

{ HOLIDAY STYLE }

THE CUTTING EDGE, HER WAY

BY INGRID SCHMIDT >>> At a loss for time but still want to look your best for that holiday party? Make an appointment at Eden Sassoon's new finishing studio in West Hollywood and get three key services — a blow-dry and style, a manicure and eyebrow shaping — for \$65 in just 65 minutes. Also on the menu at Eden by Eden Sassoon: makeup and lash application, pedicures, updos, a dry-hair trim and reparative hair treatments. The highest-priced items are a makeup application or a blow dry and style, each \$55 and accompanied by an instructional lesson and take-home video.

The services come with a pedigree: Sassoon is the daughter of the late, legendary Vidal Sassoon, and her business partner Michael Baruch was co-founder of Fred Segal Beauty.

The idea for a finishing studio offering fast and affordable hair styling, nail and makeup services under one roof was born when Eden Sassoon, an exercise-studio owner, was having her hair styled at one of today's popular blow-dry-only bars. She was rushed for time and preoccupied — her father was ill at the time with leukemia — but while she liked the focus of the blow-out salon, something felt wrong, she says.

"I thought 'I'm not comfortable. I would do things differently,'" she says. Then the ah-ha! moment: "I thought, 'What am I doing? I am this girl. I come from this family. I need to carry this on.'"

Vidal Sassoon, who died in Los Angeles on May 9, in-

'Tenacity
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Getty Images

REGIFTS' BAD RAP

BY JUDY MANDELL

By some accounts, most Americans have done it. They've repacked, re-wrapped and resent unwanted presents to a new recipient.

A survey in October 2011 by home fashion retailer HomeGoods found that more than half of the 1,000-plus respondents had regifted, 65% suspected they had received a regift and more than one-third were repeat regifters.

An American Express survey in December 2011 found that 79% of people believe regifting is acceptable. "Due to the Great Recession we have become increasingly more thoughtful about overspending," says Dana Holmes, editor in chief of the website Gifts.com. "It only makes sense that with these changes in our lives, we have also seen a change in our philosophy toward regifting. The stigma has lessened."

But the Emily Post Institute cautions on its website, www.emilypost.com, that gift "recycling" should be rare and warns

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Vidal Sassoon, who died in Los Angeles on May 9, introduced sharp wash-and-wear haircuts in the 1960s that liberated women from sleeping in rollers, using excessive styling products and setting their hair weekly in salons. "My idea was to cut shape into the hair, to use it like fabric and take away everything that was superfluous," he told the Los Angeles Times in a 1993 interview.

Sassoon's geometric cuts fell into line with minimal styling and were cutting-edge in appearance — featured on the cover of Vogue editions worldwide and famously on Mia Farrow in the 1968 film "Rosemary's Baby," which catapulted Sassoon to international celebrity status.

The emphasis on convenience that helped drive her father to fame is one of the inspirations for Eden by Eden Sassoon.

As business partner Baruch puts it, "What do women want for their everyday life or when they go out at night? They want their hair done. They want their nails done. They may not want their makeup done on a weekly basis, but they want their brows shaped. And it's not really convenient if you have to go to a second or third location. That's another couple hours. Not only drive there but pay for the parking and have another transaction on your credit card. ...Women want an hour for themselves, to look beautiful, and [now] they can do so without hurting their pocketbook or their schedule."

Another aspect that differentiates Sassoon's express beauty business is its focus on quality. Before setting up shop, Baruch conducted focus groups that showed that 80% of women don't like how their hair is styled in any salon and end up redoing it themselves at home.

So Baruch made it his first task to entice talent. He started by recruiting eight part-time stylists from some of the city's top salons, such as Warren-Tricomi Salon and Serge Normant at John Frieda, which wasn't easy.

But Baruch created a win-win deal with his salon-owner friends, explaining that their star junior stylists would gain experience, while referring clients back to their shops for cut and color, since Eden by Eden Sassoon is strictly about finishing services.

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— EDEN SASSOON, daughter of the late Vidal Sassoon.



EDEN SASSOON in her new West Hollywood finishing salon, Eden by Eden Sassoon, whose hallmark is featuring quick and affordable services.



THE SALON'S CLIENTS revel in the comfortable, even welcoming space.

makes sense that with these changes in our lives, we have also seen a change in our philosophy toward regifting. The stigma has lessened."

But the Emily Post Institute cautions on its website, www.emilypost.com, that gift "recycling" should be rare and warns that used, dated, hand-made or one-of-a-kind items may never be regifted. "Simply put, you have to make sure you don't hurt feelings," the website advises.

Still, April Masini, etiquette expert and founder of the advice column www.askapril.com, says one person's trash can be another's treasure.

"Here's where re-gifting is almost trendy," Masini says. "Vintage is the new black, and everyone is combing flea markets and antique stores for treasures." So why not shop in your own garage or attic?

"I think that regifting is the greenest gift of all," says Leah Ingram, author of the book "Suddenly Frugal" (Adams Media). "You didn't throw out the gift when you first got it, therefore keeping items out of landfills, and you haven't increased your carbon footprint by getting in your car and going to the store to buy a new gift."

But there are dangers in regifting. Most often people don't want to admit to regifting, and careless selections can lead to embarrassments and hurt feelings.

