

SU | FEATURE

Salon of the Year

Jonpaul's Tonsorial
Refined Service for Distinguished Gentleman

Text: Amena Brown

Photos Courtesy of: Jonpaul's Tonsorial

Walk into the decadent gentleman's club that is Jonpaul's Tonsorial and you may feel like you need to flash an elite membership card. Dr. Jonpaul Leskie, the inspiration for the salon's namesake, welcomes arriving clients and sends the newly shaved, massaged, manicured, and styled from his tonsorial's relaxed atmosphere to the busy business world to which they must return. The feel of the rooms and stations is simple yet brute, Euro-argyle and Franco-finessed. Jonpaul's refines the skin, hair, and style of Atlanta's distinguished gentlemen.

A technologist and consultant, Dr. Leskie conceptualized the idea for Jonpaul's during a business trip to Europe. During his travels he frequented Truefitt & Hill London, one of the world's oldest barbershops and took note of the excellent level of service and products they provided.

"It had an old world atmosphere and they did a straight razor shave, haircut, and manicure. I just thought it was more relaxing. It was just for men and it seemed like they cared more than they did here in the states, Dr. Leskie admitted.

Dr. Leskie shared his idea with his wife Cathy, a Master Barber with over 15 years in the salon industry. Their first plan of action was to find out what men wanted, so Dr. Leskie drafted an internet survey and polled a group of businessmen and executives about the atmosphere, services, price range, and complimentary beverages they would want to see in an all-male salon.

The men surveyed wanted a gentleman's club atmosphere, so the Leskies used the results to draft a business plan. Dr. Leskie used his business acumen to ensure excellent service and Mrs. Leskie used her expertise in cutting hair and managing salons to craft the look, feel, and functionality of the tonsorial. Opening for business in Duluth, GA in 2003, their customer research resulted in an old world-style salon furnished with antique pieces from London and Italy, Takara Belmont Classic barber chairs, and an authentic Koken shoe shine chair made in 1918.

"You can build it and it looks beautiful, but that's not gonna make people keep coming in. When we designed this place, and we were doing the stations, Cathy knew what a station should be. You don't see any cords



and you don't see hair around. In her salon experience, electricity had always been a problem and you could always see where the towels were. Here, you don't see anything when we're working on you. There are two holes in each station for trash and towels. We also have a central vacuum at each station, so when they sweep the hair they can push it toward the vent and keep the area neat and clean," Dr. Leskie said.

The Leskies created a specific protocol for the staff to follow so that the service each

client received would be the same no matter which staff member took care of them. The typical Jonpaul's service consists of a consultation, shampoo, haircut, hot steam towels, straight razor shave, facial massage, hair style, and a vibrating massage for the neck and shoulders. Each client is guaranteed an unhurried, relaxing salon experience.

"We want to pay attention, pamper, and deliver world class service to our clients. If we see their glasses are dirty, we clean their glasses. We offer them complimentary

beverages. If we see hair on their shirt we get a roller and roll them off. A guy could go anywhere. There's a salon on every corner. That's the differentiator. That's why people come here. We focus on paying attention to all the little extras," Dr. Leskie revealed.

Along with the protocol that each staff member follows, Jonpaul's has a sophisticated client management system that keeps track of clients' birthdays, anniversaries, product purchases, and previous appointments. The Jonpaul's staff uses this system

to meet their client's needs whether it means a larger size shampoo or obtaining a special drink request. Service at Jonpaul's is about anticipating and meeting the client's needs by listening.

"Our philosophy is we want people to know we care about them. We're like family and we treat them like family. There's nothing we can't do for that customer. We guarantee our products and our services. If you're not happy with it, you don't have to pay. If you don't like our product, bring it back. We'll either give you a refund or you can pick another product. Whatever it takes to keep you, I want to keep you here," Dr. Leskie said.

Specific about selecting quality products for salon use and client purchase Jonpaul's not only has its own private label of razors, leather goods, and brushes made in London, but also provides customers with Truefitt & Hill and Art of Shaving products. For styling and shampoo, they use American Crew and Nioxin shampoo. One hallmark of Jonpaul's service is their signature straight razor shave, something Dr. Leskie considers a lost art.

"It takes an hour for a straight razor shave, because it's a 25 step process. It's an experience that's very relaxing," Dr. Leskie said. "We use hot lather, hot towels, and shave with and against the grain. Our clients end up with a closer shave than what they could do at home."

One part of focusing on world class service is hiring good people to deliver service with a focus on customer satisfaction. Once chosen, staff members must agree to follow the Jonpaul's protocol and watch Leskie's process for two to three weeks before servicing clients. All new staff members are given a three-month probationary period.

"We advertise and promote new staff, but it's up to them to keep the customer in the chair. We look for a combination of technical and customer service skills," Dr. Leskie said.

With a business model that was built for expansion, the future for Jonpaul's is simple: growing the business. Jonpaul's has been registered as a trademark and the Leskies hope to expand their gentleman's service brand through the support of an investment group. They are also looking at expanding their services to anti-aging for men including laser treatments, botox, and laser hair restoration. As Jonpaul's grows, the Leskies stick to two things to continue to succeed.

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"We focus on customer satisfaction and employee satisfaction, Dr. Leskie explains. "If you have those two things you never have to worry about profitability, revenue, or the bottom line.

While many salons with services similar to Jonpaul's service women and very few men, Dr. Leskie clarifies why he and his wife chose men as their only clientele.

"My wife hates working on women! Dr. Leskie laughs, "Men are simple and easier to work with. What we find is, if you treat the man right and if he's in your chair twice, you've got him for life.

Dr. Leskie elicits the feedback of a client who just recently arrived and is comfortably sipping scotch on a plush leather chair in the waiting area. The client agrees, tipping his cup in Dr. Leskie's direction as Cathy Leskie begins his haircut and shave. Dr. Leskie returns to his post, welcoming the next client and an undoubtedly a successful future for the distinguished man's haven.

To schedule an appointment, please visit www.jonpauls.com, visit the salon at 9700 Medlock Bridge Rd, Duluth, GA 30097 or call (770) 814-0033.

