

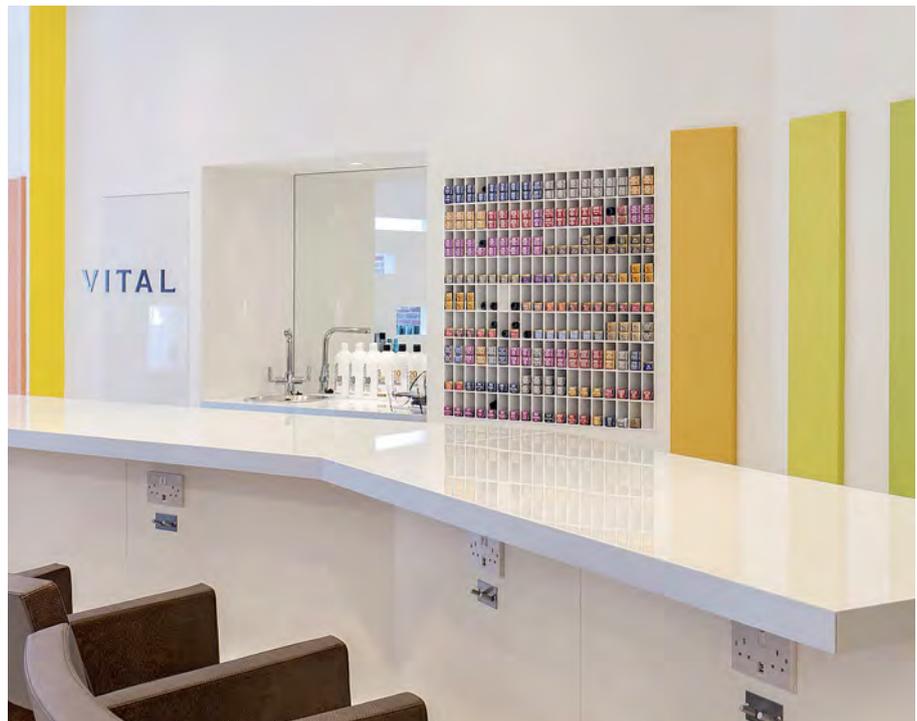
# Talking colour

Taunton has a new hair salon and  
CATHERINE COURTENAY went to investigate

We all chat with our hairdresser, but when you visit Vital, you'll have a 'real' chat with your stylist. I say 'real' because, unusually, it's factored into the appointment time, it's your chance to talk a bit about yourself, your lifestyle, what you like and dislike about your face, your hair. The stylist listens and looks and at the end of the 10 minutes or so, they'll suggest cut and colour ideas based on the real you.

It feels good going to Vital. It's spacious, an industrial-style brick wall on one side with striking panels of colour behind a bar-style arrangement on the other. It's clean, white and bright, but the antique reception desk makes it feel grounded and there's a clever sound system which means background music levels can be pitched just perfectly.

Every last detail has been meticulously worked out by owner Nick Martin, from handy USB ports and bag rests to the stylish Maletti chairs. The water in the taps is filtered to ensure it's as pure as it can be; it's also kept at a constant pressure and heated using a bespoke boiler so no hot and cold surprises when hair washing. And there are clutter-free, full length mirrors – it's important to give stylists a clear view of the client's head and shoulders, says Nick.



The colour bar at Vital hair salon in Taunton

*'The water in the taps is filtered to ensure it's as pure as it can be'*

**BELOW:**  
Nick Martin owner of Vital hair salon in Taunton

Nick, who hails from Minehead, went to Hob salon in Camden to train and when at Combers in Taunton was one of eight stylists out of nearly 1,000 applicants to be selected for the Redken Talent Tribe in 2013, a year's specialist training including working with top stylists Lee Stafford and Andrew Barton.

Joico is a perfect fit for Nick. Hair is naturally acidic and the American brand's products return hair to its acidic state. Nick explains that hair is 'opened up' to get colour inside it, but Joico products 'squeeze it' back together using keratin to help lock the colour in and protect the

hair. Normally, with colouring, hair is repeatedly opened up so it becomes brittle and susceptible to damage. Another winning factor for Nick was that its products are tested on humans and sustainably produced, the factories use wind turbines and packaging is recyclable.

The colouring process is a unique aspect of Vital. Sitting at the 'colour bar', relaxing with a coffee, you can see the stylist mix up the colours in front of you – it has the same fascinating appeal of watching a bartender mix a cocktail – and of course you can ask questions.

Nick says he wants people to leave the salon confident and sky high happy. He's certainly achieved the right atmosphere in which to do so with Vital. ♦  
**Prices start from £29 for an hour haircut.**  
[vitalsalon.co.uk](http://vitalsalon.co.uk)