



## Cataldo charisma

The Cataldo name is at the forefront of Australian hairdressing and with the opening of their second salon in the national capital, clients are indulged in utmost comfort and luxury, ringing true to the Cataldo's signature style, writes Jennie Lewis.

Over the past two decades brothers and owners Emilio and Angelo Cataldo have reached the highest levels of their craft and carried on the family tradition which began when father Giuseppe Cataldo opened a small barber's shop in Canberra's central business district in 1965. Ever since, the Cataldo name has risen to prominence both nationally and internationally and three generations of Cataldos have carried forward Giuseppe's proud tradition along with Emilio's daughter Shona Cataldo becoming the youngest winner of the 11th O'Leary Professional Colour Trophy in 2005. The two salons now play home to over 30 experienced and up-and-coming stylists.

Emilio is a creative force in the industry with a keen eye for fashion and pre-empting trends. His media coverage has been extensive and he has scooped countless national and international awards. Angelo is similarly recognized and believes their salon's strength is derived from their commitment to education. Young up-and-coming team members are trained in the latest cutting, colouring and styling techniques and exposed to countless opportunities for editorial coverage. Angelo holds a life membership to the International Hairstylists Society (IHS) and an IHS Directorship as a mark of his commitment to the industry.

The new salon is a partnership between Emilio and Angelo Cataldo and Karen Spradua. Karen, the manager of the new salon, has been an integral player in the Cataldo team for over

15 years. The new salon is testament to the extensive individual experience of all partners and proven ability to work closely together. "It is an 'extended family' run salon," says Emilio. "We have two generations of Cataldo's working in our stores and we now consider Karen as an adopted family member. We consider all team members as part of the family and feel this contributes to the friendly and welcoming atmosphere of both salons."

On the new venture, Karen says "We started with a desire for a New York style salon with a touch of Italian influence. All partners shared a view of a unique state-of-the-art salon environment with uncompromising standards of comfort to match the professional and friendly service which has distinguished our salons for over 41 years. With this concept in mind we proceeded to engage the best architects, designers, and builders to turn this concept into a reality." The salon is strategically located in the burgeoning town centre of Woden on the ground floor of a new landmark apartment complex and close to multi-storey car parking. The surrounding suburbs are well-established and home to the diplomatic corporate types. "Cataldo's look is sleek, elegant and luxurious. We believe we have created a professional, beautiful and world-class salon," says Emilio. "We have used nature's raw materials in their most developed form - stone, timber, metal and glass to provide texture and contrast." The full glass frontage allows for lots of light and the waved ceiling provides a feeling of space. An instant impact has been achieved with a large

INSTYLE 100

importance within the salon. The rationale behind the lighting design is to flatter clients, allow perfect colour selection and to create sufficient lighting internally to draw attention to the shopfront. According to Karen, "we called upon the expertise and experience of a lighting engineer who provided architectural lighting solutions including high-colour rendering shadowless light. A combination of wall lights and smaller focused track lights creates the perfect intensity to judge hair colour - without starkness. Each cutting station stands beside a wall mounted light box which enhances each client's feeling of privacy."

The finishes used include: honey onyx marble, Caesar stone, colour backed glass, timber, Italian ceramic tiles and stainless steel. A unique metal finish has been created by an artist to produce a one-off sculptural design on entry, central hub and credenza.

Since opening in August 2006 the salon has been received extremely well among existing and new clients who are excited by the design yet find the salon warm and friendly. Feedback suggests stand out features such as imported hydraulic chairs, fully reclining shiatsu massage basin chairs, the large flat LCD screens with the latest fashion and music DVDs as well as a commercial grade cappuccino machine, are key draw points for many who visit. Emilio, Angelo and Karen have ensured that it is not only clients who benefit from being time efficient, but also staff who have access to a commercial washing machine, dryer and dishwasher as well as European trolleys, secure staff lockers and a fully computerized computer appointment system and stock control. Cataldo's use Kerastase and L'Oréal Professionnel in salon products. Angelo says, "we have used L'Oréal Professionnel for a number of years and found the high quality and extensive range of products makes for a perfect partnership. Quality of product is foremost for us, our chosen suppliers are progressive and are leaders in their field. We follow the easy rule of recommending the service and products that best suits each individual client."

