

Au Naturel

Schatzi's Design Gallery & Day Spa, LLC

Summer Breeze, Jasmine & My Mind

I wish you all greetings and well wishes. I pray that you're all in good health and that you're enjoying these summer months. The recent heat wave has been humbling and stifling. I enjoy regular walks in the park but I've had to forego this simple pleasure on more occasions than I would have liked in recent months just to safeguard my overall positive outlook about the experience. I admit that I "braved the oven" on more than one occasion and was not the *worse for wear* but I do tend to enjoy a more peaceable experience. Gasping for air in humidity that seems like you could cut it with a knife is not the best way to enjoy the great outdoors. ☺ I beg for a cool, summer breeze and alas, it is as

elusive as a graceful chord dancing on the current of time. (*Sigh.*)

But, I did manage to carve out time for a most memorable kayaking outing with my sister, Jasmine. We kayaked along the Neuse River and found the journey rewarding in more ways than anticipated. It was this outing that inspired the core article for this month's issue "Summer Fun for the Natural One." I hope you'll find very useful tips on natural hair care for those summer swimming expeditions. Jasmine will be so surprised I included this photo of her but it's just testimony to the freedom and fun that natural hair provides. ☺

On the salon side, the hair expo was a massive success! It was truly a

beautiful experience. I've never seen so many naturals in the same place all looking so absolutely fantabulous!! (Kudos to Malaika & Martone--the organizers!!) I feel equally blessed by the fact that my presentation was well received by listeners. So much so that I've been asked to speak at two future expo events. I really look forward to sharing my thoughts and spreading the word, one venue at a time.

Well with ending of this missive, I wish you blessings for this wonderful summer 2010! May you stay cool and at peace.



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Special Welcome to Lakisha Gilbert

We'd like to extend a warm welcome to Ms. Lakisha Gilbert, the new stylist here at *Schatzi's*. Lakisha is a *sister locked* sister with a warm demeanor and gifted hands. A native of North Carolina, she heralds from Sherrill's University of Barbering & Cosmetology. In Lakisha's words "What inspired me to become a cosmetologist was the impact [of knowing] I had something to do with making a person

feel good and look their best." Being competent in chemical and natural hair care services, Lakisha is very well equipped to guide clients through the naturalization process. Her own hairstyle is a testimony to her love and commitment to the natural look.

Her wealth of training and experience are a wonderful complement to our existing team of talented staff. Her

styling arsenal includes: twists, locks, kinky twist, braided extension styles, rod sets, hair cutting/trimming, cornrows and comb curls. She also will be adding *sister locks* maintenance to the salon portfolio, based on client demand.

Lakisha is a warm and cheerful spirit and a delight to have around. Please join us in wishing her a very warm welcome!



Lakisha Gilbert

Summer Fun for the Natural One by Schatzi McCarthy

With the summer in full swing, I see sisters and brothers alike making their way to the beaches and to swimming pools. The heat wave that we've recently endured on the East Coast will make even the "water shy" decide to give swimming another try. I personally prefer the late afternoon to evening or the early morning when swimming in a pool. The heat of the day swimming just isn't my thing unless I'm on a beach with the full cast of characters: hot sand, breaking waves, seagulls, beach towels, a cool beverage (or

five!) and of course, my boogie board. I'm now all set to go!

So with the wind, water, sun and fun, what should be done with those glorious tresses to facilitate a beautiful bathing experience? Well, I may be in the minority here but I'm a minimalist—a naturalist in the truest sense of the word. I wear my hair in two strand twists the majority of the time. When I want to go swimming, I dive right in!! And enjoy myself. Sure, there is lots of advice out there which

suggests that we should muss and fuss with our locks prior to enjoying nature's bounty but I for one am just not down with all that. Here's why:



Why I don't bother with all the fuss

1) There is nothing wrong with my hair. My hair is natural and healthy from proper care and maintenance. I work year-round to keep it that way. So why should a few days in the summer sun lying on the ocean's currents change that? The truth is that it won't. Water (liquid water) is the single most important chemical catalyst for life in the universe. (Physicist Stephen Hawking's words, not mine.) So, why should I fear that it will hurt my hair? It won't!

