

Shanghai's Hair Street



If this city has a highway to hair heaven, then it's Guangdong Lu; the little shops on this street and its offshoots around Zhejiang Lu trim with brushes, blow dryers, barrettes and bobby pins, along with more daring hair doodads like a rainbow of dyes, walls of wacky to natural wigs and endless rows of tools to straighten, crimp and curl. Japanese, French and Korean brands dominate the market that serves both professionals and regular folks like us. Here are the hairy hotspots...

Daxon: The swankiest shop on the block. It's where professionals invest in a pair of the world's best Hikari scissors (RMB7,000) and blow dryers (RMB800) imported from Italy (so they say). Like a cuticle cowboy, sling your new scissors in the ultimate hair tool holster crafted from python skin and lambskin.

// 5 Pingqiang Lu (6350 1332)

Yiling: The giant tubs and gallon jugs of imported hair products lining the floors and walls can be overwhelming, but the bubbly shop girls at Yiling will help you select from the insane amount of mane merchandise. They set us down and lovingly styled our hair with a Korean ceramic crimper, for which we bargained them down to RMB100.

// 528 Guangdong Lu (6361 6513)

Jiacheng: The hedge of 50 pretty heads donning wigs initially drew us into this tiny shop, but it was the wall-to-wall nail polish that made us linger. There are also plenty of accessories like headbands, barrettes and clips to give your hair some sparkle.

// 608 Guangdong Lu (3352 0115)



Hey, Baldy!

HAIR SOLUTIONS FOR THE HAIR CHALLENGED

By JFK Miller

'Male pattern baldness' – surely the three most dreaded words to the male ear after 'a limp Johnson.' This receding editor went in search of his lost youth. Combed the city he did...



SOLUTION #1

The hair transplant

This is essentially reforestation. They literally harvest a 1-1.5 cm strip of skin from the back of your head, in an area of good hair growth, and graft it onto your bald spots. The op takes about six hours, during which you can surf your iPad for exciting new hairstyles, which you can expect to apply to your new Sansonesque mane in about nine months. After my initial consultation with the reassuring Mirna Sierra Duchernin of Shanghai East Plastic & Cosmetic Surgery Clinic, I was advised that I would benefit from a transplant of about 2,500 grafts, which would give me a "very natural look." The eventual cost would be RMB28,000-29,000, which includes the surgery, anesthesia, a surgeon and hair transplant team fees and follow up for six months. Dr. Song Jianxing, who performs the surgery, established the clinic in 2005 and is a leading expert in the field. // Shanghai East Plastic & Cosmetic Surgery Clinic, 3/F, 330 Jimo Lu, by Puzong Da Dao 博通路150号, 靠近浦东大道, 上海东方医院门诊三楼医疗美容科 (5876 4134, www.eastplasticsurgery.com, info@eastplasticsurgery.com)



SOLUTION #2

TCM

No surgery, (just) the natural curative properties of renshen 人參 (ginseng), jiang 姜 (ginger) and other Chinese super herbs and spices which are applied to your bald spots via some brown goop slathered onto your head once a week for a year. It stings a bit, but the massage techniques of the lovely clinicians are ever so dreamy. At the initial consultation they will scan your head and show you computer images of your follicles magnified a 100 times (this is frightening, it looks like the alien landscape of a planet in a galaxy far, far away). A healthy follicle should have about three hairs each, but near my bald spots some of mine were down to their last one (and that little fellow was clinging on for dear life). While the clinicians say they can't help you where you have absolutely no hair at all, they can bring undernourished follicles (one or more hairs) back to rude health – in short, where there's life, there's hope. Cost is about RMB500 a session, which adds up to around RMB25,000 for the year. // Sunstone Hair Care Salon, Shop 27, B2, Cloud Nine Shopping Mall, 10218 Changning Lu, by Kewun Lu 安顺路10218号中山公园龙之梦B2楼027室, 恒龙源 (5873 3232)



SOLUTION #3

The hairpiece

The least expensive of the three options (around RMB10,000-20,000), but the one with the most potential for ridicule. That's where Swenson Hair Care comes in. With over 50 years in the game and over 100 branches worldwide, Swenson will tailor-make a wig based on your specifications. At the initial consultation they will take hair samples and head measurements and then walk you through the various options. Hairpieces for Westerners are usually made overseas, either in Hong Kong, Europe or America. Swenson would not confirm or deny its celebrity client list, however, a certain Kato who hangs with the Green Hornet is rumored to be wearing one of their rugs. // Swenson Hair Care Center, Shop 613A, Westlake Mall, 1038 Fanyang Xi Lu, by Jingcheng Lu 南京西路1038号西楼613A单元, 苏宁广场, 苏宁广场 (1038号南京西路613A单元), 苏宁广场 (400 821 5198)