

- **Not sure where to buy wigs? Here are my best tips on finding the right wig shop!**

Welcome to the Alternative Hair Alchemist podcast. Now whether you're suffering hair loss from chemo, alopecia, or your hair is simply thinning out, I know exactly what you're going through. You see your scalp shining through and you're terrified, you're going bald.

That is not a good feeling. But the good news is we found each other and I'm here to help you with all of that. Hi, I'm Debra Heim, I am a certified alternative hair specialist and the owner of Very Best Little Hair House.

I have been wearing wigs myself for over 20 years. And I know firsthand wigs shopping, along with the stigma and shame that goes along with hair loss doesn't help. But I'm here to change that.

I'm here to help you feel inspired, educated and empowered about everything about alternative hair. From the shame and stigma all the way to wigs toppers. Why not all wigs are created equal?

I have so much to say and so much to share with you and I am excited that you're here. So take a deep breath, feel the love I'm sending your way, it's time to find and love yourself again. Let's do this.

Hello, everyone and welcome to episode four of the Alternative Hair Alchemist Podcast. I'm Deborah Heim. I am one half of the very best little hair house and alternative hair boutique in Sharon, Pennsylvania.

And today I'm going to talk to you about what to expect or what to look for in a quality wig shop. And more specifically mine, because that is the one I know best. And as I talk to you about the way I do things, I'll tell you why I do them that way. And what I've found along the way.

So I talked in another episode about my own journey. And my shop was born out of my wish to create a shop that I would love to shop at. So I did that one of the first things that was important to me was quality.

So I made sure that I became a vendor with all of the people that make the best stuff out there. So when you deal with an authorized vendor, which I am, and there are others, that means that you know that what you are getting came directly from that company, for we are authorized for John Renaud, Allen villa, and several other brands.

But the thing that often goes along with being an authorized dealer is you complete education by the people that make the wigs. So if you understand that, then you know that when you're going to an authorized certified dealer, then you can expect that we know what we're talking about.

And I mentioned that because I have been in some stores and some of the places where you can get wigs, you want to make sure that they're authorized. That way you know where that came from. I say

this because a lot of times people will come into my shop, and they will be wearing their wig or bring their wig for me to take a look at to see.

And when they take it out of the box or whatever. They had bought something they thought was a name brand. And it wasn't okay, not to put panic into you. But there are good fakes out there. Just this past couple months somebody came in, and they thought they were wearing a certain type of wig.

And inside of the wig, there was the tag with the name brand. They also brought the box that had the name brand, but they were not the authentic labeler boxes. So just a thought to be out there. Sometimes when you're getting a wig, you want to you know, that might be something that is important to you. It was to me, I don't know, I'm okay with a good fake.

But some of the stuff I've seen coming in isn't even a good fake. So there's that. Okay, second thing you want to ask or look for is the selection. Now, I know I'm an overachiever. But I have 15 brands. And there's a reason that I do that.

Because every brand I carry has to be quality, and they are all great. But not every wig by every brand is good enough to make it in my shop. I choose by a combination of things, it's got to be a fabulous combination of color, cut style.

And if you didn't know that every wig, that sized average, let's say everybody has an average size wig, every brand, but there's differences you know, a half inch centimeters or whatever, between those averages.

So if you wear a cap, well in one brand, you might fit even better in another brand. So there's that and I'm not gonna get confused or I'll try not to confuse you on that but the individual differences are huge.

I have had women come into my shop that have been wearing wigs for 15 years, and didn't know how one was supposed to fit. And they'd been loyal to one type of wig only because they didn't know that there are others out there. So when you shop at a shop that has a selection, you're gonna get a better fit. Also, I try to have something for everybody.

That's what I mean, when it's a boutique environment, I have a little bit of everything. And everything that I choose has to be outstanding. And I'm not talking just from the point of what I wear, I think of all the different people that might be walking through the door, because I've had them come in from 18 to 102.

So you are never too young or too old to want the best and alternative hair. And the people that come to me expect it and they walk out the door with that, like nobody leaves my shop looking like they're wearing a wig. That is the thing that I strive for.

I want to make living in a wig with alternative hair, not only normal, but fun and acceptable. And the one way to do that is to stop scaring people with really bad wigs.

I think I warned you in a couple episodes that I am blunt, I just tell it like it is. And that's how I'd like to be. So if that offends you, or whatever, I apologize for that. But it really, there's some truth to it, if you stop and take a look at it, you will know wigs are often the butt of jokes.

