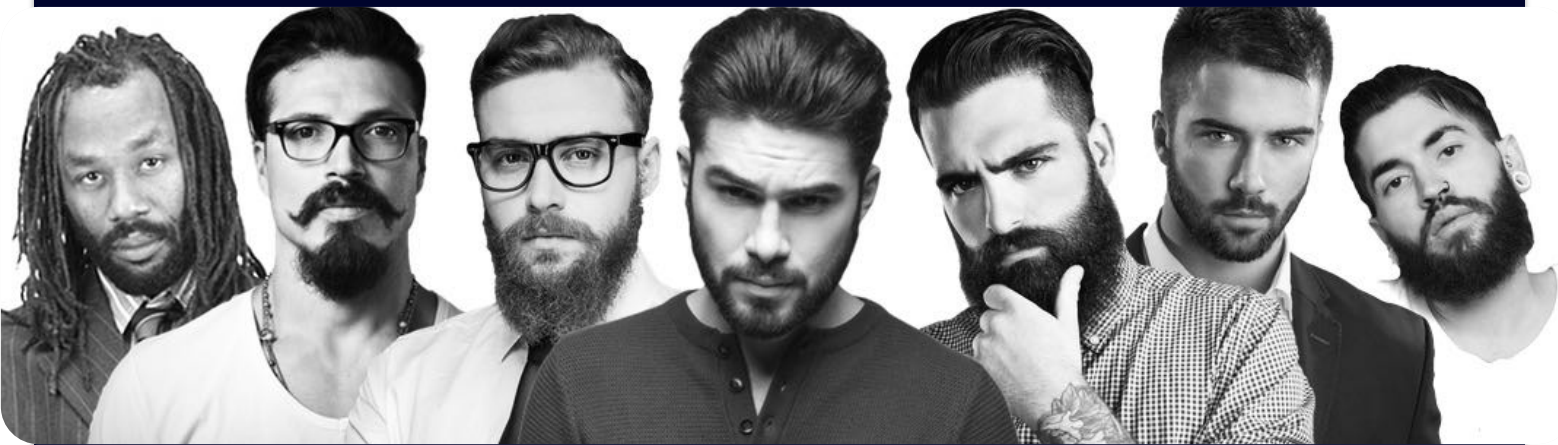




**BEARD CLUB**



**HOW TO GROW  
AN AMAZING BEARD**

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## TO BEARD OR NOT TO BEARD?

What's in a beard? Couldn't it be described simply as a few tufts of facial hair on the underside of a man's face? Or something that grows naturally with no merit to its owner?

Obviously, every man could grow a proper beard if they wanted to. Well it's that simple – right? Well to the ignorant, the answer would be a big 'yes'. But to the beard-lover the question itself would be ridiculous.

Those who sport a beard don't have to be told that there is a big difference between not shaving for a few days versus a well maintained, immaculately shaped beard. Growing facial hair has always, at some stage in man's life, been considered an initiation into manhood – or a rite of passage, if you will. But does every man have what it takes to pull off that beautiful full-bodied beard? To know that first let's try to get an in-depth understanding of what the 'beard' is all about.

In the following collection of pages we discuss the process of growing an amazing beard and the best way to maintain it once it's fully-grown. Starting from the beginning, we investigate how the mighty 'beard', has played a role since the dawn of human history. So without further ado, let's delve!



## HISTORY OF THE BEARD

Throughout history many races have held the beard in high esteem. It has been considered through the ages as a proof of manhood. Countless gods, deities and mythical heroes have been pictured with beards. History tells us that beards have been worn ritually by people in positions of power and importance. Alternatively, history has given us stories of incredible facial hair, which border on unbelievable extremes. In folklore and even in the modern day we have heard about beards which span more than the arms length and are as long as the man sporting it,!

Shaving tools or rudimentary razors were first seen around **30,000 BC** and they were made of flint. Before that shaving would typically consist of almost plucking strands of hair out with flat blunt objects working as tweezers, like sea shells. Ouch! It's clear that most men would not be keen to go through such a painful process on a regular basis and we can safely assume that before this time most men would be naturally bearded.

