

Edinburgh Reporter chats – Amanda Tod

✖ [Ivy Therapy](#) is 'Edinburgh's first fully organic beauty salon', which recently opened on Leith Walk. The Reporter went down to chat to owner Amanda Tod about her new beauty venture over a lash extension treatment...

How long has Ivy been open?

Three weeks now, so it's all nice and new – the bookings have been steady so far, which is nice because I didn't want to be too busy when we first opened. I love the fact that this property has a garden, so if there's no music you can hear the birds outside which is really pleasant for clients.

How long have you been working in the beauty industry?

I've been doing it for quite a few years now, working in different places, so I wanted to do something a bit more exciting. Being my own boss makes a nice change!

Where did you train in beauty therapy?

Mary Reid Beauty School on West Register Street, which is now The Mary Reid International Spa Academy on North Castle Street. I didn't actually plan to go into the beauty industry. I initially wanted to be a make-up artist. I did some of the course which was great, so I stayed on to learn some other aspects. I learned body therapy and massage therapy, and did a few extra classes to learn things like eyelash extensions and nail extensions. I've picked up some other bits and pieces along the way.

Do you have anyone else working with you?


Yes I have a brilliant therapist – Anna – who comes in to do tanning on Thursday nights until 9pm. We charge £15 for a

spray tan so we tend to get pretty busy!

What treatments do you do here at Ivy?

We do manicures, pedicures, facials, a lot of different massage, spray tans, waxing – the hot wax we use is a coconut wax that reduces redness and swelling, which is good for people with sensitive skin. Absolutely everything I use here is organic , except the lashes which have to be synthetic unfortunately – there's not really any other way to do them! Part of the reason I opened up Ivy as an organic shop is because I thought:- “Why put these chemicals on your skin? It is unnecessary.”

Do you think the organic aspect of your products appeals to your customers?

I think a lot of people are starting to realise and become more aware of what they're doing to their bodies, caring about what they eat and caring where it comes from. There's so  many more organic foods and organic shops these days.

Other places I've worked in before never really used products that I believed in, or believed were doing any good, so that's part of the reason I opted for organic products in my own salon. I'm definitely trying to steer away from the typical beauty side of things, I want people to be able to come here and relax. I don't believe in hard sells – the products should sell themselves.

Do you find it more stressful owning your own business and working for yourself rather than working for someone else?

It's a different kind of stress. In other jobs I'd be working in a busy spa so I'd be busy and stressed, while my managers would be concerned with other aspects – whereas now it's stress about a lot of different things, but I come to work with a smile on my face!

What did you do before you got into beauty therapy?

I worked in catering before, so it was a big change. I really enjoyed it, but it was more of a hobby at home as I really enjoy cooking so I never really aspired to become a chef. It was handy though as all the hygiene aspects I learned there, I can implement here!

What are your most popular treatments?

The most popular treatments so far have been nails, spray tanning and facials so it been a pretty good variation – I specialise in eyelash extensions as I did these when I worked at Harvey Nichols.

***If you want to find out more or to book an appointment at Ivy, call 0131 629 6428, visit their [Facebook page](#), or e-mail info@ivytherapy.com ** Amanda will offer a 20% discount on your first treatment if you mention The Edinburgh Reporter.*