



TRESSES That IMPRESS

Stay on-trend with the help of
Sean Donaldson Hair Salon

Words by Vanessa Pascale

With summer officially days away, it's about to *really* heat up and a hot, new look is in order – at least for me it is. Everyone, it seems, –from Selena Gomez to Vanessa Hudgens—is trading in their longer locks for shorter dos. I had been flirting with the idea of the coveted lob for months and decided it was time to say buh-bye to my forever-long hair, so I made an appointment with Sean Donaldson Hair.

Opened in 2010, the off-Lincoln Road, European-inspired hair salon is helmed by owner and senior Creative Director, Sean Donaldson. The airy, bespoke salon boasts a menu of services from hair and makeup to waxing and facials provided by a team of 35. It's noon on a Friday and the salon is buzzing with clients. Today, I'm here solely for their hair services. Cuts range from \$65-120, color from \$65, baliaage from \$150, and stylist blow-dry from \$45-70.

Upon entering I am immediately greeted by manager, Dianne, and given a hot cup of green tea (which they keep refilled for me). Sean graciously comes over to introduce himself to me and say hello before returning to his client. Everyone is busy. After a chat with Natalie, who is a colorist and hair educator, we decide to brighten up my hair color. She expertly takes my too-golden hair and paints in blonde highlights and then makes my base color a cooler hue. The end-result is exactly what I want –the color is fresh and light.

Then, it's time for my haircut. Salon manager Nichola gives me a textured, A-line lob. I love it! My new cut has movement and bounce --and is fun. I can't stop tousling my short, summery tresses. In addition to being immensely talented, the staff is warm and knowledgeable. My skilled hair stylists answer all my questions and keep me entertained with friendly chit-chat during my 4 hours in the salon chair. From the moment you walk in until you leave, you receive topnotch service.



Q&A with Sean Donaldson

Sean began his career in hair at London's Vidal Sassoon. Over the course of his 14 years there, he honed his craft and held senior positions in education and creative management in the U.K. and U.S. before opening his namesake salon. The British-born-and-raised hair guru is regularly featured in magazines like *In Style* and *ELLE* and boasts an impressive client list that includes celebrities and royalty. Here, Sean kindly answers our hair questions.

Miami Living: I know you've been in the business for 28 years, how do you stay on-trend?

Sean Donaldson: [By] keeping myself aware of what's happening with fashion, make-up and hair, on the page and more importantly what's happening on the street. The street-kids who experiment with fashion, makeup and hair influence me most on where the generations' heads are. From this, I adapt looks and create techniques to fit every type of client from the classic to the most contemporaneous. Every look/technique is adaptable to suit all types of clients and age groups. My peers in the industry and I also share looks and techniques that we experiment with to put our own stamp on an idea in color, cuts, and styling. Finally, hair is like fashion in regards to it being a reaction to something from the past. Being aware of previous trends, looks, lengths, colors, etc. keeps me aware that the next looks will be somewhat of a reaction to it.

ML: What trends in hair can we expect this summer?

SD: Looks for the season will be looser textures, softer bangs, and the key collar-bone blunt-cut length. The length line can either be A-line or square. Soft internal layers that can be scrunched dried, dried naturally, or loosely finished with a wand will be the summer look. But the key point is the haircut! Previous styles were created with styling tools and the haircut took second place. Not now! The precision haircut will be the key to support the looser, non-fixed looks of 2017-18.

ML: Do you have a signature technique?

SD: My background is Vidal Sassoon training so I work with precision, whether it be in bespoke haircutting or custom coloring. I look at all clients in totality --body frame, face shape, facial features, skin tones, and eye colors to name a few. I listen to who they are and what they do and from this I create a cut and color that's uniquely there as. Whether the haircut is a sharp, long bob-line or softer, looser textures, layers, colors that are classic or contemporary, the approach is the same --methodical with a technique/formula that can be replicated time and again.

ML: What is your favorite aspect of your job?

SD: My team, their energy, their commitment to our both salon/brand, and more importantly to our clients who without [them], none of it would be possible. Creative energy and a desire to make people look and feel their ultimate best is very rewarding and leaves you with a feeling of accomplishment.

ML: You are the go-to stylist on Sir Richard Branson's Necker Island, how did you secure this prestigious gig?

SD: I'm very fortunate to have met Sir Richard and Lady Branson many years ago from my best friends and we've been very close since. I have met and styled many A-list celebrities, Oscar winners, members of the British Royal family, and other amazing guests while I've been on Necker Island and have been Richard and Joan's personal stylist for more than a decade. They are just amazing people and I consider myself extremely lucky. **ML**

Sean Donaldson Hair is located at 1674 Meridian Avenue, Miami Beach.
For appointments and information, call 305-397-8460 or visit www.seandonaldsonhair.com.