Jumping a few millennia, we arrive at the **Egyptians**, who were well known for their beards. Officials of high rank grew beards on their chins. Plaiting of beards with golden thread was common and some people even died their beards with henna making it dark red. The *postiche*, or the long false beard adornment worn by kings (and even queens) under the chin can be seen on almost all ancient Egyptian statues or art.

The ancient **Babylonians** were known for their immaculately kept, frizzled and wide beards, which they took great care to oil and dress. Gold dust was also sprinkled on the beard during festive events!

In **India** and **Turkey**, growing one's beard long was a symbol of wisdom and knowledge. At a certain time, it is said, no sensible Turk in their right minds would cut or shave their beard off. In India, even today, *sadhus* or spiritual gurus still sport long white beards.



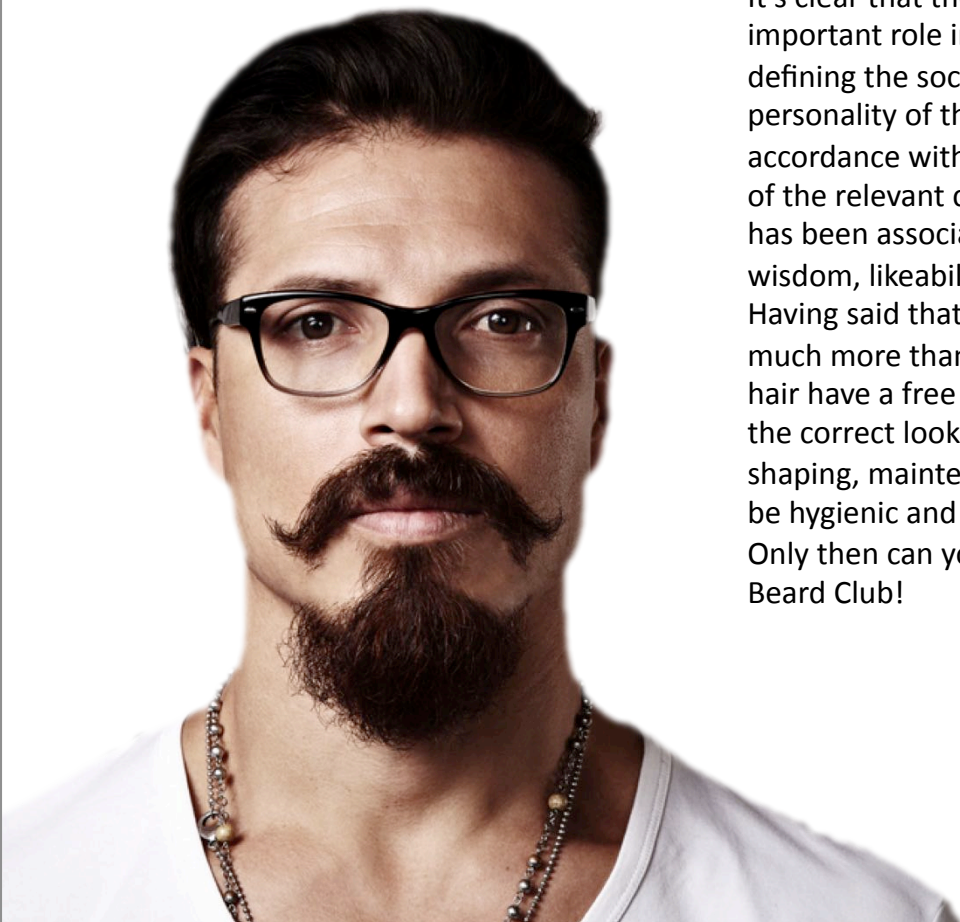


The **Greeks** had a very interesting tryst with the beard. Usually curled with tongs, the Greeks used to proudly sport beards resembling hanging curls on their chins. Just like in many civilizations at that time, it was considered a sign of wisdom. Great thinkers and philosophers like **Aristotle** and **Plato** all had beards. It was a sign of their high and revered profession.

