



Silver Lining

Find empowerment by embracing the gray

BY CELIA SHATZMAN

For their gray hair, women should choose new styles that are chic and trendy, says Paul Labrecque, founder of Paul Labrecque Salon & Spa in New York.

Growing up, Joan Hornig always admired her mother's beautiful gray hair, so when she started going gray in her late 20s, she knew she wanted to follow her mother's example.

"Being gray doesn't mean being old, and being gray doesn't mean not being beautiful. It's a choice," says Hornig, 59, a Manhattan-based jewelry designer.

For many women, embracing their gray hair can be freeing. "It is a very liberating thing. You're letting go of the confines of doing hair color every few weeks and always trying to get the color right," says Mark Townsend, Dove celebrity hair stylist. "It's a great way to accept natural beauty and embrace all parts of yourself."

Because Hornig never dyed her hair, she could let her gray come in naturally. But for those who have been coloring for years, the transition isn't

so easy.

"Any woman who has been covering grays knows that if she's even one week overdue with coloring, she has a line (from the uncolored roots)," Townsend says. "If you are going to a salon, talk with your colorist about it, because he'll know your hair texture and what kind of gray is coming in. Adding ... highlights can help camouflage that line." He adds that hair can range from silver to gray to white, and the texture often is more coarse and frizzy when it changes to gray.

Townsend also recommends using temporary spray-in color at the roots to conceal them while your gray grows in.

Another option is to have a profes-

OPTIONS TO ADJUST SALON COLOR TO GRAY

- Highlight to camouflage the line between color and gray
- Use spray-in color at the roots
- Strip the color
- Let the gray grow in, and then cut off the colored hair

sional strip away the dyed color, which helps reduce the line of demarcation. Stripping removes the dye, taking your hair back to its natural color. The easiest path to full gray is to let your hair grow a few inches and then cut it very short. "Cutting is the easiest transition, but chopping off hair and going gray is super dramatic and can be traumatizing," he cautions.

But once the transition is over, it's worth it.

"My gray hair is cheaper than a tiara, and it sparkles," Hornig says. "It has highlights, yet it's natural. I don't have the chemicals (from hair coloring) or lose time doing my hair. People stop me and say, 'Who is your colorist?'"

TREAT THE FRIZZ

It's not just your color that changes as your hair grays — the texture does, too. "You lose elasticity and weight in your hair as you age," explains Paul Labrecque, founder of Paul Labrecque Salon & Spa in New York City. "When we color hair, we're adding another layer. When you (decide after coloring to) go gray, your hair is stripped."

That means it becomes lighter and more delicate, leading to more flyaways and breakage. The coarser texture can lead to frizz too, so Labrecque suggests keratin treatments to make it sleeker. Gray hair shouldn't be washed as often, and using a purple shampoo — one designed specifically for lighter hair — every few weeks will cancel out yellow caused by sun exposure and product buildup. Adding hair oils to your routine moisturizes strands to keep them smooth and silky.

GET A CHIC CUT

After changing your hair color, you may want to rethink the cut and style, too. "If you are going to have gray hair, you need chic, trendy hair," Labrecque says. "Every woman wants her hair to be as young as it can be. My favorite cut of the moment for gray hair is Robin Wright's haircut. It's chic and modern, and makes gray hair look better. If you have (longer) white hair, you can pull it back in a chignon."

Townsend adds, "Judi Dench has short gray hair, but she's rocking some great hairstyles. You have to loosen up your hairstyle a little because gray and white hair can look like a helmet. All the same rules apply: Look at young girls and their hairstyles, which can still be worn by women in their 40s, 50s, 60s. It's about making slight changes. Showing the neck by putting hair into a bob can make hair look younger and more modern. Consider how you're supposed to cut your hair for your face shape.

"If you're making such a drastic change, you have to learn all new tricks at this point with your styling," Townsend says. "We don't have to go spend tons of money. YouTube is a great place to learn how to do great new hairstyles on yourself. Find a great haircut that will look good or try a new style. You're not going to be able to do the same routine; you already have to learn those new tricks with a new hairstyle. I used Helen Mirren as the example for my mom."

"Judi Dench has short gray hair, but she's rocking some great hairstyles."

— MARK TOWNSEND,
DOVE CELEBRITY
HAIR STYLIST

UPDATE YOUR PALETTE

And you may want to change more than just how you style your tresses.

"When a woman (s hair) turns gray, she has to change other parts of her palette," Hornig says. "When I was younger, brown was my best color, but now I never choose brown. Change the color of your lipstick

and blush; make it less harsh for an overall softer look.

"Brown and tan don't work because they are too warm and earthy, and the gray and silver hair coloration lends itself to drama," Hornig adds. "Black and bright white, not ivory, metallic grays and pewter are best. Many bright colors are good if they are strong and in the blue and purple tones. Basically I play up the silver rather than mask it. Too many people think of gray hair as drab ... the same with brown and tan. My hair color is noticed and commented upon almost daily by strangers. Why not play up the attention?"

Hornig is proud that she's inspired other women to embrace their gray hair.

"I don't think my hair is aging (me). I think it's sexy, and there are lots of things we can do as mature women," she says. "We can empower ourselves to feel good about how we look. Beauty is from within, and we really do soften with age, and we appreciate so much more because we have knowledge." ●

COMPLEMENT YOUR GRAY

Amy E. Goodman, author of *Wear This, Toss That!*, suggests clothing and makeup colors to try and those to avoid with your gray hair.

"Keep in mind that as we age, we need to shift our clothing color palette, particularly if we go all gray and as our skin tone naturally pales. The good news is there is a wealth of colors to embrace, including vibrant shades of red, purple and green. The colors to avoid draw light away from the skin and tend to age us even further: tans, muddy browns, pale yellows, mint or olive green and generally, pale pastels. When it comes to neutrals, white, black, navy and certain shades of gray can remain your go-to staples.

"For your skin, you'll no longer have the color of your hair to frame your face, so your true skin tone stands alone. To figure out how to complement your skin tone, look at your wrists. If you have blue veins, cool tones look best on you; choose makeup in purples, blues and berry reds. If you have green veins, warm tones look fabulous: oranges, citrusy reds and yellow."



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