



COLUMNISTS

Bra-fitting 101

Today Show calls on Cherry Creek boutique owner

By Mike Taylor , 10/5/2006 – 10/11/2006

For those of you who weren't up at 6:30 Saturday morning (Sept. 30) to catch "The Weekend Today Show" on NBC, I'll recap the performance by Denver's Cindy Johnson, co-owner with sister Jeanie Peterson of SoL lingerie boutique in Cherry Creek North.

I wasn't up that early Saturday either, but I got the rundown on Johnson's 8½-minute segment from the boutique's PR director, Janelle Kenny. I also received a DVD of Johnson's national TV appearance in the mail.

It's hard to overlook a press release that trumpets somebody as a "bra-fitting expert" as this one did, AND comes with a DVD with visuals to boot. There are no formal credentials or degree programs for this expert designation, of course, but if "The Today Show" invites you to Rockefeller Center in New York to opine on the subject, I think you've made your case.

Along with fielding questions from co-host Campbell Brown on just that topic - how to correctly fit yourself for a bra - Johnson also picked out some women from the audience and gave a before-and-after demonstration. So it was not hyperbole when Kenny left me a voice mail four days later and in the message referred to Johnson as a "*national bra-fit expert*."

Kenny also wanted me to know that, following up on the momentum of Johnson's national TV appearance, SoL (it stands for Store of Lingerie) will be hosting a "Bra Fitting Marathon" from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. on Oct. 19 at the boutique's North Cherry Creek location at 248 Detroit St.

I called Kenny back, not feeling exceptionally qualified to conduct an interview on the subject of bra fitting, but on the other hand believing that an appearance on "The Today Show" by a local boutique owner was not something for a statewide business magazine to dismiss.

"Are there really all that many bra options?" I asked when I got a hold of Kenny. I was curious how a segment on this subject could last 8½ minutes.

"More than you can probably imagine," she said. "There are actually over 50 sizes, let alone styles. Cindy talked on the show about how complicated bra sizing is, but she also talked about how different bras work for different body types. Eight out of 10 women are in the wrong-size bra. But even if you're in the right size bra, not every bra in that size is going to fit you."

"I see," was all I could think to say. I asked Kenny about SoL's Oct. 19 bra-fitting marathon.

"Although (The Today Show) was a fantastic opportunity to educate the women of America, Cindy's main concern still is being able to fit the women of her hometown of Denver," Kenny

said.

She continued, "Bra fitting in general has gotten a lot of national exposure thanks to Oprah in the past couple of years, and it is a very hot-button topic for the women of America because the majority of them are still in the wrong-size bra. So given the opportunity to have a professional bra fitting, almost every single woman coming out of our store will feel a difference from that."

Kenny said the prices for "everyday bras" at SoL go from \$50 to \$100, with an overall range from \$34 to \$200.

The top seller: "Our No. 1 selling bra, we call it the Daisy Bra, and it's made by Marie Jo," Kenny said. "They're out of Belgium. That bra retails for \$98, and it's our No. 1 seller despite that price because it's a great-fitting, comfortable and cute t-shirt bra. It's actually on our website if you want to link to that at SOLlingerie.com."

SoL has been open at Cherry Creek North for nine years. Johnson, 38, started working at lingerie shops as a 17-year-old and studied fashion and design at Colorado State University. While Johnson continues to work the storeroom floor helping customers find the right fit, sister Jeanie Peterson, 34, handles business behind the scenes.

"What's great is that their two skill sets really complement one another," Kenny said. "So they're completely opposite in terms of that."

I didn't get around to asking Kenny what makes a \$200 bra so much better than a \$34 model. Or what Oprah had to do with making bra-fitting a national hot-button topic.

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