In recent history we know of many world leaders whose bearded look have become nothing short of iconic. Great visionaries like **Abraham Lincoln** and **Che Guevara** both had easily distinguishable and prominent beards.

Even in modern day pop-culture media like books, comics and cinema, the beard adorns many a famous character. Characters from comics such as; **Getafix**, the wise druid from Asterix; or **Captain Haddock** the lovable bungling friend of *Tintin*. Film characters such as **Gandalf** the great wizard in Lord of the Rings, or **King Leonadis'** amazing beard from 300. These are some of the many examples of our favorite characters that would be incomplete without their beards. How badass would **Wolverine** look if he didn't have his beard?

It's clear that the beard has played a very important role in history, in many cases defining the social position and personality of the man who sports it. In accordance with the times and as a part of the relevant contemporary culture it has been associated with power, wisdom, likeability and even coolness! Having said that, growing a beard is much more than just letting your facial hair have a free run on your face. To get the correct look a beard requires proper shaping, maintenance and care. It must be hygienic and looked after regularly. Only then can you be a true man of Beard Club!



## HOW TO GROW AN AMAZING BEARD

As many of us already know (and as the first time beardsman is soon to find out) growing a beard can give a real sense of accomplishment and can be one of the very private joys in our life. But growing a beard from scratch has many elements to be considered and the end result is not equal to just a handful of hair under your chin. The quality and thickness of growth is also very important. There can be many factors which play a role in the way your beard grows. And it's important to pay attention from the day you decide to grow that manly mane!

Here are some things to keep in mind:

**Fix your diet.** Before starting to grow your beard try to make your body optimally ready for the process – sounds a bit over the top? But it's really not. Make sure your diet is not lacking in things which are necessary for good hair growth. Biotin also known as vitamin H is known to boost hair growth, found in foods such as liver. Fish oil, zinc, magnesium and multi vitamins can also help the process along. Your body may already be getting the entire regimen if your diet is properly balanced. If you decide to go for supplements it's a good idea to consult your doctor beforehand.

Beard growth, being a manly thing, is obviously fuelled by testosterone in our body. You can naturally boost testosterone levels in your body by including red meat, spinach, nuts and olive oil in your diet.



**Be mentally ready.** If you are about to be a first time beard owner just remember this – you can't make everybody happy! One of the most challenging parts of growing a beard for the first time is being able to handle the reaction of people around you. Since you are in all probability not reading this book sitting inside a cave, you'll have to go through the somewhat awkward intermediate beard growth stages in full view of everybody. Even when you feel your beard has fully blossomed into its final avatar, people might not be fond of it as you are! Some may say it's weird or strange or that a beard just doesn't suit you. Your family might try hard to convince you to shave. But all that really is not important if you are confident about your beard and the decision to grow it. Having said that, it is definitely more helpful to have support from people who are closest to you. So discussing it with them might be a very good idea!

**Moisturize!** Some people might have the notion that oiling a beard is for wimps and pansies. Well I guess those poor souls would have to find out the hard way how wrong they are, won't they? Men have been oiling their beards for centuries and it is one of, if not the most important thing that promotes great beard growth. Oiling will ensure many things. For one, it will keep your beard tips from becoming razor sharp prickly barbed wire, it softens the hair and helps stop beard itch. It is also important to remember to apply oil regularly for best results.

Jogoba is a great ingredient in beard oil. It is the closest thing to the natural lubricating sebum that is produced by our skin. Nothing can be more off-putting and detrimental to your beard image than white flaky particles in it, for this beard oil works wonders and acts as natural anti-dandruff treatment. Oils with vitamin E infused in them are also very good for healthy skin in general. Remember, unhealthy skin equals unhealthy beard!





