

How To Choose The Right Salon For You

Everyone deserves a day of beauty!

By Donna Straff and Jill Roggio

There are so many salons to choose from. How do you decide which one is right for you? It's not just about getting your hair cut and colored, it is about the quality of service you receive and your experience. How to find the right salon for "you" is essential. If the salon is dedicated to being the finest, you can bet the stylists are too. The following ideas will guide you in planning your beauty day and finding the salon and stylist that is best for you! (*Please note that these suggestions are geared to a hair salon/stylist but can be utilized for any beauty treatment, spa or salon*).

Initial Phone Call

First impressions count, so take note of the service you receive over the telephone. Below are some topics that should be covered or should be asked about on the initial phone call with the salon reception team.

-Do you have course hair, curly hair, or fine hair? Long or short hair?
Ask the receptionist for a recommendation on who would be the best stylist for your specific hair type.

-Inquire about the qualifications of each stylist. In addition to booking your appointment, the receptionist can answer questions about experience level, qualifications, and areas of expertise and personal style of each stylist. Most salons will offer a variety of stylists at different levels and price points. Ask the receptionist what requirements allow the stylist to excel to the next level. You should not focus on the length of time someone is doing hair but what education courses they have taken and what kind of client retention a stylist has.

-Inquire about the educational program in the salon. How frequently are classes held and who in the salon attends them? Having a solid educational program will ensure that the stylists in the salon are constantly refreshing their skill and knowledge.

-Ask if you can schedule a consultation with the recommended stylist. This way you can observe the salon professionals in action and you will feel comfortable about the service you will be receiving. The best time to schedule a consultation is a few weeks before you plan to book your appointment.

-Use the internet to your advantage. Access the salon's website; in addition to providing services and pricing, many websites offer specials and promotions, awards, credentials and pictures of the staff.

First visit

-Again, first impressions count, so when you arrive at the salon, take note of the service you receive when you first enter. Are you greeted with a smile and guided to where you need to be? A tour of the facility is always helpful so you become familiar with all of the services that are offered and locations of restrooms, closets, beverages, and magazines. You should be made as comfortable as possible with your surroundings.

-Is the salon neat and clean? You should choose a salon that upholds high standards of sanitation and ensure that all of its employees are properly licensed. Does the salon décor match your style and mood? You want to find a salon where you will enjoy yourself.

-The initial consultation with your stylist should begin with a friendly greeting and introduction. You should receive a complete consultation at the stylists chair before receiving any services. During the consultation, you should receive an explanation of everything that will be done to ensure that you relax throughout the service. Topics that your stylist should discuss include:

- *realistic expectations you can have for your hair and the results

- *hair type and texture

- *suggestions for your bone structure and hair type

- *your current home maintenance program and routine – what products are you using, what tools are you using in your hair and how often do you use them

*prices for all services getting done, maintenance and scheduling for future visits

Be open and honest and try to provide your stylist with as much information as possible about how you want to look and what your expectations are. You should also feel comfortable asking your stylist questions. You should try and “get a peek” into their personality, experience and achievements to ensure you are making the right decision for your beauty goals. How does your stylist look? Do they present themselves well and make you feel comfortable?

-Once your consultation is over and you both agree on the service, you may be introduced to another staff member who will assist with the service and shampoo. At times, your service may have one or two salon professionals who are working together to complete your look. During the service, you should not hesitate to ask questions. You should be receiving an explanation of all professional hair care products that are being used, how to use them and the benefits of them. As your style is being finished, you should also receive an explanation of how to maintain your style at home and tips to recreate your new look.

-After the service is completed, you should be escorted to an area to make sure you know what products were used during your visit, to pay for your services and to obtain feedback on your experience. Your stylist may also suggest that you plan ahead for your next appointment and suggest a maintenance program and schedule to keep your style in optimum condition.

Ongoing Visits

Every time you go into the salon your experience should remain consistent. You should be greeted professionally, the salon should be clean, and you should always receive a consultation before services are rendered. A consultation always ensures that your objectives are being met. Ongoing communication and consultation with your stylist is a necessity – you may be ready for “something new” with your look and that change should be communicated in the consultation. Every visit to the salon should be similar to the first visit and you should always receive consistent “excellent client service”. A quality salon should offer superior staff training and mentoring so that all the stylists provide quality workmanship.

Finding the right salon for you is essential - whatever services you choose and whatever salon you visit – make sure you are comfortable and enjoy your time – you deserve it!!

Donna Straff has been in the salon industry for almost 20 years and is the owner of Salon Rage in Southampton, PA. Salon Rage has been named one of the 200 fastest growing salons by Salon Today Magazine, a business publication for the professional beauty industry. Salon “Rage” has been open for business for 7 years and stands for the “Right Attitude and Great Expectations”. The foundation of Salon Rage is based on client service, education, mentoring and team work.