

Minardi Beauty brings a new approach to color care

The name **Beth Minardi** is synonymous with both beautiful hair and first-rate hair color education in the professional beauty industry. The top hair colorists have trained under her discerning eye, and leading hair color companies have tapped her expertise in product development and hair color education for 25 years. Today, in addition to consulting for **Joico**, Beth stays grounded in the real world of her constituents by coloring the hair of her clients, ranging from celebrities, models and leaders on the social scene to working women and men, every week at **Minardi Salon** in New York City. **Beauty Industry Report (BIR)** recently had the opportunity to chat with Beth to learn about how she's earned the reputation as the "High Priestess of Hair Color" and what's happening with her growing **Minardi Beauty Products Color Care** line of washes, after washes and styling products specifically formulated for color-treated hair.

BIR: Beth, before we talk about your product line, please share the highlights of your outstanding career with BIR's readers.

Beth Minardi (BM): After graduating from The University of Central Florida, I taught pre-school. I received a small part in a movie and became fascinated with the hair and makeup department. I had begun working on a Master's Degree in Education, but decided to attend beauty school instead. My parents were furious. I was hired by **Clairol**, received intense training and was assigned to South Florida as a hair color consultant.

That was 1978, the era in which haircutters, like **Paul Mitchell**, **Vidal Sassoon** and **Geri Cusenza**, reigned supreme. Hair color was rarely mentioned and the only "cool" color trend seemed to be blond highlights or burgundy purple. While working for Clairol, I became fascinated with beautiful hair color and recognized that few people understood it. After less than a year, I was promoted and moved to Clairol's New York headquarters. I managed sales and color education for key chain salon accounts. My degree in education came in handy as I formatted lesson plans and developed specific teaching styles that I

continue to use today. I traveled to every state and met with thousands of hairdressers, who all wanted to learn more about creating and maintaining beautiful hair color.

My next responsibilities at Clairol included overseeing the newly acquired **Jon Gunter's Congress of Colorists** and the development of a line of exclusive color creams, later known as **Logics**. I also began writing monthly hair color newsletters. I was asked to evaluate the performance of every competing line of hair color and worked closely with chemists, as well as seasoned salon professionals.

In 1986, I opened **Minardi Salon** in New York City with **Carmine Minardi**. I continued my relationship with Clairol as a consultant, teaching Logics and appearing on network television talk shows as a Clairol spokesperson. At that time, **L'Oréal** had purchased **Redken**, and president **Jim Morrison** with **Scott Missad** enlisted me to help create a new brand later named **Color Fusion**. I provided input on shade development, testing, color literature and video education. I taught for the next four years at



The Minardi Color Care line features Washes and After Washes recommended based on the type of hair color used.

every major Redken event, and numerous color seminars across the countries and penned the **Shades EQ** newsletter.

BIR: What did you learn that prompted you to create your product line?

BM: As I worked with color lines, I recognized that various types of hair color affect hair differently. As a result, **Minardi Beauty Products** are the first to break down the effects of various color categories and deliver a specific support needed when hair has been exposed to coloring agents. For example, the hair is invaded very minimally, a little more or significantly, depending upon various carrying agents and alkalinity factors. My goal is to provide professionals with very

specific tools to provide appropriate support in the salon and for clients at home.

BIR: Joico's vice president/general manager, Sara Jones, has stated, "Beth Minardi is truly one of the world's leading colorists and unquestionably the best color educator in the industry." How has that reputation assisted you in creating your own line?

BM: Being a hair color educator is an amazing honor and has given me the opportunity to get inside the minds of thousands of hair color professionals. Over the years, I have been able to maintain a very personal and special dialogue with them. I trust them. I understand them. I believe I have also gained their trust. So, they share their desires, their fears, their frustrations and their dreams with me. The privilege of teaching continues to bring me very close to them. I believe I know what they need, what they want and what will help them satisfy their clients. I am dedicated to helping colorists build strong, stable, financially successful businesses. They deserve financial stability, and I want to help them achieve that.

BIR: Please talk about how your products provide a new way to view caring for color-treated hair.

BM: Because my entire professional life revolves around hair color, I view the subject deeply. Almost every successful

manufacturer includes a shampoo and conditioner for "color-treated hair." I do not believe that is sufficient. I see hair color as affecting the hair in various degrees, so I have dissected color care into three separate systems of support:

Level 1—For hair treated with semi or demi permanent (no lift) shades.

Level 2—For hair treated with permanent hair color (alkaline) shades level 8 and darker.