## MAINTAINING YOUR BEARD

Just growing your beard is one step and actually only half the work done. Maintaining your beard after it has attained your choice of style and length is something that many men forget to do. The results can be horrible for the onlooker. You might not notice it yourself, but a face full of scruffy and sloppily kept hair can be a turn off for everyone – your girlfriend, your colleagues, your family and even your friends. On the other hand, a neatly maintained beard can give of some great vibes about you and all that you are about. So here are some tips that can be useful in maintaining your bearded look.

your fingers through it.

### Once again – Beard Oil!

The importance of beard oil can never be stressed too many times. Not only is it good for your bread, but also for the skin underneath your beard. Here's how to apply beard oil like a boss!

Put a small amount of beard oil in your palm and work it into both hands. Then first, working your way up from where your beard starts at your neck all the way up to your chin. Rub the oil onto the underlying skin, on your cheeks, running your fingers through your beard. Rub lightly - be careful not to get too much oil on your skin or it might close off all your pores. After this work your way downwards running your fingers through all the portion of your beard, making sure you get good coverage for all the hair in your beard. Stroke and run your fingers through your beard along the shape that it is meant to be in. After this, taking a beard comb, run it through your beard downwards along the flow to make sure the oil spreads to each and every part. By preventing the skin from becoming dry, oiling your beard regularly helps in reducing itchiness and prevents dandruff growth. If you are oiling your beard properly it should feel like an enjoyable massage, rather than a chore. A properly oiled beard can feel almost like silk if you run your fingers through it.





**Beard Balm** is an alternative to beard oil and is essentially the same thing except that its consistency is slightly more pasty and thick. This is because Beard balm usually has shea or cocoa butter added to it. Beard balm can be applied to the beard in the exact same way as beard oil, as described above. However, beard balm is not as good on longer beards as beard oil as it can clump if not properly dissolved.

### Brushing and Combing

Brushing and combing promotes good hair growth. Your beard constantly needs to grow out healthy hair from the roots and brushing or combing catalyses this process by stimulating the underlying hair follicles at the root. Also the strands of hair in your beard can get disheveled from time to time; you might not realize it, but this can happen even for shorter beards. Combing, by its general purpose, helps you to maintain the style of your beard. This is especially true if you have a beard style consisting of intricately shaped parts or a really long beard. For example if you want to rock a beard like the guys from ZZ Top, you would need to definitely comb it regularly! The careless unkempt look might be in, but the 'too careless' and 'total chaos' look is not. Unless of course that's the name of your beard style!

There are many types of combs and brushes to choose from depending on what you want to spend, and what kind of love you want to give your beard. There are normal brushes with synthetic plastic bristles and the slightly more expensive boar's hair brush. There are combs made of plastic, wood, antlers, and horns. Usually a broader toothed comb is good for longer beards and shorter beards require more fine toothed combs. Natural materials like horn or wood are gentler on your beard and skin and help to distribute the oil more evenly.



## Trimming

Trimming is important for obvious reasons. First of all it's to maintain the shape of your beard and keep the edges neat and clean. It also helps in getting rid of split ends in your beard. Only good trimming practices can make your beardacious face look insanely cool like you want it to!

### ***Before trimming take note of a few things:***

If you are trimming with scissors it's advisable to use a professional barber's scissors. If you are trimming with an electric trimmer, try getting a cordless one with adjustable settings.

Having a big clear mirror in a place that lets you see all sides of your face is key. A standing convex or magnifying mirror is useful while finessing of the details.

### ***While trimming:***

Comb your beard properly even before you pick up those scissors or the trimmer. Combing helps untangle any knots or loops that your beard has and brings all the hairs to their true length. Don't fluff or puff out the beard, rather comb it along its natural flow and grain.

When you are trimming your beard make sure you comb down the hair to the 'cut line' so that you ensure cutting off all the hair at the same length. Your final hair line should be even and neat.

Being able to trim evenly on both sides of the face requires practice and a developed eye. One good way to avoid unsymmetrical beard length is to start slowly from the ear, down the sideburns to the chin, repeating the same process on the other side.

