

## Celebrity Hairdresser



# EMILIO CATALDO

AHJ Editor, Susan McGinley interviews Emilio Cataldo, finalist for Australian Hairdresser of the Year 2003, about his celebrity experience

### Could you name some of the celebrities you have styled over the years?

Our location in the nation's capital means the celebrities I usually attend to are more likely to be of the political and media variety! I have cut and styled the hair of former Labor leader Kim Beazley and the ACT's Chief Minister Jon Stanhope is a regular client. I have regularly been called in to cut and style for high-profile journalists such as Sandra Sully, Maxine McKew and Kerry O'Brien when they have worked out of Canberra.

I am also regularly requested to attend to the hair of celebrities who travel to Canberra for special events, such as Sigrid Thornton and Marina Prior, and Cataldo's has a number of clients from the ACT's diplomatic community, such as Lady Goodlad, wife of British High Commissioner Sir Alastair Goodlad.

### Do you have any amusing stories to share in relation to your celebrity experience?

The wife of former United States Secretary of State Casper Wienberger booked in with me while they were travelling in Australia. Mrs Wienberger arrived with an entourage of seven plain-clothed guards as security was extremely high following an attempted terrorist attack on the couple only two days earlier. The security guards surrounded the front and back entrances of the salon and tried to look inconspicuous. But it made for a rather nerve-racking hairstyling experience with me gripped by the thought that

someone might think this was a good and easy time attack! The cut and style was, thankfully, incident-free.

Another noteworthy cut occurred while I was styling for Marie Claire Fashion Week Live. The Editor of Marie Claire Jackie Frank must have heard of my particular love for styling curly hair - and she asked me to do hers. I was enjoying the process and was about a third of the way in cutting her beautiful thick curly hair when she announced she had to be on stage to comper the next show in under ten minutes. My favourite saying "people are like tea bags - you don't know their full strength until you put them in hot water" suddenly took on new relevance and I had to race into action. She may have only had seconds to spare, but the haircut was completed and looked great when Jackie bounced onto the stage.

### Would you like to become well-known for the celebrities you have styled?

It is always interesting to meet and talk to new celebrities and, of course, the appearance of their hair takes on added importance when they are going to be on television or in the public eye. The celebrities I have met have usually been very nice, down-to-earth people and there are obvious benefits to attracting a star clientele. Top fashion designers such as Versace and Dolce & Gabbana are linked to stars when they create outfits for big events and they usually recoup a lot of great PR, so there are definite advantages to being associated with celebrities.