

Chroma Chameleons

Top Blonde! Sass and sass may have made Madonna infamous, but her legendary trendsetting ways—most notably her perpetually morphing blonde hair—have made her one of the most beguiling blondes in celeb history.

Whether created by nature or art, today's blondes, brunettes and redheads highlight the best in haircolor. By Jeryl E. Spear

Blondes. Brunettes. Redheads. Famous beauties from bygone eras may have had plenty of pizzazz in the “bod” department, but they’re *really* remembered for their stunning haircolor. Marilyn Monroe’s striking platinum locks made her a star. Rita Hayworth was an unknown until a studio colorist turned her natural, mousy brown hair a rich, strawberry blonde. And Ava Gardner’s raven locks are forever tied to her sex-kitten persona.

But unlike these beauties of yore who, once transformed, didn’t dare to alter their color, today’s haircolor habituates morph from blonde to brunette to red on a whim and strut their ever-changing colorations like prized plumage—thanks to state-of-the-art color formulations, not to mention the more intricate and artful color designs from talented beauty specialists like you.

Flaxen Beauties

Joke: What do you call a blonde with two brain cells?

Pregnant. Surprisingly, the ditzzy blonde stereotype that continues to plague the super-fair hair set to some degree probably began in 1925 when Anita Loos penned

Gentlemen Prefer Blondes. Once this lightweight story reached the silver screen in 1953, an avalanche of dumb blonde personas—including Judy Holiday, Jayne Mansfield and the ultimate woozy-white seductress, Marilyn Monroe—exuberantly agreed to dumb-down for the screen while laughing all the way to the bank. The notion played so well with the American public that it has taken a veritable army of fair-hair reformers to largely stomp out the dumb-blonde stereotype (with some glaring exceptions, of course).



Statuesque and sophisticated with the shattered, pale locks of a fairytale princess, Gwyneth Paltrow is a leading member of Hollywood’s towhead royalty.

Marilyn: Ed Clark/Time & Life Pictures; Gwyneth: Dominick Lombardi/WireImage; Charlize: Denise Venutelli/WireImage; Carrie: Denise Venutelli/WireImage; Christina: Jeffrey Mayer/WireImage; Cameron Diaz: Jon Soto/WireImage

Photos: All Getty Images; Marilyn: Jacques Demarthon/AP



Norma Jeane Baker’s time in the spotlight waxes eternal thanks in part to the mythical proportions of her voluptuous, white-blonde mystique.

Refusing to play it straight, today’s blondes are made up of a puzzle of colors that give both dimension and texture to their fair hair. Unlike the “straight out of the bottle” and decolorized stripes that plagued the industry for decades, today’s blondes are created using an artful—and, yes, smart—combo of family tones and colors, including honey, caramel, wheat and, when drama is called for, sparkling, icy platinum.

1 Charlize Theron, with her delicate blonde hair and striking blue eyes, is the quintessential blonde beauty of the 21st century.

2 Contender! As her career continues to flourish on the country music scene, Carrie Underwood is proving to be a blonde bombshell in the making.

3 Christina Aguilera’s chameleon-like beauty and white-hot hair have put her at the top of the Hollywood “retro” A-list.

4 Although gutsy Cameron Diaz occasionally strays from her signature flaxen coloration, she’s forever blonde in the eyes of her adoring public.



Nicknamed "Honest Ave" by actor Robert Mitchum for her frank ways, Ava Gardner has long been considered the ultimate raven-haired beauty.



Long considered the intelligentsia of the haircolor world, classic sirens with richly hued mahogany manes had their own brand of steamy allure (think Ava Gardner and Elizabeth Taylor). But what makes a modern-day brown-haired beauty equally desirable? According to colorists who are constantly striving to create the next super-dark siren sensation, today's brunettes have acquired multihued personalities with hints of auburn, copper and warm chocolate, or shivering slices of silver, super-ash brown and cherry red—often glazed or placed throughout rich brown bases.

Brunette Beauties

1 Top Brunette! Arguably the most beautiful modern-day brunette, Catherine Zeta-Jones' breathtaking face and dark mane threaten to surpass Gardner's sensuous, femme fatale legacy.

2 With her auburn-tinged "bronde" locks and voluptuous curves, Cuban-American sensation Eva Mendes' earthy sex appeal plays out for the camera with every flip of her chocolate mane.

3 Angelina Jolie's switch from vixen to earth mother has only served to enhance her brunette, goddess-like quality.

4 Contender! Up-and-coming brunette beauty Lindsay Hartley is a sex-goddess legend in the making.

5 As demure as Grace Kelly, Anne Hathaway is a brunette vision of ladylike qualities that add a touch of class to the darker-haired movie set.



Photos: Ava: Silver Screen Collection/Hulton Archive; Jeffrey Wilbur/WireImage; Eva: Steve Granitz/WireImage; Angelina: Jim Spellman/WireImage; Lindsay: Jean Paul Aussaonar/WireImage; Anne: Daniele Venturini/WireImage

Rita: Silver Screen Collection/Hulton Archive; Gillian: AFP; Christina: Michael Bezjian/WireImage; Rebecca: Steve Granitz/WireImage; Debra: Jon Kopeloff/FilmMagic

Scarlet Beauties

Hot-blooded and tempestuous—just two of the traits attributed to redheads, both those created by nature or at the gifted hands of colorists. A case in point: In Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel masterpiece (1512), the pre-apple Eve is blonde, and the post-apple Eve has a flowing mane of red hair!

Whether women are naturally red or simply red at heart, bold, crimson locks are still dancing to a sexual beat in the eyes of many beholders—but far from in a cheap way. Whether lusty and desirable, or smoldering with subtle sexuality, today's singe-worthy redheads radiate both fire and ice with a complexity of hues that include warm reds, apricots and coppers, as well as overlays of cool cherry red and opulent ruby.



1 Top Redhead! Debra Messing, whose fiery red hair ignites with flicks of ruby and copper for the camera, is the reigning queen of crimson.

2 Since starring in *Lost*, Rebecca Mader's flaming red locks have won her as much praise as her acting moves.

3 Contender! *Mad Men* beauty Christina Hendricks' warm scarlet mane defines her red-hot sex appeal and undeniable confidence.

4 Gillian Anderson's famous whipped, strawberry-hued locks remain her power color of choice.



Superstar Rita Hayworth was a bit player in the Hollywood gristmill until Columbia Pictures had her brunette locks dyed a luscious shade of strawberry blonde. Her most notable movie flop: *The Lady From Shanghai*, thanks to a serious misstep by director Orson Welles, who ordered Hayworth's signature red mane cut short and dyed blonde!