That strong conviction is also key when sourcing new staff, says Emilio. "We have a large number of staff who are long-standing, loyal members of our team. As a predominantly young industry we find many team members enjoy work and travel but we welcome them back upon their return. We offer our team opportunities to grow and support them to excel within the industry by entering competitions, winning awards and participating in fashion events. A positive work environment has meant we have great relationships. We hire for attitude and train for skill, a new recruit must be enthusiastic, friendly and willing to take on new challenges, adapt to change and be interested in helping people. We hold in-house Cataldo training with a range of highly-skilled educators and encourage all team members to attend outside seminars and additional courses in specialty areas."

Emilio believes the biggest motivator is the client. "It is extremely rewarding to see clients walk out of our salons feeling and looking a million dollars and we take enormous pride in seeing our team grow on a personal and professional level every day. On a creative level we get a real buzz from producing photographic work which is recognised internationally through various magazines."

Over the years he has noticed a marked change in the industry however, "hairdressing is ever-changing, which is one of its appeals but we have noticed over the years it is harder to maintain client loyalty. Appointment times have been stretched from 4-6 weeks to 7-9 weeks. However, when clients do come in they tend to make it a real experience and spend a larger sum of money. As work hours have changed, clients prefer to attend the salon outside of the



traditional 9 to 5. A visit to the hairdressing salon today is no longer a routine affair, it is considered a luxury and the budget allocated for this experience is on a par with other forms of indulgence. Our competition is not so much other hairdressing salons but rather any retailer vying for their disposable dollar. People are becoming increasingly aware of the importance of a great hair style to enhance their looks and the media are now focusing on personal image and makeovers. This has elevated the importance of the hair stylist as part of the overall transformation," he said. Emilio, Angelo and Karen have great hopes for the future of hairdressing, "we think it will be taken more seriously, especially if the minimum wage is increased to a level which attracts more young people away from other higher paying jobs. The high underlying costs involved will translate to increased prices for salon services and the consequences of this will be a reduction in the number of borderline salons and employees will be rewarded for their true worth," said Emilio.

As for the future of Cataldo's, "we believe we will grow over the next decade, forging the success of the Cataldo's brand both in Australia and overseas and further propelling us to the top of the hair fashion world. The national capital and its region is experiencing population growth and we see the opportunity for further expansion in the near future." ■

**Cataldo's Salon**  
55 Northbourne Avenue  
Canberra City ACT 2601  
Ph. 6249 6666

**Cataldo's Salon**  
Shop 2, Sky Plaza  
98 Corinna Street  
Phillip ACT 2606  
Ph. 6162 0366

INSTYLE 102



chrome signature 'C' embedded in a panel of imported honey onyx marble, which provides immediate brand identification and adds interest and warmth from the minute you enter the salon.

The major point of difference is the stylish yet practical salon layout, which revolves around the central hub combining a café bar on one side and a colour bar on the other. Swivel bar seats provide for a friendly communal feel between clients and staff, and a laptop with a hairstyle database allows clients to make their way through inspiration for their next hairstyle and colour. The café bar doubles as the waiting area where clients can relax with a coffee, the latest magazines and enjoy fashion and music DVDs on a large LCD screen. A separate area for private consultations is available. The custom designed open colour dispensary bar combines stainless steel, Caesar stone and metal coatings for a sleek look and ease of cleaning. The cutting stations are located along a wall section which is accentuated as the main wall and expressed by perimeter lighting. The ultimate luxe mood is set in the shampoo and treatment area with backlit



images of wellness and relaxation. True chill-out mantra is taken another notch with the fully automatic reclining shiatsu massage chairs with adjustable tilt basin. The client is in control of the intensity and massage type by the use of individual controls.

Stepping up to the mezzanine level adds another dimension to the salon. It accommodates product storage, a staff retreat complete with a swanky management workstation and an office which frees up the main floor area for the core salon functions and adds a New York loft style feel. "The wave inspired ceiling features forward of the mezzanine and is sculptured to transform an otherwise flat and lifeless surface into an expression of movement and function," explains

Emilio. "In addition to adding a unique feature to the salon it also provides space for an air-conditioning plant and equipment with flat cut-out areas for air registers."

Large Italian ceramic tiles line the floor, primarily for ease of cleaning and to create an uncluttered, spacious palette. An additional air-conditioning unit was installed to take into account the additional heat created by hairdressing environments, to give ultimate client and working comfort. Lighting is given paramount

INSTYLE 101