

My day at the salon

By J. Gordon

Did you miss me? I know you did. I've been locked in the IT server room for the past four weeks and the funny thing is, no one seems to have missed me at all. Except you, my faithful reader, that is – I got your e-mails.

Being locked in a dark cramped room was not fun. It's the no bathing part that really bothered me though.

Now that I'm out, my staff felt so bad they never came looking for me, they decided to send me to a day spa for a little relaxation.

The first thought that popped into my head was "do men go to day spas?" The answer is 'yes,' many men go to day spas, but the most common male spa visitor is the metrosexual.

What, exactly, is a metrosexual? Well, he's well dressed, well groomed and narcissistic, but don't call him gay. He's the fashion-conscious target audience of men's magazines.

Who you callin' metro

I don't consider myself a metrosexual. I don't consider anyone I know metrosexual for that matter, but that isn't stopping salons dedicated to the male grooming from popping up all over the country.

Mark Simpson, a British journalist, coined the term metrosexual in 1994. He used it to refer to an urban male of any sexual orientation who has a strong aesthetic sense and spends a great deal of time and money on his appearance and lifestyle.



For more than 10 years men all over the world have been fueling this \$11 billion industry.

The whole concept of male grooming – however foreign it is to me – is becoming an increasingly popular trend, and the American Male Salon & Spa in Mountain View is trying to capitalize on that trend.

When my editor suggested looking into this millennial phenomenon, I must admit I didn't think I was the right person for the job.

But since I'm one who flinches at the sight of tweezers and hot wax, some could argue that I am the perfect guinea pig for male grooming.

In the name of research

So, for research – honestly – I recently went through the full beautification

process (minus the waxing) at the Mountain View Salon.

Phil Sacino, owner of the American Male Salon compares male grooming to fixing your car.

“You wouldn’t drive 3,000 miles with out a tune-up,” Sacino said. “So you should treat yourself as well as you treat your car.”

Sacino opened his first salon in Mountain View almost a year ago and has plans to open several more throughout the state.

The first American Male was opened in Pennsylvania in 1997 as a learning lab for stylists to better understand what men wanted in grooming services.

“Our services are tailored toward men,” Sacino said, “but that doesn’t mean we would turn away a woman.”

The American Male Salon is dedicated to helping men look and feel good – all in an inviting environment.

“We want guys to feel comfortable,” he said. “That’s our main goal.”

When I arrived at the salon I was greeted – “Hey Jeramy” – and offered a beer. I accepted of course.

TVs are placed sporadically throughout the salon tuned to ESPN so you’ll never miss a moment of The Game.

The whole nine-yards

My treatment began with a full service manicure, ahem, hand detailing.

The woman buffed, shined and clipped away at my nails as I relaxed in the salon’s “Pedi-Lounger.”

She finished it off with a coat of clear nail polish, which was a little embarrassing but the brief foot massage was heaven, and my blushed cheeks began to slowly fade away.

“I’ve seen guys come out of that room dancing,” said Sacino.

I felt like dancing, that’s for sure, but I managed to contain myself. Next I was off to my 45-minute Executive Facial. Clouds of steam and the smell of cucumbers filled the room. The facial massage was by far the best part. It was one of the most relaxing experiences of my life.

My face was rubbed with creams, swabbed with cotton, and dabbed with lotion. My grill...err face, looked shiny and new.

Then it was time for my custom hair service. It began with an invigorating shampoo, mini facial and scalp massage. Once the shampooing was gone the haircutting – excuse me – styling began.

She took a little off here and when she had finished I realized just how badly I had been in need of a haircut.

It sure didn’t seem like three hours had gone by, but everybody had done a fabulous job and I looked pretty damn good.

“We want guys to look good,” Sacino said. “We also want to make it easy for them to maintain that look.”

And I’d have to agree with him, using hair gel isn’t rocket science, and I’ve kept up my spiky new style since.

Now onto more macho activities, shoot...I forgot to TiVo “The Young & the Restless,” gotta run.



a full service salon for guys