And there are some wigs that could do better. Okay, I'll just leave it at that. And back to the individual differences. The hair that wigs are made out of is also known as fiber or hair if you're actually talking about human hair, but for the most part, we're talking synthetic fibers, and there's a huge difference.

And every company's fiber is different. So the differences from one brand to another, there may be a brand that the texture looks more like what you'd like your hair to appear like. And when you see in person, you can see the color, a lot of the differences in fibers, sometimes they have a shine to them.

Although in my shop, if there's anything that has a shine, it's either the flashlights we give away, or I shocked myself with that. But it's really true. If a fiber in my shop has a shine, it is the shine of natural healthy hair.

There's quite a difference between a blatant plastic shine and the shine of healthy hair. So and that's the thing in my shop, I have synthetics and I have human hair out there. When somebody comes through the door.

And they're like, Well, I'm like, see if you can find the synthetics. And generally, nine times out of 10 they can't do that. So I only throw that in there because I know there's this huge fear of synthetic wigs. That's one of the first things I get on the phone.

People are like your hair or your wig is real hair. And right away, that lets me know that this is probably the last time they've bought a wig, either they bought it at the wrong place, or it's been several years ago, because the technology is amazing.

Even four years ago, when I started my shop, just the changes that I've seen, it's astronomical, it's amazing. Everybody that comes in my stores, sometimes they come in with dread. But then they get excited about the possibilities.

Even when people bring their friends, that's going to help give them an honest opinion. Maybe I wouldn't, I mean, first of all, but I get it. You want your friends or whatever. And we'll talk about that in another episode too.

Because sometimes choosing your hair by group consensus is not the way to go. That's an episode in itself. But anyway, even the friends say they have full heads of hair. Sometimes I'll be asked, Hey, is it okay? If I try this one on just because I set my shop up that way by intention?

When you walk in? All you're gonna think about is wow, I'm gonna look like that. Oh, and did I mention fit? I'm not sure I did. But fit I am a stickler for when you are in person. And I've noticed over the four years and even Chris will notice this too, because he's certified.

He's worked beside me as well. We can watch you put a wig on and I can tell if there is a better fit out there for you by three wigs. I've got it down. So that's another thing like people will come in with bands and caps and tape and all of that and I see it online people like what can I do for this?

What can I do for this? Bottom line is there's probably something that would fit you better. And yeah, you can make any wig work but when you're talking about something that you want to wear daily, and you want it to work like another head of hair, fit is really important.

And I find this especially to be a problem if women are on the petite side. Right away you're fighting a losing battle with an average wig because the hairline is going to fit way lower on the forehead. The things just can be overwhelming.

So if you're petite, that's an especially good reason for you to look for a place to shop in person. Another reason, if you shop in my store is I check each and every wig before it goes out there.

During the pandemic, everybody had variations and challenges and stuff. And I know, some of the companies went to other companies because they couldn't get things produced on time. Well, that just resulted in a lot of individual variances.

And when you shop at an authorized certified dealer that's doing it from the heart, I'm not going to put something out there just because Well, that's all I can get right now. So that's something to think about, when you're choosing where to shop for your wig. If you've had a bad experience, then that's something that you need to discuss with them.

Hopefully, it doesn't happen in the first place. But I know that it does. Another thing you want to look for is knowledge. If you ask questions, you should be able to get a reasonable answer. Or if they don't know the answer, how about a hold on, I'll check for you. I mean, I don't know about you. But that's important for me to get, and also with knowledge is their expertise and recommendations.

I see a lot of women coming through the door with pieces that simply weren't going to work for them in the first place. And sometimes when you come through the door, you're defensive, because you've had a past bad experience, which I get a lot of them.

Sometimes the piece that doesn't work for the person was purchased, because they went in saying that that's what they wanted, if that makes sense. A lot of people come in with human hair toppers, because they walked into a place and insisted on human hair.

And it wasn't even the right piece for them. So sometimes I love it when somebody comes through my door, and I asked them what their goals are. And I'll take you from the door to the end of the transformation in a moment. But when they come in, and I ask them what's going on? And they say, Well, you're the expert, you tell me that is my jam.

Okay, I am off and running. Because when you come through the door, take a look at you ask you a little questions about lifestyle and what your goals are. And do you like to spend a lot of time on your hair? What side does it part on?

I talk to you I kind of get a vibe, I'll look at pictures. Although pictures tell me more not by specificity. But by looking at them, I can also get a kind of vibe. Because with pictures. And when women start to look for wigs, the first tendency is to go for a picture.

