

GEMI HAIR PRODUCTS & PHOENICIA STYLES

BUILDING A FAMILY LEGACY



Burt's Cash Store If Burt could see his store now!

In 1905, Burt's Cash Store, on a historical downtown corner, served the city as a general store. Today, recently reinvented by combining the site of Burt's old store with another of the city's oldest buildings, the corner still serves the public as a retail space. Standing proudly at Cook & Johnson, the character building now houses Phoencia Styles, a new full service salon, and Gemi Products, a 37 year-old business that has spanned two generations of family operated enterprise.



Georges and Michel Murr arrived in Canada from Lebanon in 1965 and began working with fellow countryman George Fayad. George operated three of the most reputable hair salons in Victoria, including Maison Georges at the Executive House, in the current site of Bartholomew's Bar and Grill. Trained in Switzerland, Germany and France, the Murr brothers brought a welcomed European style and flair to the Victoria beauty business. Three years later, they launched their own venture, Coiffure Gemi, named for the first two letters of each of their names. They opened their doors on January 4, 1968 (when patrons paid \$2.00 for a shampoo and set), and quickly built up a steady clientele, attracting customers from as far away as Tacoma, Washington.



In 1977, Georges quit hairdressing after developing a reaction to the chemicals used in permanent wave solutions and colours. He opened another successful business, Ali Baba's Pizza, (385-6666) where his son Marc Murr joined him as a partner. Ali Baba's Pizza has now expanded operations into Colwood, Saanich, and Tsawassen at the BC Ferries terminal. They also opened La Fiesta Café, (383-6622) located on Douglas Street in the old Sussex hotel building.

In 1992, at Gemi Hair Designs, Michel decided to expand his salon business to include the sale of professional hair care products. Michel's first hair product lines included Paul Mitchell, Redken, Lanza, Joico and Aveda. Informed by a sales rep of the suggested retail price of the products, he said, "That's too much to charge my customers. I came to Canada with \$113.00 in my pocket. I know what a dollar means. People work hard for their money." That began the story of a little old building where professional hair care products sold at an affordable price.

Later told by a supplier that he would need to raise prices to carry a particular line, he became infuriated. Michel would not budge on his position, did not raise the prices, and took a financial hit. He lost the line but still carried Paul Mitchell, Redken, Lanza and Joico.



Now the largest retailer of professional hair care products in town, Gemi carries over 85 lines at Victoria's lowest prices. In their onsite testing station, Gemi's staff diagnoses problems with fine, limp, frizzy, or unruly hair, and prescribes the right products for any hair type. Clients have the advantage of testing the products before purchasing, allowing them to become familiar with the performance, touch and scent of a product, determining exactly which styling tool best suits their needs.

Gemi now has a new neighbor, Phoenicia Styles. The name comes from the ancient tribe and civilization that once occupied the coastal cities of the Mediterranean, Africa and the Middle East. Phoenicia literally means 'the dealer in purple', the first color derived from nature and used to dye hair. Phoenicia Styles has been fashioned after the old tribal concept of inviting clients to be part of the mixology of the color process. This reinvented concept brought the color technician out to work in an open area at our color bar.



Old concepts remain ingrained in the staff's dedication to good service, and clients enjoy complimentary cappuccinos, lattes, an espresso bar, and warm friendly service. The customer is always the focus. More services have been added to the aesthetics room, a tranquil setting for nail sculpting, facials, manicures, pedicures, massage and waxing, making Phoenicia Aesthetics the perfect one stop destination to cover all your beauty needs.

Tell them Burt sent you!

We extend a sincere thank you to everyone who supported our renovation and growth, and special thanks to: Our hair stylists and color techs, Magda, Candice, Chelsea, Alex, Anna and Kevin; all our junior stylists from the hair schools; Paula, Alan and Mama and Teresa from aesthetics. Pro Line Roofing, Deccico Bros. Stucco, Ali Baba's Pizza, La Fiesta Café, Dave the electrician, Monarch, Alliance, Absolute Beauty, Icon Systems, Insight Magazine (Bill Code), Nova Beauty (Vero 4 Life), Klaudia, our beloved Product Manager (smile), Grant Construction (Kenny), and all of Victoria.

