

HAIL, CESAR!

STRAND SLAYER
CESAR RAMIREZ
SHOWS US HOW A
GOOD WIG CAN GO
FROM BASIC TO BAM!

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THE TARAJI

BONE-STRAIGHT LOB

When Cesar Ramirez originally cut this asymmetrical lob on Taraji P. Henson for our November 2015 cover, he focused on crisp, clean lines. He was just as precise in re-creating the look here. All the wigs he crafts enhance the individual's bone structure and face shape. "When you buy a wig, it's like a base. Take it to a professional to have it cut and/or colored. Customize it to complement your face and skin tone," says Ramirez. Sleekness ups the style's impact, so he applied a shine spray to tiny sections before flat ironing. "It gives you a sleek cuticle, so everything looks silky."

H A I R



THE CIARA

BEACH-WAVE BLOND

Ciara is unquestionably a hair chameleon, but these sun-kissed, flowy waves have basically become the singer's signature. Wigs give you a good excuse to try out a cool new color. When doing so, Ramirez treats them the same way he does his clients' tresses. "For the moment, it's 'your' hair. If you want your extensions, weave or wig to look good, use the same quality products you would use on your own locks," he says. To maintain color as light as Ciara's, apply a leave-in conditioner and then an antibreakage heat protectant, which adds elasticity back to strands. This cocktail "makes the hair stronger, so it doesn't break when styling," says Ramirez. ▷



THE BRANDY

CURL CUES

"When you're cutting curly hair, it's a lot of freehand," says Ramirez of the triangle-shaped bob he made for Brandy. He prefers dry cutting over wet in order to monitor the true shape of curly strands: "You don't style your hair wet, so cut it when it's dry to know what shape you're actually creating." To keep his curly wigs from frizzing, he uses a non-crunchy gel cream, followed by a humidity-blocking hair spray that maintains definition. Stay away from wet or nonaerosol stylers, which can only exacerbate frizz. "I like soft-hold sprays because you can get the hold you need and still brush through the hair, and the curls can last for a few days without having to wash them," says Ramirez. ▷

INSET: GREGG DEGUIRE/WIREIMAGE



For our model, Ramirez crafted a platinum-blond version of his JHud crop.

Short Story

Wigs are the perfect way to give a new trend a test run. If you hate it, you're not stuck with it. Better yet, you may end up loving it—which is how Jennifer Hudson got her pixie. “We had a consultation and tried a bunch of styles,” says Ramirez. “I thought of doing something really short, a pixie, which she had never done before, and she loved it. The original was a wig, and then she grew her own hair into the style.” □



“Jennifer’s original pixie was a wig, and then she grew her own hair into the style.”

Jennifer Hudson started with a nineties-inspired crop, consisting of long bangs and sideburns; it evolved into an edgy, spiky do.

GRAND OPENING

Having worked with wigs since the beginning of his 18-year career, Cesar Ramirez is now expanding his brand with a focus on customization. In April he opened his first studio, Bunny&Skull, in Los Angeles. There he fits, colors and styles wigs in an intimate salon setting. “I give my clients the opportunity to try new things without having to commit,” says Ramirez, who plans to open a New York City Bunny&Skull soon.



CESAR'S TIPS & TOOLS

WIG-SHOPPING IDEAS AND PRODUCTS

- Get a wig measured to your head so that it's not too big or too loose.
- Go for human hair. Steer clear of synthetic-and-natural-blended strands, which can look fake and can't be heat-styled as easily.
- Flat-braid the tresses. That's key, because the way your hair is braided under the wig will determine how the wig sits on your head.

RICKYCARE Classic Large Paddle Brush (\$30, rickysnyc.com). **MIZANI** HRM Humidity Resistant Mist (\$17, Ulta). **THE WET CLIPS** (\$7 for 4-pack, thewetbrush.com). **MIZANI** 25 Miracle Milk (\$20, Ulta). **KARG** Shear K-Wide Royale Scissors (\$422, mikekarg.com).

JENNIFER HUDSON INSET, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: MICHAEL TRAN/FILMAGIC; RAY MICKSHAW/FOX VIA GETTY IMAGES; GARY GERSHOFF/WIREIMAGE; JON KOPALOFF/FILMAGIC; SALON, COURTESY OF BUNNY&SKULL; PRODUCTS, COURTESY OF BRANDS.