



COSTLY CUTS

THE RECESSION'S EFFECT
ON OUR BEAUTY

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THE RECESSION WE ARE CURRENTLY EXPERIENCING SEEMS TO BE AFFECTING BEAUTY MORE THAN YOU WOULD THINK.

Some people will go to all extremes to get that perfect stylish look that they've always dreamed of. When they've found what looks good for them, they tend to keep up with it. When it comes to coloring and cutting hair, keeping up with the maintenance can be very costly, but rewarding in the end for the recipient.



Above:
La Vita Bella Salon & Day Spa
East Norriton, Pa.

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Pain is beauty, and beauty is pain, even if that pain means emptying a wallet here and there to get that perfect haircut. For the clients of La Vita Bella Salon in East Norriton, Pa., that might not be so much the case anymore. The economic deficit has hit home for Paul Fragale, the owner and head stylist at La Vita Bella. Fragale, 45, knows how loyal his clients are. “They come here in the pouring rain, and schedule all of their visits in advance because they know they’re going to get nothing but the best from our salon,” Fragale explains as he perfectly trims the bangs of the client in his chair. At one point, Fragale started noticing some of the cancellations from his “regulars” who never cancel their four-week visits. “It’s scary to think just how close to home this recession can hit someone,” says Fragale.

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Clients are having a hard time affording to keep up with their looks. Nancy Gamebone, 52, has been coming to La Vita Bella since it opened eight years ago. “I’m not saying that it’s too pricey to get my hair done here, because that isn’t the case. I simply don’t have the money anymore to keep up with my coloring every

four weeks.” This was something that Gamebone had to cut out of her budget. “It was either I keep spending the money on my hair, and not have enough money to buy dog food for my two dogs. I wasn’t going to let my animals starve.” The receptionists have noticed the bulk of cancellations and regular clients not coming in as often as they used to. Tanya Bronov, 28, is the head receptionist at the front desk at La Vita Bella. Bronov has definitely seen a change in clientele. “We’ve been getting a ton of cancellations and people actually openly telling us they can’t afford it this month, or they’ve had to change stylists for a cheaper price,” says Bronov.

La Vita Bella is not just a salon. It’s a day spa as well as a nail salon. From massage therapists, aestheticians, to nail technicians, everyone is feeling the brunt of a drop in clientele. MiMi Paser, a massage therapist at La Vita Bella, feels that she is being affected by others being affected. “This economy is like a domino effect, man. Once someone gets affected, then they stop coming in, then I don’t get paid, so now I’m affected. It’s wild,” says Paser as she rummages through her purse. All of the workers at La Vita Bella are feeling the impact of the recession little by little every day.



Over across town, Bubbles Salon has been having the same problem. Bubbles is known for an affluent clientele, but also people who are willing to pay a little bit extra for the right look. Hair stylist Rachel Mendez, 31, feels as though she is in the same boat as

some of her clients who haven’t been coming back. “I used to see them all the time. It’s not that they’re not happy with their look because they’ve been coming here for years, but I do understand how hard times are. Even I have had to cut back on getting my nails done every two weeks and going out to dinner at my favorite restaurant once a week. Times have changed.”

For the stylists and workers at La Vita Bella, they are holding their heads high and still believing in their salon to pull through this recession. “I have faith in my clients and know that this isn’t the last of them,” says owner Fragale with half a smile. For now, La Vita Bella will continue to run their regular prices and continue to try to accommodate their clients as much as possible. People are faced with tough decisions every day because of this recession, and although some decisions may be bigger than others, everyone is feeling a little bit of this economic downfall day by day.