

Mr James, here I am!

by **Simonne Pace**

BEING pampered is not a daily experience for me. But once in a while, I am lucky. A few weeks ago I got a phone call from Mr James International at the San Gorg Corinthia Hotel. A girl invited me over for a hairdo.

My reaction was 'Oh, how nice!' But I never went, simply because I forgot all about my appointment. It had come in between going abroad and other chores. Last week I got another phone call and another invitation.

On my arrival at the salon on Wednesday I was welcomed by Richline, one of the stylists who works at Mr James, the one who invited me over the phone. I told her I was from *The Sunday Times* and was immediately introduced to the other girls, Louise, Lianne, Nadia, Mandy and Christine. Marion and Ruth were off duty.

Louise offered me a cup of coffee and told me she would be preparing a treatment for my dry hair and would then do a blow-dry.

The part I enjoyed most was when Nadia, a trainee, washed my hair after the treatment. I was given a scalp massage which nearly made me doze off. It was heavenly.

After that, Louise, a bony girl with short, wet hair, started her blow-dry. She was sociable and sweet and talked to me incessantly. She kept offering coffee (I drank two cups!) and before I knew it my hair was ready.

The girls spoke about their experiences abroad. Marion and Louise were sent to Manchester from September 27 to October 4 and Richline and Ruth just before them, also for a week.

All the girls were welcomed by Mr James himself, the owner of the salons, and his wife. They were taken round Manchester and visited antiques fairs and dined at places like The Butley's Ash, Sticky Fingers, owned by Bill Wyman, a Rolling Stones band member, Giorgio and Est! Est! Est! Bella Pasta, Kwok Man, and La Taska.

Richline and Ruth stayed at the elegant Jarvis Piccadilly Hotel, in the heart of Manchester. On their first day, Mr James spoke about running a professional hair salon. They were also joined on numerous occasions by Nikki, one of the salon's stylists.

The girls worked closely with the English staff at the Manchester Salon and did hairdos, upstyles, cuts and colours. They even met top hairstylists, one of whom was Mark Hill (those who watch *Style Challenge* know him).

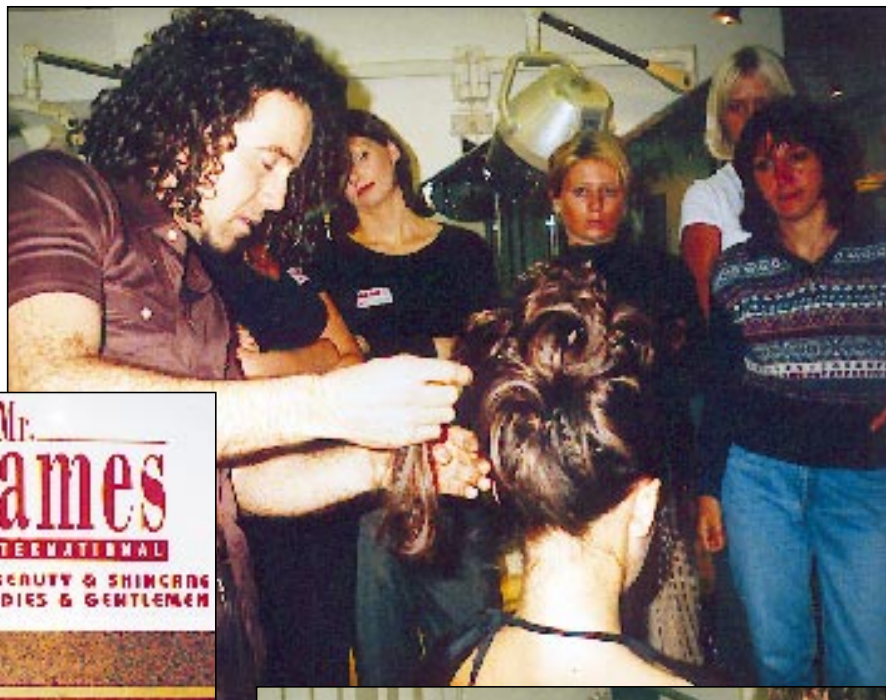
Besides serving clients and visiting hair salons, the girls visited clubs like Havana, Cuba Café, Moon Under Water and the Piccadilly 21.

Louise and Marion spent a morning at Wella Studio (where they were even presented with their diplomas) following a barbering techniques course with top stylists Stephen and Chris, followed by details about salon routines.

"We were lucky all throughout our stay," Louise said, after finishing my hair. "We even met Alex Ferguson and some of the Manchester United football players on the flight back to Malta," she chuckled.

Mr James International at the San Gorg Corinthia Hotel is open every day, including public holidays (except Sunday) from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Now that Christmas is approaching, why not treat your mother, father, sister or friend, or whoever, to a session at Mr James International? Gift vouchers are available.



RICHLINE (left) and Ruth



TOP HAIRSTYLIST Mark Hill during a demonstration of upstyles for Louise (first from left) and Marion (top, first from right)

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