



"This job is my passion"

Interview with Bassam Haddad C.D.T

Bassam Haddad is Master Dental Technician and owns a boutique lab in Ile des Soeurs, Quebec. He is an experienced lecturer and recently became a member of the prestigious Oral Design Community. Recently Spectrum caught up with Bassam to find out what makes him a passionate about his profession and what motivates him to keep going.

Q. Bassam, congratulations on becoming a member of the prestigious Oral Design community. You operate your own boutique lab, what is your lab's main focus?

A. Thank you, Ettore. I have a boutique lab which I call Vivaclair Canada. The name means "clearly vital". I provide high quality work and our main objective is the satisfaction of the client and thus the patient.

Q. You do a very personalized work. On what basis do you choose the characterization of crowns or veneers that you do?

A. I always like to meet the patients so I can discover their personalities and try to match the shape and the color of the teeth with their personalities and their expectations. Most people are looking to have what is known as the "Hollywood smile". Personally, I think that it is better to add some characterizations or very subtle imperfections to make the smile look as natural possible.

Q. You're saying that you like to meet patients so you can

see the color and the shape of their teeth. Do the patients or people in general know about your work?

A. Unfortunately, most people still do not know what a dental technician is or does. Most of the time when I meet new people and they ask me about my profession they answer: "ah you are the one that makes the dentures". And when I explain to them that we also do veneers, crowns, bridges, crowns on implants and all kind of prostheses that dentists cement in the mouth, they are surprised. I love to explain to them that I do customized work, not standard work and that our work demands a lot of patience and precision. At that point, people start to say: "ah it means you're an artist." I love that because that is true.

Q. Being a dental technician is a difficult job and it's going increasingly computerized and increasingly rare. What do you have to say to students who want to become dental technicians?

A. I tell them to believe in what they want to be. I personally believe that my job is a noble job. It demands a lot of





knowledge and logic. It's not an ordinary specialization. In my eye it is one of the best jobs out, there if it's not the best. I would also like to remind them that if they believe in themselves they will achieve success in any job that they choose to do.

Self-confidence in their abilities and their commitment to continuously improve will take them to the success. If they can join faith to passion they could do a great job and enjoy what they are doing and this is the most important.

Q. What would you have been if you didn't choose to be dental technician?

A. I would have been an airplane pilot. It was my dream when I was child because I wanted to fly. But believe me that sometimes, in my actual job, when I accomplish a perfect esthetic case and I see happiness on the patient's face, I feel that I'm flying (laugh) But it doesn't last long, and I return very quickly to my bench in the lab (laugh).

Q. What is difficult to manage in your job?

A. It is a difficult business to manage in general because there are too many departments and they all have to work in harmony to deliver the perfect work on time on scope and on budget. But the most difficult thing for me to manage is the fact that I have to satisfy the patient, the dentist and especially the assistant (laugh).

Q. What type of work does your lab carry out?

A. My lab is a multi service lab. We do all kind of restorations:

fixed and removable, implants, esthetic cases. We do not do orthodontics. I believe that every dental technician should be able to do all kinds of restorations, especially since some cases need both removable and fixed prosthesis. I feel that it's much better when the complete job is done in one lab so the technician could follow the whole procedure and achieve the best result.

Q. How many employees work at VIVACLAIR?

A. VIVACLAIR CANADA is a boutique lab. We have a team of six people. We don't deliver commercial quantity; we are devoted to quality.

Q. What kind of equipment/technology is available at the lab?

A. I have a fully equipped dental lab. I am trying as much as possible to follow the new technologies without avoiding the artistic manual side of my profession. I have two different milling systems that receive all kind of digital impressions. I have as well different brands of ceramic furnaces and a very special one signed by the maestro Willi Geller. I have also, a special titanium casting machine because I believe that the titanium will be much demanded in the future.

Q. What have been the major challenges in establishing and running the business?

A. The major challenge for me was to be able to compete with the big labs. I would have never been able to produce the quantity, precision and very acceptable work that is

produced by big labs. So I worked on the 20% of difference that left in the market for boutique labs. That's why I focused on the quality where I can put all my knowledge in mixing colors, defining shapes and adding these small details that demand a lot of patience and an artistic touch. This is how I put my own signature that no machine or technology can do it.

Q. What motivates you to give lectures and courses?

A. After lectures, people always come up to me and say that it's nice to share your real experience with us, at least we've learned some tricks that we can use on a daily basis. I never hide anything and I openly share my experience.

The same applies to my hands-on courses. I have an extensive experience as a dental technician and always give hands on courses with real cases. Participants always enjoy their experience.

Q. I see that you lecture and offer hands on courses on behalf of Dentaaurum? I also know there is a demand in the market place for KOL like you, why Dentaaurum?

A. I found the company to be very serious and with an excellent and quality product line, covering all products from prosthetics (crown & bridge and cast partials), orthodontics, ceramics and implants. The company was founded in 1886 and what makes it unique is the fact that it is the oldest private family owned dental company in the world. I also found their service here in Canada attentive and very personalized. I have been successfully giving courses and lectures for Dentaaurum for about 5 years now. The people working for Dentaaurum Ceramics research department are open to ideas and specific demands. Very serious people as well and they always follow up.

But I want to clarify that when I lecture or do hands on I present and advise on products that I favour and use every day. I am not an employee of Dentaaurum and all my opinions are based on my personal experience.

Q. Have you tried Dentaaurum's latest offering ceraMotion?

A. Yes, I have been working with Triceram titanium and Zirconia ceramic for 5 years and started working with the CeraMotion ceramic line (Me, Ti and Zr) over a year ago. The CeraMotion line was launched in Canada at the Technorama last April.

What I like most about CeraMotion is that it is a complete system and as I work a lot with big combination cases, it makes my life much easier and helps me to achieve the same shade whether it be Zirconia, Titanium, Lithium disilicate or PFM's. The system is user friendly, you can use only dentin, incisal and transpa incisal to achieve the shade guide in a natural way or you can use 10 powders or more to be more artistic.

In addition the system also has a touch-up kit which makes corrections easier and more aesthetic. It comes in different shades of dentins and incisors. There is also a chroma concept kit which allows us to achieve Chromascope and 3D shades and it is also available in pressables over metal and zirconia.

Q. Bassam, what is the difference between your restorations and a "normal" crown?

A. I create restorations which are of natural, vital and aesthetic in appearance. It's not easy to create a restoration which looks natural and vital with any product. A high quality product can help you achieve this more easily. My dentists comments are: "We feel there is life in your restoration."

Q. What would you consider your biggest achievement in your career?

A. The day I would leave my mark by inventing or discovering something that could be taught to the future generations.

Q. Do you still have the same passion as on day one?

A. No, even more! This job is my passion, every day I get deeper and deeper into it. The new technologies and products feed my passion.

Bassam, thank you very much for sharing your thoughts with us! 📷