2) Moisturizing prior to swimming should be done with caution. I once took this advice to heart and followed the recommendation to coat my hair

with conditioner before swimming. I jumped in the water and for the next ten minutes, fought conditioner dripping into my eyes. It was a most punitive experience. Sure, I could have coated my hair and rinsed it out prior to swimming. That would have made a lot more sense. But in my view, it makes much more sense to oil the hair before swimming. Oil will coat, lubricate and protect the hair while swimming and won't be undone by

the water quite so quickly as conditioner.

3) Should I wear a swim cap to minimize abuse to the hair?

Okay, this recommendation is very logical and sensible but is totally NOT sexy!! So, I don't embrace it. Sorry but that's just me. When I swim, I want to feel free. The swim cap just don't do it for me. But if the spirit so moves you to wear one, by all means...DO!

"There is nothing wrong with my hair.... So why should a few days in the summer sun...change that?"

So now that I've expressed my own biases against traditional swimming hair care regimens, I think it appropriate to share what I do believe.

What I DO bother to DO

1) Water is a natural tangling agent. If you swim every day for a week with two strand twists, you may be surprised to find that you have locks by the end of the week! I found this out the hard way about 26 years ago while training as a lifeguard. I share this knowledge with you so you don't have to learn the hard way like I did. If you swim with loose hair, be sure to detangle and condition the hair upon exiting the pool. I would caution anyone with hair longer than six inches when swimming with loose hair. You may potentially be creating a

massive detangling job for yourself. But being a naturalist, I'm totally not opposed to loose hair swimming. Just know what you're getting yourself into.

2) Chlorine and salt left in the hair are drying agents.

Therefore, they should be meticulously rinsed from the hair following a swim.

3) Moisturize to restore pH balance and elasticity.

After rinsing the hair, conditioning is much more important than shampoo. The reason is that some

cleansing shampoos tend to strip the hair of natural sebum. If your hair was clean when you went swimming, I'd recommend skipping the shampoo and going straight to conditioning. If you must shampoo your hair, use a moisturizing shampoo instead of a cleansing shampoo. This is to avoid further stripping the hair's protective oils. Now is also a good time for a nice hot oil treatment or a deep condition. Your hair will thank you for it and will be much easier to detangle with the added lubrication of oil and/or conditioner products.

Summer Fun for the Natural One...Continued

4) Natural hair likes to dance—the longer the hair, the more passionate the tango. So to avoid stressing and tangling long hair, try styling it for the swim. I personally opt for large twists when swimming or braids pulled into an updo with a scrunchy. It keeps the hair from moving and tangling excessively and makes life really easy when it comes to rinsing, conditioning and re-twisting for tomorrow's swim-fest. If I want to feel my hair move and bend with the water, then I wear my regular size twists and just jump in. I can get away with this freestyle for about two days. Based on my hair texture however, I better be trying to redo the style by day three or just go ahead and embrace locks. ☺ If you already wear locks, then sister, you're all set to go!

5) Transitioning clients should seriously consider braided styles if you love swimming during the summer season. The two co-existing hair textures per strand (the trademark of transitioning locks) are already going to be subject to much friction and abuse from any combing and

styling they are enduring at this time. Therefore, the added threats of tangling and chlorine (or salt) will only serve to frustrate your naturalization journey. With that in mind, taking away one of the points of contention (namely regular combing and styling) can only make life easier. Your hair length and general condition will determine whether braided extensions are needed or whether you can style your own hair. Whichever option you choose, remember to apply the same rinsing and conditioning regimen to your braids that you would to your loose hair or locks.

What if I'm a daily swimmer?

If you're a daily swimmer, my guess is that you live in California, you're swimming competitively or swimming is your preferred fitness routine. If any of these apply, then you would be an ideal candidate for the swim cap. Your greatest challenge may be finding one that fits. Natural hair can tend to be big

hair so it may take a bit of searching to find the right one. But, it will be worth the investment in order to minimize the tangling and dryness that swimming can cause.

