

Rossano Ferretti and the £1,000 haircut: because he's worth it



Rossano Ferretti and a model showing an example of the cut that costs £1,000

At 53, he's the world's most expensive crimper, charging a grand a time. And his new way of cutting hair is as revolutionary as Sassoon's was in the Sixties. Caroline Phillips experiences it

13 March 2013 by Caroline Phillips

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"A thousand pounds for a *haircut*?! I hear you say. "But you could feed an African village for a year... buy two Hermès belts... how can any hairdo be worth that sort of money?"

Either you need your head examined, expensively, or you're tidying topiary for a palace. Who spends a grand on something that's going to grow out?

The answer is that oligarchs' wives and assorted A-listers spend £1,000 for a haircut. The likes of Lady Gaga, Linda Evangelista, Michelle Pfeiffer, Salma Hayek and Angelina Jolie. Pippa Middleton goes to the maestro's salon – or *hairspa* as it's known. And the Duchess of Cambridge? If she does, nobody's saying.

Welcome to the world of [Rossano Ferretti](#), the 53-year-old coiffeur who's leading a hair revolution. Ferretti is to 2013 what Vidal Sassoon – creator of the five-point cut and Ferretti's mentor – was to the Sixties.

You haven't heard of him? That's forgivable, as he only opened his hairspa in London last year. But he's ginormous. He has 20 hairspas from Beverley Hills to Milan, is a global spokesman for L'Oreal, runs hair seminars from China to Mumbai, and has world-wide academies where he teaches his approach. He's the only global hairdressing brand.

Ferretti has more USPs than you'll find in 16 alphabets. He devised and patented The Method, a unique technique for cutting hair (about which, more later). He has created and patented a special pair of scissors: texturising ones, that snip a delicate 18 per cent instead of the habitual 30.

He claims to have invented the Invisible Cut (full of layers, but you don't see them). And, along with ace colourist Carl Dawson (who does Kate Moss, Sienna Miller and Gwyneth), is developing a unique hair colouring procedure (watch this space).

The Rossano Ferretti Hairspa experience

But is this all the Emperor's New Clothes? Are we talking nothing more than clever marketing and gimmickry?

I decide to put my tresses to the test. The Rossano Ferretti Hairspa (all 5,500 square foot of it for just 14 hair stations) is in a four-storey, Georgian townhouse in Mayfair's St George Street.

A good-looking, besuited doorman spirits me up the sweeping staircase beneath the bespoke Fabergé black glass chandelier. Upstairs there are black floorboards, hair products displayed in antique frames and a 1936 perm machine that belonged to Ferretti's grandparents. (He is a third generation hairdresser.)

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I here are no mirrors; another first. Women, he believes, shouldn't suffer seeing themselves in transition.

And there's no thudding music. Even the noise of hair dryers is kept to a separate room. Forget hairspa. This is a hair temple.

 Rossano Ferretti_The Methodx3-620x300

The Method: a hair innovation

Ferretti appears in a jacket, waistcoat and patterned scarf. (Like the children of the cobbler who has no shoes, he's bald.) He is stylish, charming and solicitous. He takes my hair in his hands and tuts: "Whoever did this, sorry. This is not the right job for them." (It was one of the guys at Nicky Clarke's, actually.)

Then he sprays my hair with essence of unicorn's tears before taking out his diamond-encrusted platinum scissors. Not really. What he actually does is pick up strands of my hair, let go of them and, as they are falling, snip away. Cutting the hair in motion. The Method.

As he works, we chat about his earlier life, working on catwalk shows for Armani, St Laurent and Dior, and shoots with Richard Avedon. Ferretti started in the trade at 14.

Now he jets from LA ("hair colour city") to New York ("all about blond and blow out") to London ("volume and bounce.")

He did Jennifer Lawrence's, Kate Hudson's and Reese Witherspoon's hair for the Oscars. His has been a meteoric rise from humble beginnings. But how does he justify his charges?

"Quality," he says. "In the USA people happily pay for it. It's different in Europe."

It's true that Nicky Clarke and Paul Edmonds charge £500 for new clients. But across the Atlantic, Frederic Fekkai, Sally Hershberger and Gibson cost \$750, \$850 and \$950.

"The truth is, I don't want clients. I'm too busy. I have a brilliant team for doing haircuts."

As the Italian hairdresser *della celebrità* cuts my hair, he zeroes in on the way it falls, its structure and texture, rather than forcing it into an unnatural shape.

"The scissors don't do the haircut, they're an elongation of my hands," says Rossano Scissorhands, swooping and curving his body as he works. "I move myself around the hair, not stand there like a stone."

Hmmm. But doesn't any halfway decent stylist take note of the natural movement and structure of the hair? And as for the scissors with gaps, aren't they really just thinning scissors?

He stops and contemplates. "Hair grows vertically and with The Method technique, I cut it holding the scissors vertically, not horizontally," he replies. "In this way, we achieve a natural movement of the hair which is not geometric or box-like."

And the scissors? "Usually thinning ones have two blades with teeth. But The Method texturising ones have one plain blade and the other with teeth..." (See a [photo gallery on Ferretti's site](#).)

Was it worth it?

He takes three inches off my hair. It's far more than I'd have suggested, though I had told him to do whatever he wanted. Well, you would, wouldn't you? You don't go around telling £200-a-second brain surgeons how to work. Fifteen minutes later Ferretti is finished. (OK, a mere £67 a minute.)

The results are fantastic. A sort of bob *de nos jours*. Full of life. Natural. Flattering. Afterwards friends comment that they've never seen my hair looking so good; and my children say it looks professionally blow-dried, permanently.



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Crucially, it looks just as good when I wash and go myself. It's grown-up hair. Hair the way it's meant to look, not following trends or forced to do things that it doesn't want to do. Hair that has self-assurance.

When it grows out

But there's a problem with the haircut: it grows. And I don't have £1,000 for another. So two months later I take a photo of my original Ferretti-ed head to my local salon and say, "Copy that, please."

Now I'm not stupid. Granted my local is not a hairspa, but it's not just any old salon.

It's owned by a famed snipper, who's no slouch himself. In his day, he's done TV presenters and pop stars. And he has a nice view of the railway line. So it should be a bit like taking a designer dress to be copied in India. And I've done that a few times.

Anyway, he says "no problem" and chops away. But maybe it's because his scissors thin by 30 per cent, maybe it's because he cuts horizontally, but whatever it is, I end up looking like Richard III. And weeping. And £70 poorer.

This means that, just 24 hours later, I find myself paying to have my hair cut – again. This time, the hairdresser, the beautiful Pol Garcia, snips elegantly. He cuts my hair as it falls. He does yoga-style bends around my body. The result has volume, bounce and elegance. It costs £150.

Ah! Did I tell you that he cuts Pippa Middleton's hair? Oh, and that he works at the Rossano Ferretti Hairspace? Ferretti has a talented team who offer his cuts at a snip of the price.

I'm sold on The Method. One of these days I'd love to have another cut by Ferretti. After all, it only costs 1.4p a follicle.

Next week: *Caroline recommends the top treatments for adding (and subtracting) hair. Why not bookmark this page?*

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