


A MAN'S WORLD

By Rowan Cory

MALE GROOMING IS A MINEFIELD. IF YOU DON'T DO IT AT ALL YOU'RE A SLOB AND IF YOU OVER DO IT THEN YOU'RE A GIRL. THE PROBLEM DOESN'T END THERE, FOR THE VAST MAJORITY OF MEN GROOMING IS TEN PERCENT FOR THEMSELVES, TEN PERCENT FOR THEIR CAREER AND EIGHTY PERCENT FOR THEIR SIGNIFICANT OTHER OR MORE IMPORTANTLY BECAUSE THEY DON'T HAVE A SIGNIFICANT OTHER.



 This means, sadly, that male grooming is dictated by the whims of the female species and therefore, the rules aren't simple.

The Holy Grail, as a male, when it comes to being well groomed, is to look as though you didn't make any effort at all. The vast majority of women want a Camel man who, by chance, looks as well coifed and manicured as a Calvin Klein underwear model. Though the old adage "if you want something done right, do it yourself", doesn't apply. A professional is always preferable to a badly worded instruction sheet and a hot tub of Wax-it-Yourself the night before a hot date.

For most men going to a salon is about as traumatic as being pulled out of the line at customs and instructed to drop your pants. Everything is white and pastel with hoards of women in robes giggling and pointing at you (well, that's how it feels anyway). Despite this many salons are now boasting an almost 50/50 male to female client ratio, though the men are mostly booked, and dragged in by their less hirsute partners.

Now the smart people at the newly launched Glasshouse rejuvenation for men salon recognised that despite the trend towards unisex bathrooms in public spaces,

when it comes to men and women, some things are better done separately. Grooming is, after all, about the result rather than the process. It's true any establishment worth its salt will make the process as luxurious and enjoyable as possible but in the end it's results that matter and at vital stages during the process you will probably compare unfavourably with Margaret Thatcher on a bad day. Therefore bumping into someone you would quite like to date, before emerging as a swan, is inadvisable.

The great thing about Glasshouse is that the décor and environment is undeniably male without sacrificing the quality or range of the grooming options on offer. That, and that you can book a pedicure with a friend and watch the game on their plasma screen with a drink in hand while you have it.

NOBODY TALKS ABOUT MALE PUBIC GROOMING

The irony is brilliant. Salons used to be the girliest places on earth and they might end up being the last place guys can just be guys, albeit whilst being made to look a little more presentable. These male salons offer all manner of treatments, all of which have been set-up specifically with male

needs in mind. The experience of having a treatment at Glasshouse is remarkably tranquil considering that next to facials and massage, waxing is the most popular treatment. I half expected to hear the muffled sounds of grown men crying through wadded towels. The basic chest or back wax has been around for years but recently their popularity has fallen in favour of the more extreme back, crack and sac wax. A sort of male equivalent of the much discussed Brazilian. According to Beryl, owner of Glasshouse, the BCS has become so popular that they have to have their pricelists reprinted to include it (R150 if you must know). When it comes to pubic grooming, I think each to one's own is a good policy and the BCS is certainly not for me.

I opted for another of the popular treatments, the hot-stone massage which I must say was probably the best I have ever had. Whilst I was having my massage, I couldn't help but ask the masseuse about the BCS, I was intrigued about its...well, rise in popularity and the mechanics of the thing. These days everybody talks about female pubic grooming. Guys talk to guys, girls to girls and probably most often guys to girls. I mean, show me someone who doesn't know what a Brazilian is and I will show you someone who has been dead for ten years.



The point is nobody talks about male pubic grooming. To some men, male pubic grooming would be a contradiction in terms and to others, it would be as normal as shaving their face everyday. If the figures are to be believed, it seems that this sort of trimming, up till four or five years ago, was solely the province of gay men and porn stars, but it seems in the modern era of the metrosexual and the dandification of straight guys by queer eyes, male bikini waxes and pubic hair grooming has moved from the realm of women's work and discreet trimming in bathrooms, to more open maintenance efforts by all types of men. Though let's be honest, the male anatomy is not the prettiest thing around and owing to it being an external organ, the idea of it and hot wax in close proximity is frankly frightening.

Not to detract from the suffering the ladies go through in the name of "neatness", but most of their bits are tucked away, not to mention that many of them have been having hair removed for as long as they can remember, so I would imagine the pain would be slightly less. It just seems extreme for a man to go from all over body hair to very smooth below the belt. The part that is really worrying is that the waxee has to be involved in the process; you have to move your bits around so that the aesthetician can get into all

the nooks and crannies. A thought that doesn't fill me with happiness and light. What's worse is that for most men the reason isn't even that they think it will look good; they tend to do it because their partner wants them to or they think it will lead to better sex. As a man I am almost shamed by what it seems we are willing to do if we think it might make sex more likely.

By the end of the massage, I am absolutely thankful that a moment of uneducated pique didn't cause me to sign up for an impromptu BCS. In this case whilst the result may be fantastic, the process would probably be the end of me.



The Glasshouse:
Unit 110a The Foundry
74 Prestwich Street
Greenpoint
Cape Town

T: 021 419 9599/8
info@glasshousemen.com
www.glasshousemen.com