Conclusion

Fundamentally, a lot of the fuss around protecting Black hair from water has emerged because of our history and our tendency to shy away from anything that will mess up an expensive hairstyle. I totally understand that. But, I personally wear an expensive style for an event. I wear a hairstyle for my lifestyle, meaning I choose a style that fits my life. Once I've made that choice, the hair should never limit my LIVING. So, I encourage you to embrace a style that best matches your life. You'll be a lot less frustrated in the end. With hair that matches your life, you're free to be who you are...and all the musing and fussing becomes "much ado about nothing."

What are Sisters & Brothers Saying about Massage?

Here at *Schatzi's*, we recently conducted a prospective client survey to better understand the attitudes of the public towards massage therapy services. One of the perhaps NOT surprising revelations is that as a collective, African-American people do not routinely patronize massage therapy services. Observing the trend and wanting to better understand why, I designed a very brief questionnaire to find out. Our massage therapist, Vanessa Andrews, conducted these rather informal interviews with members of the public.

Now, before I go into explaining the survey results, I want to be very

clear in stating that the survey was in no way representative of the general public; it was not randomized in any way. While the survey WAS in fact designed consistent with survey research standards of mutual exclusivity and exhaustiveness, it was not administered within the confines of very rigid, scientific methods. This type of survey would have been very costly and would have extended far beyond our personal needs for engaging in this activity. Our aim was to generally understand client preference with a mind to preparing an article like this one to share the results. So Professor Spain, if you're out there reading this and thinking that I

forgot everything I ever learned in Social Stats, please rest assured, "I aint forgot nothing!!" ☺

Okay, so much for the research methods discussion. Of the survey respondents, 75% had never had a massage while 25% had. This trend was much in keeping with our original perception that most Black people don't receive massage therapy services. Of those respondents who had experienced a massage, half of them would like to have another one while the other half expressed no interest in another one due to the cost of the service. Of those who have never had a massage, responses

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Embrace the Beauty of You.

Schatzi's is a natural hair and personal care salon with a warm and nurturing ambiance for clients to "Embrace the Beauty of You." *Schatzi's* is located in the Park on Millbrook Condominium complex, near the intersection of Six Forks and Millbrook Rds.

Schatzi's design gallery provides services that nurture natural hair care with talented stylists who are happy to guide you through and beyond the naturalization process. Our day spa encourages mental, spiritual and physical well-being through a range of relaxation services, including massage therapy, facials and other skin care services. Our two floor art gallery is provided courtesy of local artist Jasmine Hawthorne.

Au Naturel newsletter, an essential part of our information sharing services, is a wondrous labor of love that is a joy to create and a gift to you our valued clients and to the public at large.

We're on the Web!

www.schatzisdayspa.com

What are Sisters & Brothers Saying...Continued

were mixed, with 33% wanting to try one, 33% not wanting one and 33% being uncertain about it. Of those who clearly don't want to experience massage therapy services (regardless of gender), cost was a reason cited as well as the personal nature of the experience. Of those who were unsure about whether they would want a massage, reasons cited included: "jealous partner" and "no time."

Of those respondents who are open to the idea of massage therapy (regardless of whether they've experienced one in the past), the primary factor cited for failure to follow through and get one was cost. In fact, the number one reason for not pursuing massage therapy services across all categories of respondents was cost. Respondents also expressed

ideas about massage therapy "not being a priority" and cited "feeling uncomfortable about their bodies."

Overall with cost being seen as the primary deterrent to massage therapy services followed closely by concerns about the personal nature of the experience, it is no wonder that there are not more brothers and sisters on the massage table. With these reasons cited, this trend is not likely to change for the foreseeable future. Athletes and dancers are professionals who cannot afford to compromise when it comes to the care of their bodies. So for them, massage therapy is a necessary investment. For the rest of the community, massage therapy may have to take a back seat to other more priority needs...understandably so.

The problem however is that current African American health statistics, particularly heart disease and hypertension rates, would suggest that we can't really afford to see massage therapy as a luxury. Our mechanisms to handle the stresses within our lives are simply not working overall.

Conversely, people in Asian cultures embrace massage therapy as an integral part of life much like a doctor's visit. As such, their health care outlook is more preventative rather than curative. One side effect of their approach to life is that they have some of the highest life expectancies in the world. But can massage therapy make a difference in personal health outcomes? For the next issue, we'll share more thoughts on massage therapy benefits.