Los Angeles real estate specialist Chantay Bridges has been the recipient of many thoughtlessly regifted items, including wrinkled clothing, odd store gift cards from places where she never shops, and perfume that's been opened and used. "You tried it and realized it was atrocious and decided to pass it along to me," she laments. "The bottle wasn't even totally full."

image@latimes.com

RECYCLING THE JOY

BY JUDY MANDELL

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Next, Baruch recruited full-time staff using a system based on his favorite television show, "American Idol." A social media recruiting blast to 10 beauty schools produced 250 candidates, which he narrowed to 75 stylists. Then he convinced Kaz Amor, an old friend and partner at Warren-Tricomi, to lend his salon on Melrose Avenue every Monday for a six-week competition. Amor and David John (who worked with Baruch for 16 years at Fred Segal Beauty and is now with Serge Normant at John Frieda) graded the contenders on seven different "looks," from straight to wavy to beachy to updos. In addition, they evaluated factors such as punctuality and confidence, timing and technique.

Kristoff Ball (considered "the best finisher in the city," according to Baruch, with celebrity clients including Gwen Stefani and Rita Wilson) signed on to do four demos a day for two days at Eden by Eden Sassoon for the 24 finalists, who then interpreted Ball's demo looks on models. Twelve full-time stylists were ultimately hired.

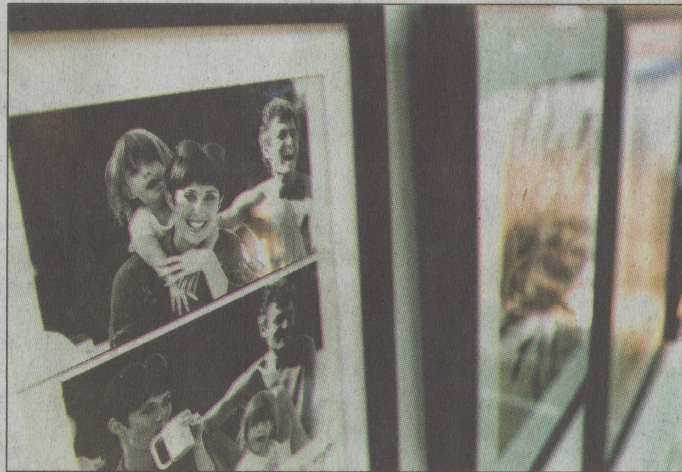
"Tenacity was one of my dad's favorite words," Sassoon says, reflecting on the process. One entry in her father's personal journal, a gift from her to him in 1994, pretty much says it all: "Discipline. A necessary inconvenience."

"I haven't met many people like Michael, who really have that drive," Sassoon says.

The lofty Eden by Eden Sassoon space at Sunset Plaza is designed to resemble a Malibu home, with an open, self-serve kitchen, family photos decorating the walls and cozy, upholstered club chairs at the shampoo stations. The welcoming, easygoing atmosphere is an obvious contrast to the notoriously strict intensity and polished, art gallery vibe of her father's salon on London's Bond Street. "When my dad spoke, they all lis-



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Photos by **CHRISTINA HOUSE** Los Angeles Times

tened," she said. "I mean, he threw scissors up and they stuck in the ceiling. If you came dressed the way we dress today, if you weren't to the nines, Dad would say, 'You're out!' Back in the day, you had to have it down."

This isn't the first time Sassoon has followed in her father's footsteps. An exercise enthusiast who appeared perennially youthful, Vidal Sassoon introduced the American public to Pilates on "The Regis Philbin Show." Since 2007, Eden Sassoon has owned Pilates Plus by Eden Sassoon, a fitness studio in Beverly Hills that offers Pilates, Zumba, Pure Core, Piloxing (a mix of Pilates and boxing) and the Sass Barre (a combination of ballet barre, cardio, resistant training and core work).

Next she's planning two more Eden by Eden Sassoon locations in Los Angeles and a second, smaller format for seasonal, resort

locations, such as Malibu, the Hamptons and Aspen, Colo. "And when I start to travel, I want to go big. I want to go international," Sassoon says. "To me, that's important. That's where the Sassoon name is. Even Asia."

Beyond that, she hopes to brand her own line of skin care. She and brother Elan, who owns the Sojourn line of eco-friendly hair care products, also plan to rewrite their parents' book, "A Year of Beauty and Health," published in 1976, "from our knowledge of being their children."

"I have a responsibility. I was born his daughter," she says.

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Dana Holmes, editor in chief of the website Gifts.com, offers these tips for gracious regifting:

If a person permeates all social circles in your life, don't regift anything that he or she gives you. Chances are the original giver may spot that carefully chosen Nate Berkus bowl or Royal Doulton figurine sitting on someone else's mantel and end up with hurt feelings.

To avoid regifting within the same circle of people, keep track. Before you store an unwanted item for future regifting, attach a sticky note about who gave it to you and for what occasion.

If you receive a gag gift, it's OK to give it back or pass on the joke to another victim.

If the gift comes to you from — or is going to — someone you're very close to, it's best to come clean. Tell them diplomatically that you're regifting and why.

Never regift just to get rid of something. Make sure the gift is in pristine shape and carefully match it to the recipient's interests. Regifting is a success only if you are sincere.

Always give the item new life with fresh wrapping paper and a thoughtful card. Be sure to closely examine the package for any old cards, tags, handwritten inscriptions or remnants of old wrapping paper and tape that would indicate you're recycling something that was given to you.

Have your children decide on a charity to give the unwanted gift to (as long as it meets the criteria above: pristine condition and something the organization is able to use). This rule is great for several reasons: You're able to pass on something you can't use to a recipient who can, while teaching your children a lesson in sharing.

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