And that's counterintuitive. But it's not the way to go. So that will be another thing that I talk about is what to expect from a picture or why it doesn't look like that. Because basically the answer is wigs are 3d. And there's only certain styles made.

So sometimes people want to mimic a style that just simply isn't available in a wig. But if it's not made, I know who makes the closest and how to get you there. But either way, that's another consideration. Another thing that might be an individual difference that is something you might consider is the difference in lace fronts.

Every company has a different you know, material or lace, I guess you call it. Some of them, I pick the best ones. But sometimes somebody's lace will feel good on your head where somebody's other lace might not be as comfortable.

So that's another thing that you can pay attention to. I've had a lot of customers come in, and they are sensitive to the lace fronts. Now there are also things you can do now there's a comfort lace overlay. But if you can get a wig that feels good, you don't have to do extra stuff to that's the goal.

Another thing that I've seen differences in is I talked about how if you go in and you tell them the style, the color or whatever that you want, they're gonna want to give you that, and I have seen wigs come in my shop that were exactly what the person asked for.

But it didn't, you know, it looked kind of 2003 if that makes sense. So if you find what you want, and you try it on, but it doesn't it's not a full body. Yes, there should be a better choice for you. And in my shop, we try and do that like it's a process of there as you try on.

I asked you what you like and you don't like and we go from there. So I guess my example would be is a shoulder length brown wig with bangs. We don't just have one, we have three four. And then from there, I know what slightly different colors to start or whatever. So getting down to the Select

Should and the individual differences. That's where it really comes in good if you're shopping in a boutique environment, because the way I work it, which is also not the way that most wigs stores work is I don't buy 12 of one style for 12 different colors.

I talked about how it's got to be like a work of art for me to have in in my shop. And I order things in intuitively, I keep up on everything new that's coming out. And a lot of the places will send a video first as they're releasing something. So I'll take a look at that.

And if I think something looks great, I have a strong gut feeling that somebody will come through the door for that. I order it and it always does. Yesterday, I had a couple wigs that I had had that intuition on. And lo and behold, in the morning, and then again in the afternoon, the clients that walked in, it was perfect for them perfect fit, perfect color. Not to mention, they came through the door, each of them in an outfit that like worked really well with the alternative hair.

So that's the type of experience that I hope you get that I'd like to provide for you. And that can happen if you come to the shop. The other thing a couple other things about shopping, I work one on one by appointment. And again, that came about because of the pandemic, I originally intended to do a mix of online and in person.

But during the pandemic, I had to go for a few months just online, and then it was open by appointment. And you know what one on one was magic. Because there aren't people walking in and out, we can direct our time to you in that situation.

So a lot of the shops I know other shops are starting to work by appointment. And while that might be inconvenient, that's a good sign. So one on one is how it works in my shop. And I think more shops will be going to that type of scheduling. And it's a good thing because people are starting to take alternative hair more seriously, you know, it's really a need.

And I hope, I hope I hope more good web stores open up because we are really needed. I see I'm droning on here. So you know, let me wrap it up real quick. Other considerations if you're going to a wig shop, or you're taking somebody parking at my shop, I have handicapped accessible because I also had a past life for 35 years as a nurse.

So I know sometimes medical conditions and hair loss go hand in hand. But I don't know that all wigs source think of that. So if you're calling to get an appointment, check on parking, if that's a consideration. And when you're calling for that initial appointment, you should feel comfortable, at least have a warm and fuzzy even that should be able to give you an opportunity to tell whether you're going to book or not. I myself try to be as transparent as possible on the phone.

If you're interested in an appointment and you email me sometimes I have questions to ask you. That will help me decide to give you a better idea of what's going on. So sometimes on the phone is the way I like to do it.

Because I can also gauge where you're at and you know what possible ways we might go. So the phone call is the first start. And before I end this episode, I don't know any other episodes I can't remember if I mentioned the wise wig advice group that very best little hair house has. That is my group come hang out. It's a shame free zone.

Not a lot of our activity goes on there but I do share things like the videos I share them first whether I get it from a vendor or whether I make it myself. I would love to see you there. There are other ways to find us on Instagram @vhairhouse.

We have a YouTube channel and drop us a line drop me your thoughts. I'd love to connect with you and until next time, bye bye. If you love this episode and want to connect with me, please go to my website and drop me an email. Very best little hair house.com so we can get in touch. And until next time, remember that you are beautiful, perfect and loved just the way you are.