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## Let's Do Lunch

I met **Yves Durif** for lunch at his favorite café, Le Pain Quotidien, where we talked about his new salon at The Carlyle, a Manhattan landmark that's been a home away from home for presidents and princesses.



**Q: Aside from the fact that it's French like you, why do you love this restaurant so much?**

**A:** You know exactly what you're getting here. The cobb salad is amazing, a perfect meal. I like the decor as well. I come from a town in the Alps that is very rustic. It reminds me of that. In fact, I would love to take their concept of a communal table where everyone eats together and use it in a hair salon.

**Q: Only instead of having lunch, they'd be having their hair cut?**

**A:** Right. I've thought a lot about opening a salon like this where the atmosphere is homey and the haircuts are affordable, say, around \$40.

**Q: You closed your salon on the Upper East Side last fall and moved to The Carlyle. How's that working out?**

**A:** When I was approached about opening a salon there, my first reaction was negative. I just didn't get the whole hotel thing, but The Carlyle is different. Do you know that every American president since Truman has stayed there? Princess Diana was also a guest. It's very exclusive.

**Q: So how did they hear about you?**

**A:** I have a client who met a VIP from The Carlyle when she was traveling in France. He admired her haircut, and she told him that she went to me. He told her that they had a salon in the hotel and contacted me to see if I was interested in coming there.

**Q: Do many of the guests who stay at The Carlyle visit the salon?**

**A:** Actually, it's been very good for business. Of course, very famous and powerful people tend to stay there, and I've learned that no matter how much money you have or how successful you are, we're all looking for the same thing: happiness.

**Q: How did you get into hairdressing?**

**A:** I am so ADD that I was terrible in school, so I enrolled in beauty school at 14. It was either that or become a plumber or electrician. I was very artistic though. I drew all the time.

**Q: You worked with Bruno Pittini in 1984, didn't you?**

**A:** Bruno was one of the best hairdressers I've ever known. I learned a lot about cutting hair from him. In the '80s he had a salon at 65<sup>th</sup> Street and Madison Avenue where Giorgio Armani is now. Everyone worked there—Frédéric Fekkai, Serge Normant, Odile Gilbert, Alain Pinon, Brad Johns. It was an incredible experience.

**Q: So tell me about your recent foray into television. You taught a New York Times reporter how to cut hair, right?**

**A:** His name is Harry Hurt III. He'd been filming these segments for CBS about starting a new career if you've been laid off. It's on YouTube if you want to see it. I had to teach him how to cut hair. He couldn't even figure out how to hold the scissors and the comb at the same time. It was inconceivable to him. The blow-dry was even worse. I felt that it gave the public a better appreciation of what we do for a living. He told me that he'd tried out a few new careers and had even flown a plane upside down, but that cutting hair was the hardest. —MARIANNE DOUGHERTY



Guests dine at communal tables at Le Pain Quotidien, which has 15 locations in Manhattan.