

The Sun

Hair De-Frizzers Are Set To Appear In Nightclubs of New York City

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It's hard to know what goes on behind bathroom stalls in New York City nightclubs, but starting next month denizens of the night will have one more service they can purchase there — hair straightening.

Aimed at women and men who want to de-frizz their locks while out on the town, the machines are already popular at nightspots all across London and other cities in the United Kingdom.

The wall-mounted hair-straightening flat iron machines charge patrons a small fee for use. In England, the service costs a pound for 90 seconds; here in New York, businessmen are thinking of charging a dollar for 60 seconds. The machines here would accept bills.

Counting on the machine's popularity across the Atlantic, an entrepreneur named David Ganulan has ordered \$50,000 worth of the machines, which he is trying to market to clubs across the city and later in Miami.

Mr. Ganulan says he has already drummed up quite a bit of interest from bar and club owners in the city, but declined to give names. Along with two partners, he has created a company called New Vending Concepts.

The in-install flat irons are the brainchild of two Scottish businessmen, Neil Mackay and Richard Starrett, who this week won the Best Grooming Gear award in Wallpaper magazine's international design awards.

The machine's ceramic tongs were honored at the Hayward Gallery in London.

Despite the accolades, it is unclear how the irons will fare in the city.

The owner and director of Polished Social Image Consultants, Samantha von Sperling, who helps style many high-profile New Yorkers, said that even though curly and wavy hairstyles are in this winter, the flat irons will be a hit at city clubs.

"After a night of clubbing when a woman's hair has gone from wavy to frizzy, or just plain soaking wet, she would happily take a half way decent ironed look," Ms. von Sperling said. "I'd rather look a year out of fashion than like a wet rat."

The Beautiful Vending Company has already mounted about 75 West Street, Suite 8-E, New York, NY 10006



Courtesy of the Beautiful Vending Company

Soon club-goers may be able to flatten their locks with bathroom flat iron machines.

700 machines in the United Kingdom. Currently the company is experiencing its most rapid growth to date, installing about 40 hair irons a week.

The manager of an Italian eatery in Murray Hill called Bistango Restaurant, Anthony Avellino, said he would consider installing a flat iron machine in his restaurant. "Being that I have three daughters who use straightening irons all the time," Mr. Avellino said. "I think it could be an added plus." Others in the industry, however, aren't so keen on the idea of placing hot ceramic tongs in the hands of customers who may be inebriated.

"It sounds dangerous," a bartender at Rogue Restaurant and Bar in midtown, Jessica Freeborn, said, "I don't know if America is ready for hair straighteners in bathrooms."

Messrs. Mackay and Starrett came up with the concept of the vending machines while working as event marketers in Scotland. According to Mr. Mackay they saw a demand for beauty products at bars and clubs.

Their business philosophy is that a well-run and successful nightclub keeps female clients inside its doors, and with flat irons, fashionable women might stick around a while longer.

Club and bar owners can have the hair irons installed for free by New Vending Concepts. The establishment and Mr. Ganulan — who also created a company called Kettlebell Concepts that brought exercise techniques from Czarist Russia to America — split a portion of the profits, similar to the arrangement that bar owners have with internet juke box companies. As an additional revenue driver, there is space for marketers to place color ads behind the machines.

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