



Capri Cosmetology Learning Center and the Enduring Power of Beauty, Skill, and Human Connection

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Walking Into Capri – Nanuet

The first thing you notice when you walk into Capri Cosmetology Learning Center in Nanuet is movement.

Water runs steadily at the shampoo sinks. Hair is rinsed, sectioned, and carefully watched. Students move between chairs and stations, combs and brushes in hand, checking mirrors and timing. Instructors stay close – observing, offering quiet guidance, stepping in when needed – correcting a hand position here, a technique there, without taking over.

It feels busy, but focused. Less like a classroom, more like a working salon that also happens to be a place of learning.

At the front desk, Michelle, Capri’s front-end manager, greets clients, answers phones, checks schedules, and helps ease nerves before anyone sits in a chair.

“Most people walk in a little nervous,” Michelle said. “My job is to make them feel comfortable right away. Once they relax, everything else falls into place.”

Behind her, the day unfolds – clients waiting, students preparing, instructors watching closely. Confidence is built in real time, one appointment at a time.

Capri as a Third Place

Capri is more than a school or a salon. For many clients and students,

it becomes something in between – a familiar place that isn’t home and isn’t work but still feels personal. “People come in for a service,” Michelle said, “but they stay because they feel welcome.”

Longtime client Carol Corngold, a nurse and therapist, said that sense of comfort is what keeps her coming back.

“It’s relaxing,” she said. “You talk. You decompress. There’s a bond. It’s not just hair – it’s human.”

From Ancient Ritual to Modern Beauty

Long before ring lights and social media tutorials, hair and makeup were already part of human history.

In ancient Egypt, cosmetics were used for ritual, health, and protection. Kohl lined the eyes not just for beauty, but to guard against glare and infection. Wigs signaled status.

Oils, pigments, and early skincare blended art and science, passed down through generations.

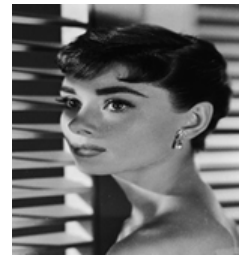
Through the centuries, beauty followed culture. In ancient Greece and Rome, appearance reflected balance and refinement. In the Middle Ages, pale skin signaled class. By the Renaissance, hair, fragrance, and cosmetics became symbols of power and wealth.

Each era shaped not just appearance, but identity. Hollywood and the Evolution of Style

By the early 20th century, Hollywood transformed beauty into aspiration. Silent film stars helped define iconic looks. Old Hollywood glamour – sculpted waves, red lips, flawless skin – turned beauty professionals into the unseen architects of celebrity. Marilyn Monroe popularized soft waves and polished volume, while Audrey Hepburn embodied clean lines and understated elegance.



Marilyn Monroe



Audrey Hepburn

These contrasting styles reinforced a truth that still holds today: beauty was never meant to look the same on everyone.

“In the 1990s, when Jennifer Aniston’s haircut on Friends became popular, everyone wanted it,” said Heidi, Capri’s director. “Trends come and go, but when something hits culturally, it spreads fast.”



Jennifer Aniston

“If someone asks for a 1960s or 1970s look,” said Joe, one of Capri’s instructors, “you need to know exactly what that means.”

Beauty as Both Art and Science
While cosmetology is often viewed as creative, those in the field know it is equally technical.

Understanding chemistry, skin conditions, hair texture, sanitation, and product interaction is essential — especially as clients become more informed and diverse.

“People come in with inspiration photos,” Joe said. “But you still have to consider skin tone, hair texture, and what’s realistic. Makeup and skincare are emotional. You have to ask the right questions.”

“Trends are cyclical,” Heidi added. “We focus on fundamentals so when something comes back — and it always does — students are ready.”

Skill, Soft Skills, and the Human Side

A successful cosmetology career requires balance.

Technical skills — cutting, coloring, styling, nails, and skincare — matter. But so do communication, time management, confidence, and empathy.

“A lot of students know how to do makeup on themselves,” Joe said. “The real skill is learning how to do it on other people.”

“You’re not just applying product,” he added. “You’re dealing with emotion.”

