

Coral PLEAS

Owner,

CUTTING *loose* SALON



Cutting Loose Salon is this entrepreneur's creation. Coral made the bold decision to open her own salon after years as a partner in another salon and now the salon is celebrating its 10th anniversary. She opened the University Parkway location in 2008. From four stylists that included herself, her son, and two stylists to the current 43 master stylists and 18 "protégés", Coral has built the business from the ground up. Her son Travis Scheuer, a stylist himself, opened the Lakewood Ranch salon with 14 stations. The University Parkway location sees 500 clients and 80 new clients a week and Lakewood Ranch sees 240 clients and adds 40 new clients a week. An industry benchmark for new client retention is 30 percent; Cutting Loose's retention rate is 70 percent.

Upon stepping into Cutting Loose Salon your immediate thought is this is not my mother's beauty shop. The expansive space includes a separate room with rows of stations dedicated only to hair cutting. Your mother's shop certainly didn't have a color café where hair color is applied as clients sip wine at round tables without mirrors (after all, who wants to see yourself during this service).

Cutting Loose Salon is the creation of entrepreneur Coral Pleas who, at age 45, made the risky decision to open her own salon after years as a partner in another salon. The salon, which specializes in French haircutting and French balayage techniques, is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year.

After deciding to go it alone, Coral opened the University Parkway location in 2008 in a small space. Timing wasn't the best as the country was in a recession, but Coral's commitment to excellence and word-of-mouth referrals were the difference between staying in or going out of business.

From four stylists that included herself, her son, and two stylists to the current 43 master stylists and 18 "protégés", Coral has built the business from the ground up. Three years ago her son Travis Scheuer, a stylist himself, opened the Lakewood Ranch salon with 14 stations. The current 6,500 square foot University Parkway location sees 500 clients and 80 new clients a week and the Lakewood Ranch location sees 240 clients and adds 40 new clients a week. An industry benchmark for new client retention is 30 percent; Cutting Loose retention rate is 70 percent.

Coral says, "I wanted to train stylists differently than in the past. My goal has always been to raise the level of excellence in the beauty industry. I grow successful stylists through a unique model where cosmetologists who have not attained master status have the opportunity to hone their skills through classes, mentoring, and performing services on clients. Stylists attend eight-hour training sessions on Mondays for eight weeks on hair cutting and the same time on hair color. I consider this an investment, not an expense. My reward is watching these young stylists grow into master stylists. I'm a coach and mentor and I'm 'behind the chair' once a month to demonstrate how to take care of guests. I care about my staff and took 11 people to Japan in 2017 and a 27-year-old to London. Some stylists earn up to six figures a year."

Daniel Kaner, Co-founder and President of Oribe Hair Care, says, "Coral is the most modern of business leaders. She has an intuitive sensitivity and respect for people which makes her a highly effective business person. You can feel the sheer joy she experiences developing her business along with the people that make up her company. I love to be in her presence; I learn what it is to be your best self in a business context."

The business is a family affair with Coral, Founder and CEO; daughter Taelor Pleas, Director of Team Development; her wife Niki Pleas, Master Stylist II; son Travis Scheuer, Managing Partner, Lakewood Ranch salon; and Travis' wife Lindsay Scheuer, Marketing Coordinator.

The salon has been recognized as the Best Salon in Sarasota; Top 200 Salon in America, Salon Today Magazine; Best of the Best, Sarasota Magazine; Best of SRQ Local, SRQ Magazine; Young Business of the Year" by The Sarasota Chamber

of Commerce; and Best Hair Salon, Living on the Suncoast. Coral served on the Board of the Directors of Intercoiffure Mondial America/Canada as Secretary and is certified as a National Educator and Platform Artist for Paul Mitchell in the United States and the United Kingdom performing in the company of the biggest names in the beauty industry around the world. Recognized in national styling magazines, the salon is a regular stylist for Style Magazine/Sarasota Herald Tribune and the hair and makeup stylist for ABC7 news anchors.


Not one to let the grass grow under her feet, Coral has developed The Pleas Formula. She says, "The Pleas Formula is a business advisory and consulting company to assist entrepreneurs, early stage startups, and existing companies wanting to take their business to the next level in the beauty industry and dramatically increase the success and profitability of their businesses. I have captured the best practices of my business to enable beauty owners and businesses to implement all the same processes and systems in all phases of the beauty industry." Currently beauty owners spend three days at Cutting Loose followed by a coaching phone call every two weeks for three to six months. Through a lease agreement two other Cutting Loose salons are in operation.



Coral speaks passionately about the need for gas for generators for salons in Puerto Rico. She held "Donation Tuesdays" where five percent of sales on every Tuesday in January was earmarked for a sponsored salon in Puerto Rico. In February she asked for donations from her guests in Show Love for Puerto Rico. She also supports local restaurants and stores. She sponsors the Lisa Kreider Foundation at the Community Foundation of Sarasota County named after a woman killed by a drunk driver. Last year the foundation awarded \$7,000 in scholarships.

Coral serves as secretary of Safe Place and Rape Crisis Center (SPARCC) Board of Directors. Jessica Hays, SPARCC President & CEO, says, "Coral is an incredible example of empowerment in both her personal and professional life. She is committed to helping others achieve their potential, whether it is one of the stylists on her team, or a survivor of domestic violence she is helping through her work with SPARCC. She has been a longtime supporter of our organization, giving of her time, talent and resources to help survivors to heal and thrive. With everything from raising awareness and donating products and services to SPARCC survivors, to chairing events and serving on the Board, Coral embodies compassion and commitment to the community."

Born in France to a military father and stay-at-home mother, Coral was raised in Colorado. Her husband Michael is a bartender at the Ritz-Carlton and her sister works at Cutting Loose. She "loves being a mother and grandmother" to Travis's children Owen, who is five, and Rylee, who is three.

Walking her two Labs, entertaining, cooking, and spending time with friends and family are her favorite non-work activities. Someday she would like to spend one month a year immersed in another country's community life starting with Italy.

Coral is a master h neur, businesswoman, philanthropist, air stylist, entrepreneur, coach, wife, mother, and grandmother. Who says women can't have it all? 

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