots to the tip – and that the hair she’s paying for is the hair she’s getting. “If we were to apply hair to a customer that included shorter strands we’d have to apply double the amount to get the look she wants, which means she would have to spend twice the money and get an uneven result,” explains Gold.

An increased use of henna in India has recently added another step to the process. “Sometimes there may be strands of hair that, because of the henna, can’t be taken to the exact shade Great Lengths need,” explains Balsara. “The moment the anomaly appears they send the batch back to us and we screen it and remove them. What a lot of companies do is just blend the anomalies into the rest. We’re talking about tiny flaws, slightly darker individual strands, that the customer might think is passable. But Great Lengths demands that level of precision and perfection.” 

WHAT’S NEXT? The hair extensions industry’s next big thing is a system that will eliminate the need for clunky, and sometimes uncomfortable, polymer bonds (the little plastic casings used to attach the hair to your own) altogether. “[The new method] – which boasts the speed of a clip-in with the longevity of a normal Great Lengths application – will revolutionise the application of hair extensions and make other single-strand methods, clip-ins and wefts obsolete,” promises Rob Aubin, from Great Lengths Australia. Like mascara that never comes off and a spray tan that lasts a month, it might sound like a way-out, futuristic beauty fantasy but you can expect it to start appearing in Australian salons in March. Bags first in... **Great Lengths, 1300 138 452, greatlengths.com.au.**