If you want to get razor sharp edges on your beard – well, use a razor! Sometimes using a razor is easier than using scissors or a trimmer to make the edges neat, sharp lines.

Remember with everything beard related, patience will get you better results. This applies to trimming as well. A beard is a delicate thing and needs attention to detail. A hurried frantic approach to trimming can lead to irreversible mistakes with you having to completely shave off your beard!

***Something to remember when trimming!***

On a very important note, never trim after a shower or when your beard is wet. Since wet hair uncurls and is longer in length you might end up cutting off much more than you planned. You will notice the blunder only when your beard dries.

***Another thing to remember after trimming!***

Most people apply aftershave after trimming or shaving their beards. Aftershave is a good thing in the sense that it keeps infections away from any nicks or cuts you may have got – because it has got alcohol as one of its ingredients which is a very effective disinfectant. But aftershave with *too much* alcohol can leave your skin excessively dry leading to itching and flaking. So, it's good to find an aftershave that is gentle on your skin. Also to reverse the drying effect of aftershave on your skin it is important to oil your beard and it's surrounding skin regularly.

**Washing**

Just like oiling, washing is something that needs to be done on a regular or daily basis. Wash your beard with warm water, both in the morning and at night. Use whatever suits you best – it could be normal soap or any of the specialized shampoos available in the market. In any case it should be something which is not too strong on your skin- just enough to be able to wash away any residual oils.

Here's a question. The shampoos made specifically for beards - how are they different from regular shampoo? Well, since the skin around the beard is more sensitive, these shampoos are usually gentler than normal shampoos. Shampoos for beards can contain extracts from aloe-vera, cucumber and even menthol, all of which are meant to have a soothing effect on the skin. One very important thing to remember is to rinse out whatever you are using very well after the wash. Any residual soap or chemicals could spoil the texture of your beard and make your skin dry. You wouldn't want to wake up the next morning with an itchy chin, now would you?

**Waxing**

Some people with intricate beard styles might need to go in for a little bit of beard waxing. If you want to rock a real funky style of beard, especially if parts of it need to defy gravity, you might find beard wax quite handy. Beard wax has beeswax added to it as a base allowing greater control and ease of shaping. It helps in maintaining the form of the beard, nourishes it and overall makes the beard shinier and generally less wild.



## **SOME FACTS ABOUT BEARD CLUB'S BEARD OIL**

**Beard Club's** very own beard oil is made keeping in mind all the things necessary to keep a beard healthy and glowing. A carefully tested combination of natural oils, each having its own merits have been infused in the oil. Listed below are the key components of **Beard Club's Beard Oil** and their respective benefits.

**Jojoba Oil** - This oil is extracted from the seed of the jojoba plant (*Simmondsia Chinensis*), a bush like plant found in desert areas of Arizona and California. It's extremely effective in repairing dry and damaged hair, significantly reducing the ill effects of chemicals on hair. It provides luster and reduces frizziness.

**Argan Oil** - This oil is produced by grinding and pressing oil out of kernels of the Argan tree (*Argania Spinosa L*), a plant found widely in Morocco. This acts as great hair conditioner making hair softer, silkier and shinier.

**Almond Oil** - The almond nut (*Prunus dulcis*) is very rich in anti oxidants and vitamin A, D and E - all of which are extremely beneficial for skin and hair. Almond oil is non-greasy and light. It gets absorbed quickly into the skin and doesn't block the pores. Almond oil contains magnesium, a deficiency of which leads to hair loss. It also helps in reducing split ends in hair.

**Coconut Oil** - Coconut oil is beneficial in numerous ways for hair. It contains fatty-acids which help in keeping dandruff away. Also, the high content of lauric acid promotes hair growth. Coconut oil has a natural cooling/soothing effect on the skin. Studies have shown coconut oil can easily penetrate hair fibers and prevent hair damage.

**Grape seed Oil** - This oil is extracted from the seeds of grapes. It's full of proteins, minerals, linoleic acid and vitamin E, all of which are great for your beard hair. It can be applied on any hair type.

