



Wendy wigs out in waves.



Niecy's got flower power.



Pep's cute with curls.

## Express Yourself

Hadiiya Barbel customizes wigs for Wendy Williams, Niecy Nash and Sandy "Pepa" Denton. Want one?

"It's not your grandmother's wig," says celebrity hair maven Hadiiya Barbel of her eye-catching original pieces. "It's your ultimate fashion accessory." Ranging from \$500 to \$3,000, the hair vet designs, cuts, shapes and colors all of her custom-made creations.

The enterprising stylist started making custom wigs in 2004. "I wanted to keep my hair weave in because I spent so much money. I had to find a way to create looks where it made more sense."

In 2005, the ambitious 31-year-old met talk show host Wendy Williams at a magazine photo shoot. Although it was one of her favorites, Barbel gave Williams her 29-inch-long wig from the shoot. Today, Barbel creates and styles all of Wendy's wigs for *The Wendy Williams Show*.

Barbel prefers wigs over weaves. "It's less money in the long run," she says. "A weave for \$500 only lasts two months. [Wigs] are more practical. [They're] pushed by the celebrities. You have Tyra, Beyoncé, Wendy, Oprah. Even if you've never worn a wig, you're interested."

### Underneath Your Wig

"Keep your hair moisturized," Barbel advises. "If it's long, keep it braided, wrapped, trimmed and controlled." If you rock a wig, she cautions against perming your hair. Instead, leave your hair in its natural state and wear a net wig cap so your scalp can breathe.

### Keep It Clean!

To avoid buildup, Barbel suggests washing wigs once a week or every two weeks with a detangling and moisturizing shampoo, regardless of the quality of hair in your wig. Just soak and rinse.

### Can't Afford a Custom Wig?

Barbel suggests purchasing a synthetic wig from a beauty supply store and then taking it to a professional stylist for cutting and shaping. "I may reconstruct a wig that cost \$50 and make it look like it costs \$500," says Barbel.

—TRACY E. HOPKINS