“You have to be calm, cool, and confident,” said Melissa, an esthetics coach. “Even if you’re nervous inside, the client shouldn’t feel it.”

Learning Under Pressure — and Loving It

On the clinic floor, Danielle, a senior cosmetology student, worked carefully on an advanced color project — a bold red with a soft pink halo.

“Bleach starts working the moment you put it on,” she said. “You have to work fast, check constantly, and make sure you don’t over-process. It’s like racing the clock.”

“Once you understand undertones,” she added, “you stop guessing and start knowing why hair turns brassy or muddy.”

Nearby, Leilani focused on an intricate updo.

“I love curls,” she said. “If the base isn’t right, nothing holds.”

“Every curl pattern behaves differently. You can’t force it. You have to work with what the hair wants to do.”

“You’re scared at first,” she admitted. “But the coaches are always there. You’re never on your own.”

Training in the Spa — Real World Experience

In the spa area, Tanya, a senior esthetics student, described the hands-on training.

“We bring our clients onto the bed and practice just like you would in a professional spa,” she said. “It prepares you for the real world.”

For Ethan, another senior esthetics student, the path was personal.

“I struggled with acne and skin issues,” he said. “I started researching ingredients and products, and that led me here. I know I’m on the right path.”

The Revolution That Made Beauty a Profession

The modern beauty industry was shaped by pioneers who transformed hair and makeup into recognized professions. Elizabeth Arden emphasized skincare and education.

Madam C. J. Walker built a groundbreaking empire while creating opportunities for Black women. Vidal Sassoon brought precision and discipline to haircutting, and Paul Mitchell connected professional products with salon culture.

In cosmetics, Estée Lauder reshaped marketing through personal connection and sampling, while Pat McGrath and Fenty Beauty pushed creativity and inclusivity forward.

From Revolution to Education: Capri's History and Mission

Capri Cosmetology Learning Centers was founded in 1963 by Frank Molinari, a licensed cosmetologist who believed education should be practical, disciplined, and career-focused. Leadership later transitioned to Anthony Fiore, who joined Capri in 1990 and purchased the school in 2001. Today, Capri operates campuses in Nanuet and Newburgh, serving students from Rockland County and beyond.

Its mission remains clear: to improve students' quality of life through education and prepare them for long-term careers in cosmetology, esthetics, and nail specialties.

"At first, students are hesitant," Heidi said. "Then you see the shift. The confidence builds.

That's when you know it's clicking."

Beauty, Influence, and Modern Paths

Many well-known figures began with hands-on experience in

beauty and personal image, using it as a foundation for broader careers. Kim Kardashian, Mariah Carey, Kylie Jenner, Zendaya, Rihanna, and Victoria Beckham all explored aspects of beauty early in their careers. Their paths reflect a common truth: learning the craft builds confidence, discipline, and an understanding of how personal image connects to identity and opportunity.

A Growing Industry With a Future

The beauty industry now generates well over \$100 billion annually and continues to grow.

Once seen as a side path, cosmetology is now recognized as a serious trade built on skill, adaptability, and entrepreneurship.

"Everything you do in this business is selling," Joe said.

"You're selling yourself and your skills – but only if the client trusts you."

Technology and social media shape trends, but instructors say nothing replaces human touch.

"AI can help with ideas," Joe said.

"But people still want a real person – someone who listens." Voices From Graduates – Online and Off

Much of Capri's reputation spreads through word of mouth, increasingly online.

"Capri didn't just teach me how to do hair," one graduate wrote.

"It taught me how to trust myself.

"By the time I graduated, working with real clients didn't feel intimidating," another shared. "It felt familiar." Clients echo the same message.

"You never feel rushed here," one longtime client wrote.

"People listen. That makes all the difference."

Final Reflection

For Carol Corngold, that connection is what keeps her coming back.

"It's relaxing," she said. "You talk. You decompress. There's a bond. It's not just hair – it's human."

She said that bond sets Capri apart.

"You're not just another appointment here. The students remember you. You feel like part of their learning." Heidi sees that as the clearest sign of success.

"When clients come back asking for the same student," she said, "that's when you know the bond is real. They're not just trusting the service – they're trusting the person."