**Vitamin E** - Vitamin E is very well known for promoting hair growth and preventing hair loss. **Beard Club's Beard Oil** is infused with this necessary ingredient to ensure your beard gets its required dosage.

Beard Club is dedicated to promoting the growing, styling upkeep and maintenance of your beard. Adding to the existing beard oil, Beard Club will be soon presenting a whole range of beard grooming products such as beard balm, beard combs and beard shampoo.

## BEARD TYPES AND THEIR PERSONALITIES

Though there are a number of easily recognized standard beard types, in actuality there is no end to the different types of beards possible. A slight variation on one beard style can create a complete different look and a colorful imagination coupled with dexterity with trimming tools can be used to create wonders. Colored beards, braided beards, pointed beards, completely disheveled beards – you name it. The list is endless. Doesn't matter how audacious a beard is, if it you can truly rock it then it's meant for you! Here we look at some of the more common beard types.

### The Full Beard

This refers to beard growth all along the chin, the cheeks, through to the sideburns. The set is usually completed with a moustache to match.



Notable Example: Chuck Norris, George Clooney

## The Goatee

Quite a broad term for a style which has many variations. Generally it involves having a beard around the chin, along the sides of the mouth and sometimes completed by a moustache, but not necessarily.

Some people would argue that a proper goatee should never be accompanied by a moustache. The edges are usually neatly trimmed to give a proper definition to the shape.



Notable Example: Jeff Bridges, Edward Norton

## The Chinstrap

This resembles a strap of a helmet traveling from one side of the face to the other, going underneath the chin. It's usually a thin line of hair, clearly defining the jaw line connected to the sideburns. If however the beard hangs like a curtain down from the jaw line it's called a **Chin Curtain**.



Notable Strappers: Lewis Hamilton. Abe Lincoln.



### **The Van Dyke**

Named after Flemish painter Anthony Van Dyck, this beard style consists of a goatee and a moustache with all the hair on the cheek shaven.



Notable Van Dykians: Colonel Sanders (KFC), Johnny Depp

### **The Balbo**

The Balbo is a mix of a goatee and optionally a moustache – but they are not joined. The beard covers a wide area on the chin that almost resembles an inverted letter “T”. To sculpt out a proper Balbo it’s usually advisable to start with a much large beard and trim it down to the proper dimensions.



Notable Balboans: Tony Stark a.k.a Ironman!

## The Anchor

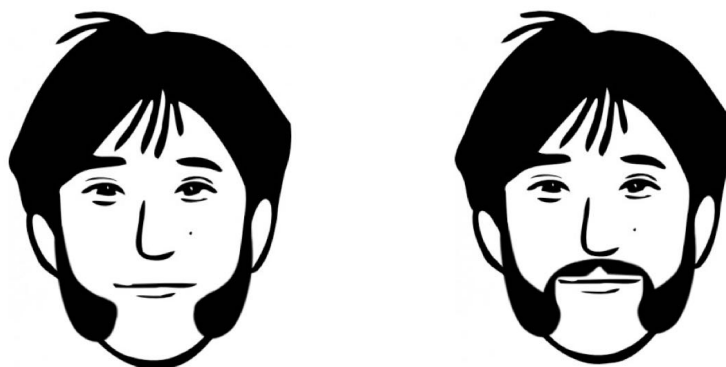
This is a rather stylish beard seen worn by lots of fashionistas. It's a careful mix of the chinstrap and the goatee, carefully trimmed to resemble a ship's anchor. The jaw line is defined rather well with this look. It needs to be maintained very neatly otherwise it can sink into the depths!



Made famous by: Captain Jack Sparrow

## Mutton Chops

Another classic age-old beard style. Here thick sideburns come down along the side of the face and end near the corners of the mouth. The bottom lines of the sideburns define the jaw line and the end of the side burns are vertical lines. If the two sideburns on either side are joined by a moustache, the variation is called **Friendly Mutton Chops**. Whereas, if the sideburn of a Friendly Mutton Chops style is slightly thinner, it becomes a **Franz Joseph**.



