

QUEEN ANNE

AN EXCLUSIVE MAGAZINE FOR THE RESIDENTS OF QUEEN ANNE



JOSPEH ABOLAFIA
LIVING THE QUEEN ANNE DREAM



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Cover photo by Juliann Itter, Jumay Designs



JOSPEH ABOLAFIA

QUEEN ANNE'S FAVORITE HAIRSTYLIST AND RESIDENT

By Nicole Meyers

Photography by
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Joseph Abolafia has found his home in Queen Anne for as long as he can remember. Even before he discovered his passion for hairdressing, his first passion was the sense of community in Queen Anne. Although he did not grow up in Queen Anne, he still recalls his visits up to Queen Anne Hill to see his aunt and uncle back in the 70s. In fact, the first two things Joseph decided to do following his high school graduation was attend hair school, and begin his journey as a renter in Queen Anne.

In hair school, he met his first business partner and friend, Rory McGowan. The two of them began their careers together at Yuki and Wendy's Salon in Madison Park, before going into business together at their first salon downtown. From there, Joseph and Rory's salon was founded with the help of Joseph's parents co-signing. Their rise to Seattle fame was illustrious, with Joseph and Rory becoming the go to stylists for Seattle's elite. He and Rory styled the hair of Mary Gates, MacKenzie Scott, Sheri Shultz and members of the Nordstrom family. During their years co-owning a salon in the 80s, the two of them attended a variety of charitable galas and events. Their glamorous lifestyle benefited their business and the community they lived in, creating a thriving client base. Unfor-



tunately, by 1985, the crime rate in downtown Seattle had risen so much that Joseph decided to take his business into the Queen Anne neighborhood. He opened Salon Joseph on W McGraw Street, while Rory opened Coupe Rokei. Many of their loyal customers followed them to their respective locations, and they began to build success apart from each other. Throughout the years, they maintained their connection with each other through continued communication and support.

Joseph was originally drawn up to the Queen Anne neighborhood as a location to continue building his business due to the convenience of being able to commute on foot. However, he soon embraced the community by donating to multiple of local schools and the Queen Food Bank. Contributing to both of these crucial charitable organizations in our community allowed him to entrench himself in Queen Anne even more. Soon after his move, many of his loyal clients from his downtown salon followed him over to the Queen Anne hill, building his community further. At the beginning of his relocation, Joseph ran the salon by himself, eventually hiring an assistant and organically growing his business from there.

Back then, West McGraw was not the hub of Queen Anne activity that it is now. From across the street in his salon chair, Joseph watched the community grow into a busy few blocks from 5th Avenue to 7th Avenue. Beginning with his own salon, treks across the block to Ken's Market and the local bakery, Joseph allowed himself to appreciate the opportunities that McGraw was offering. He saw our small street

corner become a hub for multiple other hair salons, Malena's Taco Shop, the art gallery, Macrina Bakery, and many more local chains. Over the years, he provided hair cutting services to the Seattle Children's Home, giving back to his local community through his passion. Furthermore, he allowed himself to explore Queen Anne Avenue, becoming one of the staunchest supporters of our local businesses. You can find him frequenting two of his favorite restaurants: Grappa and Betty on Queen Anne Avenue, on a regular basis. Joseph also appreciates the variety of shopping offered on Queen Anne Avenue, including the newest addition, Vixen Collection.

Although he appreciates the restaurants and shopping, his favorite part of enjoying Queen Anne Avenue is watching fellow local business owners thrive. He states that he loves to see "everyone supporting each other," in the Queen Anne neighborhood, which creates a sense of community for both business owners and residents alike. Some of his clients are also owners of other businesses in Queen Anne, exemplifying how owners of our local businesses lift each other up.

Currently, Joseph has reunited with his business partner Rory, combining Coupe Rokei with Salon Joseph in the current location on McGraw Street. As of September 2022, Rory made the decision to close her salon Downtown and join Joseph up on Queen Anne Hill. This is a beautiful closing act to both of their illustrious careers in hair design, from their start in hair school to closing out at Salon Joseph. The two of them combined the modernity of Coupe Rokei with the traditionality of Salon Joseph to create a natural fusion



that is similar to our own neighborhood. Queen Anne takes pride in its curated combination of old and new, supporting young families and elderly people alike. Joseph has embraced this, professing his love for how our neighborhood has evolved over the years. He finds that the energetic nature of the younger members of Queen Anne adds to the vibrancy of our neighborhood, creating a more supportive local environment.

Outside of the salon, Joseph loves to spend his time exercising, whether that is outside or inside. He's a regular at the Anytime Fitness in Queen Anne, where he uses strength training as a way of managing the stress of running his own business. As well as this, he enjoys taking his workouts out-

side with a variety of running routes in our neighborhood. Incorporating views into his runs is crucial, so he can appreciate the sweeping ocean views at Kerry or Kinnear Park. He also loves the sheer number of stairs in our neighborhood and strives to eventually make his way up all of them he can. His longtime partner also shares Joseph's love for exercise, and you can frequently see them enjoying a couple's run. Maybe one day, the two of them will achieve their goal of climbing the mountain of stairs in Queen Anne. From hair cutting, to shopping and eating local, giving back to the community, and experiencing the great outdoors, Joseph has become an integral part of Queen Anne for which we should all be grateful.



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