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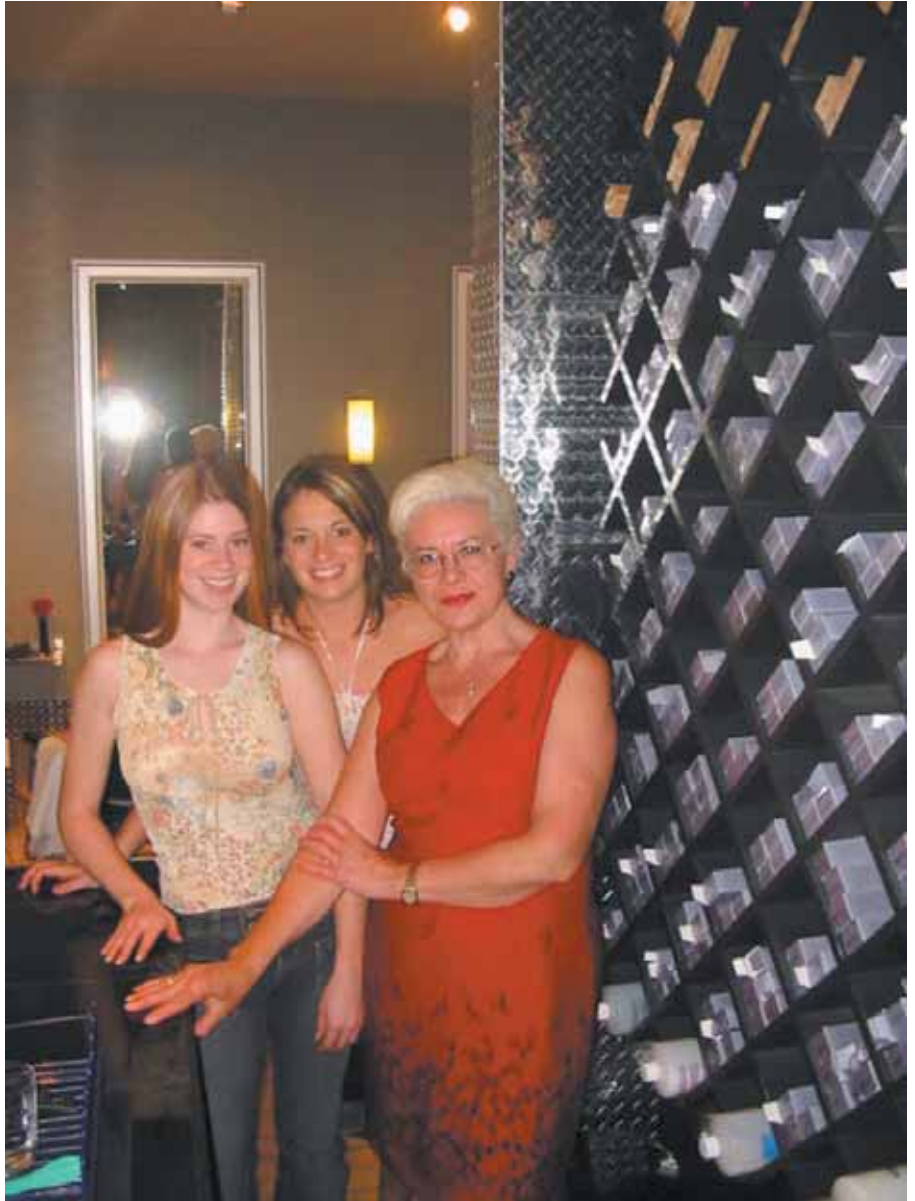
GEMI HAIR PRODUCTS & PHOENICIA STYLES

On Saturday, June 11th
Gemi Hair Design featured
Victoria's first ever
PUBLIC HAIR SHOW!

With over 85 product lines, being represented by the industries top sale represenatives, (REDKEN, LANZA, JOICO, SHWARTZKOPF, MATRIX, GOLDWELL, OPI, AG, PAUL MITCHELL, TOSCA and so much more there was no shortage of styling and product techniques.

What was provided to the public? 'FREE' samples, waxing, manicures, straightening, updo's, curling, makeup application and knowledge The show was definately a win-win, for those who attended! The event which was fully catered with an open bar went from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm.

From nearly a year in the planning, another in the renovations, and one of the industries most successful grand re openings. When owner Fadi Murr was asked when the next hair and beauty show would be? Looking exhausted he just laughed and said "look for the white Banner that hangs outside the building!"





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