



# HEALTH & WELLBEING

## DIY

### Henna Magic



#### Henna for Hair

Today we will look at a brief history of henna and how this simple plant can be used in hair care, providing a natural and beneficial way to colour hair without the use of chemicals found in commercial dyes.

#### A Brief History of Henna

Henna, made from the leaves of the *Lawsonia inermis* plant, has been used for thousands of years across North Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia. Ancient Egyptians used it to colour hair, nails, and skin. Over time, henna became part of wedding ceremonies, festivals, and other celebrations, with designs symbolising beauty, joy, protection, and new beginnings. Today, henna remains a vibrant art form known for its intricate, temporary patterns and rich cultural traditions.

#### The Importance of Quality

The quality of henna cannot be overemphasised. Low grade henna, whilst not be harmful, will not yield the positive and lasting results achieved by that of high grade.

Henna for hair should be 'body art' quality and at least triple sifted (6 - 9 x sifted is best). A good supplier will be able to confirm the year and region of harvest, in addition to the percentage of 'lawsone' present

#### How to Adjust Colouring

Colours from vibrant red, brown and black can be achieved by applying henna alone, or mixing with indigo.

Indigo powder, a natural plant-based green powder made from the crushed and dried leaves of the *Indigofera tinctoria* plant, is mixed with henna to dye hair brown. The ratio of henna to indigo adjusts the depth of brow. To achieve black tones, an application of henna is applied, followed by indigo. Of course the natural hair colour must be taken into account, and it is always ways to strand test before making a full application.

- As with all natural products, allergies may occur, so always ***patch test first.***
- Search for a quality supplier, such as Henna Boy.

#### Henna Today

Today, henna is enjoyed around the world as a temporary form of body art. It remains an important part of weddings, festivals, and cultural celebrations, while artists continue to blend traditional motifs with modern designs.

In addition, many people are turning to henna as a safe alternative to commercial hair dyes. By combining with other herbs such as indigo and cassia, many shades of red, brown and black may be achieved.

#### What is Lawsone?

Lawsone is the natural red-orange pigment in henna that gives it its beautiful colour. It is found in the leaves of the *Lawsonia inermis* plant and is the ingredient that helps henna colour the hair. The amount of lawsone can vary, usually making up around 0.5% to 3% of the dried leaves. The higher the Lawsone content, the deeper and more lasting the colouring,

#### How Henna & Indigo Condition the Hair

Henna and indigo can help condition the hair in several ways. Henna's lawsone molecule naturally binds to keratin, a protein in the hair, helping to smooth the outer cuticle. This can make the hair look shinier and feel thicker because henna forms a light protective coating around each strand. Henna may also help soothe the scalp, as it has natural antimicrobial and antifungal properties that can support a healthy scalp and help balance oil production.

#### A Final Thought

- Research techniques for application on the internet
- And most of all, have fun! Henna & Indigo are wonderful ways to add colour and health to your hair, naturally!