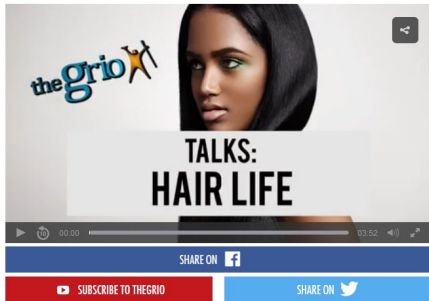


Black hair entrepreneur talks tips & tricks for slaying your next hairstyle



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The hair business is not a game. Anyone who gets their tresses pressed, weaved or styled naturally, knows that you want to get your money's worth for products and services.

Between beauty stores and the explosion of online hair businesses, options are endless too. For women who rock extensions specifically, the decision about what hair to buy and how to make their beauty investment last is important.

theGrio spoke with Besona Bettah of Yhasi Luxury Hair about general tips and advice for hair upkeep, and larger questions around black hair care and supporting black women in the business.

Bettah, a 28-year-old Cameroon native, has lived in Ohio, New York, and now Atlanta, Georgia. She started her hair extension business, Yhasi Luxury Hair, in 2012.

Bettah's business took off when two girls from Atlanta with a strong social media following started wearing her Burmese hair. "At that time, no one was selling Burmese hair," Bettah told theGrio. "Once they wore the Burmese hair and other girls saw them wear it, they started buying it. They loved it. And it just took off from there."



The brand has gained over 161,000 followers on Instagram, inspiring the young entrepreneur to share her story and advice for other women, whether they are customers or future owners.

TG: Why do some women love extensions?

BB: I think it's great for women to wear extensions! I think all women should wear extensions whether you have long hair or short hair because it gives you options.

TG: What's the best way to take care of extensions?

BB: Washing and deep conditioning your hair weekly is vital. A lot of women get hair and I always tell them, "You have to treat it like it's your hair." If you want it to last you have to wash it, if not every week, every other week. Cold wash it in between. And always go back, put back the moisture in the hair, replenish the hair by doing a deep conditioner for 15-30 minutes.

TG: How long should you keep sew-ins in your head for?

BB: I say you should keep a sew-in anywhere from 4-6 weeks before you take it out. I know some women keep theirs in for two months but I wouldn't recommend keeping it longer than six weeks.

TG: What is Laotian hair and why would it be appealing to black women who wear weaves?

BB: It's very similar to an African-American woman's hair once it's pressed out. A lot of women, especially African-American women don't want the silky doll hair, so this hair is just like when your mom would press out your hair with a hot comb. You can put it in and it blends really nicely.



(Courtesy: Yhasi Hair)

TG: Whoopi Goldberg once called weaves and extensions "cultural appropriation." What do you think about that critique- was she right or wrong?

BB: What about ancient Egyptians? They wore wigs, they wore extensions for thousands of years. I don't really understand what she was trying to say. This [hair weave styles] is ours. And I think any woman should be able to wear extensions, doesn't matter what color you are, what your religion is, your background.

TG: How do you feel as a black woman in the hair supply business?

BB: Extremely lucky. The hair extension business... The owners of it are not black women. I feel like more black women should get into the business and just take it over.

I'm just really honored that I was blessed with this chance to start this company. It's a dream made into reality and it's bigger than I thought it would ever be.

To get more ideas on extension care and styling, check out the rest of our "Hair Life" video below. Stay tuned for more #hairlife stories from different women in the business.