Level 3—For hair treated with high lifting blonde shades or with lighteners, or hair that is both chemically re-texturized and treated with alkaline color products.

My firm belief is that as color is retouched at the root, the hair shaft should be bathed in a nutritious broth that strengthens, hydrates and protects the already delicate color-treated hair

shaft. Quite simply, the hair should be conditioned as it is colored. To that end, we created our hero product, **Minardi Fortifying Pre Wash Therapy Treatment**.

BIR: Beth, you mentioned elevating hair color to an art form and also elevating the care and beautification of color-treated hair to an art form. How are you planning to accomplish those goals?

BM: Sadly, I believe that not all colorists view hair color as anything more than a “service.” There are those who might see trendy, fantasy colors as art. They do not recognize that perfect gray coverage, wonderful shine, flawless color changes and beautiful, wearable hair color represent the finest in artistic coloring. I believe great colorists are artists. I believe we work on a living canvas, and that every color application is a delicate exercise. I believe that people who are extraordinary with color should be recognized as artists and as specialists, and that the term “hair dresser” does not adequately recognize their expertise.

Many great colorists do not recognize how unique they are. Too many know a little bit about hair color. Too few of us are experts.

Color manufacturers have done a good basic job. They are like a religion, they want you to go to their church, rather than deeply understand spirituality. I want to change that.

BIR: Tell me what really went into making the Minardi Beauty Products line.

BM: Almost 30 years of experience went into the creation of the **Minardi Color Care Collection**. As I spoke to colorists throughout America, they were kind enough to give me the unvarnished truth. They shared what they believed to be the finest products and told me why they loved them. I made it my business to test and to use everything on my own clients. I studied ingredient listings, and I listened to client responses. My dedicated and strongly opinionated team members provided extremely honest feedback on all the product testing we conducted.

The products were developed in a working hair color environment and tested over several years on real clients before we brought them to market. Our design staff made certain that every styling aid maximized beautiful color as it supported great cuts and styling.

BIR: Give me a brief overview of the Minardi Color Care Collection.

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BM: The top selling skus include **Minardi Pre Wash Therapy**, which is applied to dry hair prior to shampooing. It is also used during color services and enjoys huge success. Our **Hydrating Wash** and **After Wash**, formulated for professionally lightened hair, are also big favorites. And our new **Root Lift** has experienced a huge sell-in and sell-through, followed closely by our **Abundance Volumizing Foam**.

BIR: You mentioned you support your line in a unique way. What does that mean?

BM: When you use Minardi products, we will teach you how to better color and care for hair—even though we do not sell hair color.

BIR: What role does Minardi Salon play in the marketing of your new line?

BM: Minardi Salon is my brand’s flagship; we are located in one of the most competitive markets in the world. Since our clients expect the finest and are able to purchase almost anything they want, we are exceptionally confident that their embrace of our line means that all salons will enjoy the same type of success when they sell our products.

BIR: What did you see in the professional marketplace that indicated there was an opportunity for Minardi Beauty Products?

BM: I saw a white space on the shelf. I saw the need for very specific, color care products

that were exclusive to salons, yet attainable with no contracts or agreements to sign.

BIR: What is your vision for your company?

BM: Our vision is to become the leading purveyor of all things related to hair color and caring for color-treated hair. I also think it is important for the women of our industry to understand that women can lead and succeed in this wonderful business.

BIR: Who is your target market?

BM: Our target market is women and men who want to care for their color investment in the most sophisticated, yet easy to use, manner. We are dedicated to the salons that provide that kind of environment.

BIR: Tell me about your online marketing initiatives, including social media.

BM: I talk about my line and education opportunities on my Facebook page and on the Minardi Beauty Products Facebook page. I also use Twitter.

BIR: What are the primary methods you use to distribute your product line to salons?

BM: Currently, we have five U.S. distributors and look ahead to significantly expanding our distribution in 2011. We also sell direct to salons where we have no distribution. Our ideal distributors are salon-exclusive and place an emphasis on professional education and building relationships with salon owners.

BIR: What do you have planned for 2011?

BM: We look forward to new products, distribution, sizable growth and intense, superior ongoing education for colorists.

BIR: If you weren’t in the beauty business, what would be your dream job?

BM: Living with horses and successfully raising them, training them, showing them and loving them. Or I would teach theater to children in a very private environment.

BIR: Anything you would like to address that I have not asked?

BM: Salon professionals need to know that there are a thousand reasons not to do something, but if you truly believe in your dreams and your abilities, you can do anything that you want to do.

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