

Japanese Hair Straightening

By Sandra Lee

I have often admired the thick, silky, shiny and very straight hair of Japanese women. Lee Hendrickson of Balance Pointe Salon in Stow is a stylist who has also admired beautiful Japanese women and their exquisite coiffures. Lee went to New York City to study the technique called "Japanese Thermal Hair Straightening" which was developed to give every woman an opportunity to experience having this kind of unusually beautiful and healthy hair. She has completed all of Milbon Liscio's basic and advanced thermal reconditioning systems and is certified by them. Very few stylists in Ohio have full certification.

The methods needed to achieve these results are extensive. The technician, Lee explains, must give the client full attention for many hours. There are more than 20 steps included in Japanese Hair Straightening: Here is a sampling of some of those steps.

The process begins with an in depth assessment of the clients hair to determine the type and strength of the straightener and thermal conditioner to be used. The process uses both chemicals and heat to soften the bonds of the hair. Protectors are used for the skin and scalp to prevent any irritation during the process. Then root softeners are applied at the base of the hair. Several types of keratin



Kim's transformation from uncontrollable frizz to smooth, healthy locks took Kelly Bartlett and Lee Hendrickson, the straightening specialists at Balance Pointe Salon, more than four hours to complete. Kim will return in six months for a touch up.

protein strengtheners and moisturizers are applied in stages along with several hair protectors. What really sets this process apart are the flat irons specially designed to work with damp hair to realign the internal bonds. Traditional relaxers for straightening hair are known to damage the hair. The result is that the hair can look dry and brittle. With the Japanese technique, hair has more elasticity. It is soft and pliable. The technique is workable for many kinds of hair types and for women of all ethnic and racial background.

The technician is skilled in establishing a formula for every gal. While the hair in the end is basically straight, its softness and pliability allows it to be curled for styling purposes. The process needs to be done approximately every four to six months and

costs approximately \$400 to \$700. Japanese straightening has been growing in popularity in this country since 1998. The straightened hair can be color treated or highlighted and the technique maintains silky, glossy, smooth, healthy, undamaged hair. The system invented in Japan takes 3-6 hours and can be used on color-treated hair. It produces easy care stunning results for months. Even better, whatever hair is treated will stay straight permanently and only the regrowth needs touching up. This innovative process is suitable for uncontrollable, coarse hair, wavy, frizzy, kinky hair, colored treated and highlighted hair. To get the best result of thermal reconditioning, it is crucial to use the right products, the right technique, and most importantly, to choose the right specialist with extensive knowledge and experience of

this treatment. This treatment has been featured in just about every fashion magazine in America including: In Style, Allure, Vogue, Marie Claire, Jane, Woman's Day, Cosmopolitan, Self, Oprah, Lucky, Glamour, and Elle.



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