Famous Choppers: Wolverine!

### **The Soul Patch/ The Landing Strip**

The soul patch is a small tuft of hair just underneath the lower lip. It stops before the chin starts. A Chin Strip continues downwards from the bottom of the lower lip all the way down to the end of the chin. It resembles a thin rectangle with parallel sides. If the hair hangs even below this it becomes a **Chin Tuft** (a chin tuft need not necessarily start below the bottom lip, it can start well below that)!



Famous Patchers & Strippers (oops!): John Travolta in *Swordfish*, Uncle Sam (chin tuft)

### **Designer Stubble or the Manicured Scruff**

Some may argue this is not really a beard. It's just really short cool looking hair growth to make you look rugged and awesome! Usually about a day or two of not shaving would do the trick. But people who wear this look permanently actually put a lot of 'behind-the-scenes' effort in keeping it looking 'natural' and mowed to just the correct length!



Famous Stubblers: Every Single Man on The Planet (at some time or the other)!



### **Old Dutch**

This is a full beard but without the moustache. Also the beard usually hangs down a little more than the full beard and forms a square-ish bottom line.



Notable Examples: Dutch people of olden times!

**These are only a few of the hundreds of beard styles that you can personalize to match your personality and convey your personal style.**

## BEARD FACTS

### *DID YOU KNOW?*

- Abraham Lincoln grew a beard after being advised by a little girl that he would look better in one.
- There are people who study and research beards. This field is scientifically known as *Pogonology*.
- Peter the Great of Russia imposed a tax on beards! People who chose to have beards had to pay for the privilege and had to carry around a bronze beard tax token. The tax amount was 100 rubles!
- The only member of the rock group ZZ Top who doesn't have the iconic long beard is Frank Beard!
- The German king, Otto the Great always took oaths, swearing by his beard!
- On average, a beard grows around 5-6 inches per year.
- How long would your beard grow if you never shaved it in your life? Around 30 feet!
- At a point in time in history, three hairs cut from the king's beard were fused in the royal wax seal to validate that the document was genuine.
- Soldiers of the Persian army were known to pull the enemy of their horses by pulling at their beards! Talk about 'beard-warfare'!
- The longest beard ever recorded in history was that of Hans Langseth of Norway. It measured 5.33 meters! The beard is kept at the Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC.
- In 1535 Sir Thomas Moore was beheaded. The interesting fact is that he removed his beard just before, claiming "that his beard had never committed any treason"!
- There are actually people who are scared of beards! This abnormal fear of beards is known as Pogonophobia, where symptoms include an increased heartbeat, shortness of breath and sweating upon seeing a beard!

### **BEARD FACTS CONTINUED...**

- Beards grow slower at night and faster during the day!
- An average man has approximately 30,000 beard hairs on his face, the most hairs being on the chin!
- A mans beard grows faster when he anticipates sex.
- How long would it take you to collect a pound of your shaved beard clippings? 16 years!
- Do you know what the medical word for razor burn is? Hold on to your beards for this one – its *Pseudofolliculitisbarbae*!
- We all know about Fidel Castro’s famous beard. Do you know why he grew it? Because he had a shortage in the supply of Gillette blades!
- Here are some interesting percentages: 6% of men have a full beard, 3% have a soul patch and 17% have a goatee!
- Alexander the Great made all his soldiers shave before the battle of Ardela because he though that beards were dangerous in hand-to-hand combat, because they could be grabbed by your opponent.
- Beards have been regarded as emblems of wisdom: Philosophers were always bearded (Socrates, Marcus Aurelius, Hadrian, Shakespeare). It was said, “Lose your beard, and you lose your soul.”
- And the one fact that every beardsman knows - having a beard quadruples your handsomeness.

**So as a proud Beardsman of Beard Club go forth and rock that beard in all its glory.  
And remember, if you love your beard it will love you back.**