

FARZAD'S BARBERSHOP

THE BARBERSHOP

Experience



DESCRIBING HIMSELF AS 'THE HAPPY BARBER', FARZAD OPENED HIS OWN SHOP IN VANCOUVER THIRTEEN YEARS AGO. ORIGINALLY FROM IRAN, HIS SHOP HAS A TRADITIONAL STYLE TO IT AND SPECIALIZES IN SHAVING AND BEARD CARE SERVICES



Farzad's Barbershop opened for business on February 6, 2006 when, after 11 years of working for someone else, Farzad decided it was time to be his own boss again. "I had my own shop in Iran 28 years ago, so I knew how it felt to work for myself. I was working in a shop where it felt like I was running the place," he explains. "I wasn't manager or anything like that, but many clients thought I was the owner."

Keen to create a space that was truly his, he opened Farzad's Barbershop – a small, family-owned business with just two barber chairs. The shop is located in the Yaletown neighborhood and when it first opened, there were very few other barbershops in the area.

"The older generation of barbers, like my former bosses, were at retirement age, there was not even a barber school to train barbers. It wasn't 'cool' in those days to be a barber or call yourself one. I was the last generation of the old-timers if you will, and I didn't know any other trade. Today there are about 15 barbershops around me and we are the busiest."

One of the things the shop prides itself on is its shaving and beard care service, which Farzad and his fellow barber Noriko adapt depending on the client's needs.

Despite the fact that beard care feels like a new trend, Farzad says for him it has always been

integral to his barber education. "32 years ago when I went into the barbering trade, every barber shaved. I learned from making the lather for the boss when he had to shave, and when he cut someone's hair I had to shampoo the hair. We learned the trade from the masters who wouldn't admire your work if it was good but you would get a bad look if it wasn't good!"

He does admit, however, that there has certainly been a rise in the popularity of shaving and beard care services. The most important thing though, is that the client has a positive and relaxing experience. "A gentleman gets a barbershop shave because he wants to treat himself and it has to feel special and different from just shaving himself at home. Some of our clients even fall asleep in the chair!"

Farzad's services include the Deluxe Hot Shave, which begins with the application of several hot towels and pre-shave oil to prepare the skin, followed by rich moisturizing shaving lather. The face is then shaved with a straight edge blade, followed by more hot towels. More lather is applied for a second shave, more hot towels and finally two ice-cold towels to close the pores. The finishing touch is soothing after-shave balm massaged into the face. For something even more special, clients can opt for the Royal Treatment, which includes a haircut, the deluxe shave and a relaxing face, scalp and shoulder massage.

Not every barber offers shaving services, but Farzad reckons they should: "Barbering is a trade that involves two separate things: cutting hair and shaving and they complete each other. It's like going to a carpenter, giving him a piece of wood and asking him to cut and plane it for you and for him to say 'sorry, I only cut wood!'"

Although the shop remains busy, Farzad isn't keen to expand. "We have a saying in Farsi that says 'the bigger the roof, the more snow you have to shovel'. Keeping it small and simple has worked extremely well for all these years and our clients love that welcoming, family feeling they have when they come to our shop." So it's safe to say you won't see Farzad's Barbershop locations popping up across Vancouver. As the Farsi saying goes, if you don't have a headache, you don't take the pill!

