

BROWS

Stephen Knoll Salon

GINA DADDONA, 625 Madison Ave., 212-421-0100

Even though we asked Daddona to keep our brows full, she spent 20 minutes tweezing and penciling them in—which felt like an eternity in her teeny, brightly lit room. But the mild claustrophobia was well worth the impressive results. The change in our brows was subtle enough that friends said we looked great—they just couldn't pinpoint why. \$50.

HAIR COLOR

Sally Hershberger

Downtown

ERIN BOGART, 423-425 W. 14th St., 212-206-8700

We've met our share of critical colorists, but Bogart was nit-picky in all the right ways. She replaced our sun-drenched shade with a more flattering espresso (made extra dark to allow for the inevitable fading), then interrupted our shampoo three times to analyze the color. The result: thoroughly flattering. \$125 and up.

Philadelphia

HAIRCUT

Richard Nicholas

Hair Studio

LIZZ BURNS, 1716 Sansom St., 215-567-4790

Burns's own hair has pink streaks—an alarming sight when all we wanted was a small change. No problem: The layers she cut into our previously one-length hair were so skillfully placed that they added volume and even made our face seem slimmer. \$60.

BROWS

Rescue Rittenhouse Spa

MICHELLE MARTIN, 255 S. 17th St., 215-772-2766

Martin's whip-fast brow plucking was almost painless, and she distracted us by asking loads of

questions—all while we lay on a comfy massage table. Before we knew it, Martin had given our sparse brows a sophisticated shape and made them look inexplicably fuller. \$40.

Washington, D.C.

HAIR COLOR

Georgetown Aveda

AYSE KATIRANCI, 1325 Wisconsin Ave., NW, 202-965-1325

We could have done without Katiranci's insults about our hair color, though we agreed that an even crueler colorist had overbleached it. Fortunately, Katiranci was equally opinionated about a better option: a healthy-looking honey brown that we couldn't deny was a vast improvement. \$85 and up.

BROWS

Erwin Gomez Salon & Spa

ERWIN GOMEZ, 1519 Wisconsin Ave., NW, 202-333-7290

So many friends swear by Gomez's brow-grooming skills that we decided to shell out \$75 for a first-time session. We were grateful for his tips on growing in our thin brows, and for his swift waxing and tweezing. And, like our wallet, our heavy lids actually felt lighter when we left.

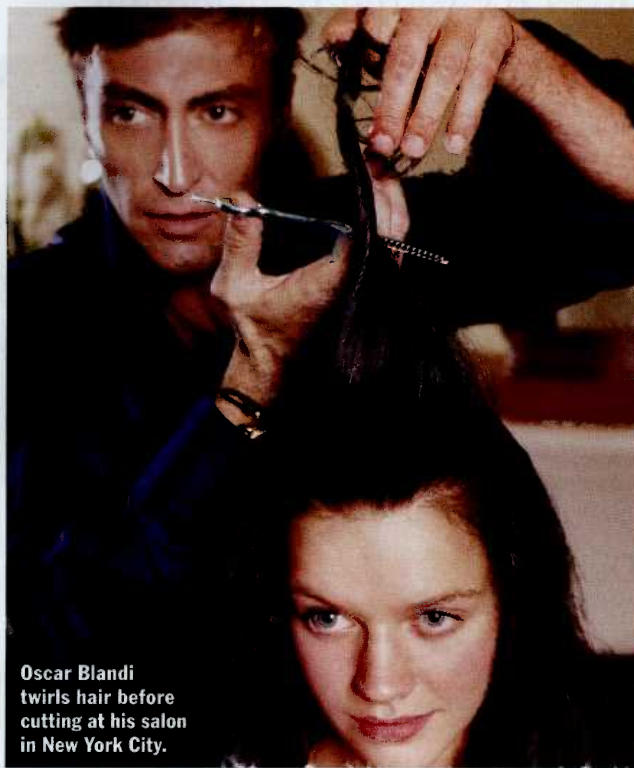
Miami

HAIRCUT

Van Michael Salon

SIOBHAN VARGAS, 1667 Michigan Ave., Miami Beach, 305-534-6789

We've never liked a yes-man—or -woman. So when Vargas disagreed with our vision for side-swept bangs with our current look, we appreciated her candor and her willingness to flip through magazines until we agreed on a style. The bold, straight-across bangs had more of a cool-girl, Zoëy Deschanel appeal—and even dressed up our lazy-day ponytails. \$60 and up.



Oscar Blandi
twirls hair before
cutting at his salon
in New York City.

HAIR COLOR

Rik Rak Salon

CARIDAD GUTIERREZ, 1428 Brickell Ave., 305-371-7324

Even with the seduction of shoes and cupcakes at this huge salon, we made a beeline to Gutierrez, imploring her to get rid of our hair's botched red undertones. She calmly explained that it wouldn't be easy, and she wasn't exaggerating. An arduous four hours later, we looked far prettier as a blonde, albeit a slightly fatigued one. \$180 and up.

Detroit

HAIRCUT

Mijo-a' Beauty Studio

GJYSTA NUCULAJ, 124 E. 4th St., Rochester, MI, 248-652-8097

Growing out a blunt bob had left us without a real style, so we headed to Nuculaj's salon. Her intimate setup and oversize leather chairs made us feel so at ease that we might have agreed to anything. Thankfully, Nuculaj picked sexy, long bangs (which hit at our cheekbone) and an uneven cut (a touch longer in the front). It was exactly the update we needed. \$65.

BROWS

Alex Emilio Salon

APRIL POUGET, 409 S. Main St., Royal Oak, MI, 248-414-7696

Pouget's first move was to aim a bright light in our face—an unpleasant experience. But she was so sweet, we soon forgave her. Using three tweezers, she defined and thinned our arches so they complemented our eyes beautifully. The process took a full 45 minutes, but our brows have never looked better. \$30.

Chicago

HAIR COLOR

Luxe a Salon & Spa

ELIZABETH KING, 2109 W. Belmont Ave., 773-665-2049

We don't consider ourselves dull, so why should our hair be? King persuaded us to take our mousy brown hair darker (though we didn't need much convincing), then whipped up a high-sheen deep chocolate shade that was striking against our fair skin. The icing on the cake: The color was far more interesting than our natural tricky shade, but no one would ever know—it was that realistic. \$75 and up.

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