

Pump up the Volume

Big, beautiful curls, volume and texture are the in-style looks for fall.

VOLUME. AT ONE POINT IN OUR COLLECTIVE fashion history it was revered and treasured—a look that allowed women to fluff and spray their coifs to new heights. And like any other trend, it went through the traditional hot and cold phases and reincarnations—in for a few years, out for a time and then back again. This fall, however, high volume and texture make a triumphant return, with beauty customers craving products that will help keep their styles looking fabulous.

“Women are over the contrived look,” says Jade, a stylist at Privé salon in Los Angeles.

“They’re wanting more texture in their styles—bigger and fuller with lots of volume.” This is excellent news for your customers because the look works very well with curly styles—another trend that you’re going to be seeing a lot of among African-American clients this fall, as well as customers from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. “I think a lot of women have grown tired of the time and effort it takes to straighten their hair,” says Michelle Breyer, co-owner of NaturallyCurly.com, a website based in Austin, Texas, that’s devoted to women with curly hair. “And thanks to a growing number of great role models in the entertainment industry, like Jill Scott, they’re seeing examples of beautiful, natural hair.”

ONE AND THE SAME

Since women with a variety of skin tones can have curly hair, the multicultural haircare industry today is focusing products on hair texture, rather than ethnicity. “There has been a blurring of the lines when it comes to products,” continues Breyer, who declares that many Caucasian women are big fans of products that were designed by African-American women, and many African-American and multiethnic women use products that were developed by Caucasians. So, in order to ensure that customers are getting the products they need to enjoy high-volume, curly styles this season, your customers will first need the right cut, then they’ll need you to help them find the right product mix. And girls with curls have very different haircare needs than their smooth, sleek counterparts.



“Keeping the hair conditioned and moisturized is really important year-round,” continues Jade. “Curly hair tends to be dry.” And with those facts in mind, New York City-based L’Oréal Technique created its Nature’s Therapy Perfect Curls Defining System: four specially formulated products designed to moisturize and rescue dry, unruly curls. The collection includes Defining Shampoo to gently cleanse and moisturize hair, lightweight Conditioner to instantly detangle and nurture curls, leave-in Crème to tame curls while adding definition, bounce and shine,

and Spray Gel to energize and reshape curls. And to help the products work more effectively, they’re all infused with natural ingredients like coconut oil and wheat protein.

Natural products can also be found in the Boston-based CurlFriends line, a nine-item collection that was created by Antonio Soddu, a hairstylist and former partner at Bumble & bumble. The line includes Cleanse Shampoo, Nourish Rinse-out Conditioner, Tame Smoothing Serum, Seduce Pomade and Shine Hair Gloss, all of which are made with a blend of sage, soy protein, rosemary and wheat. “The natural ingredients used in CurlFriends products eliminate frizz by creating the perfect moisture balance,” says Shelly Charbonneau, COO of CurlFriends. And since curly hair ranges from gentle waves to tightly coiled strands, the CurlFriends line recommends specific product combinations for a



COURTESY OF L'OREAL TECHNIQUE NATURE'S THERAPY PERFECT CURLS

variety of hair textures: medium and wavy, fine and curly/permed, very thick and wavy, and very thick and curly.

FINISHING TOUCH

The aforementioned products will definitely have your customers looking good this fall, and to increase profits, don’t forget to recommend products to accessorize those curly looks. “The thick headband is always a fashionable, popular accessory,” says Jade. And to keep curly tresses in control, Breyer recommends pulling the front of the hair back with a pretty barrette and keeping the rest down, or using a scarf as a headband to keep hair off the face. “Twist the back of the hair up and let a few tendrils down for a pretty, romantic look,” continues Breyer. Some top-notch accessories to stock include The Tonytail Co. Scarf Switch-a-Roo, which hooks onto a headband so it won’t slip out of the hair, and assorted hair clips from Mona Lisa.

It’s hard to tell exactly how long the high-volume look will last, but with the variety of hairstyles that African Americans have embraced over the years, it’s fair to say that there will always be a market segment that shuns flat irons and relaxers and embraces a head full of naturally curly hair. And as long as those customers know what they like and what they want, they’ll need you standing by with the right product mix to keep them looking fabulous season after season.