For most Americans, the Erie Canal is just a place in a song we learned in grade school. You know, the one with Sal the mule pulling her barge “from Albany to Buffalo.” For folks in Pittsford, NY, it’s a feature of everyday life, as well as a link to their past.

On an avenue overlooking the Erie Canal, Trü Salon welcomes customers with a mixture of old-world hospitality and 21st-century savvy befitting the neighborhood. “Our location helped me create the space,” says owner Julie Judge. “It has the feel of an upscale salon but in a down-to-earth atmosphere.”

When Judge bought the salon in 2006, it was called The Hair Barn. Changing that name was her first order of business. “Being an Aveda Concept salon, I thought, ‘What does Aveda mean to me?’” Judge says. “It’s about being true to the earth, true to yourself. Our name has helped our guests know who we are.”

The decor in the 1,500-square-foot space also supports the Aveda concept: clean, serene and contemporary. “We chose blues and browns to create a natural, soothing space but added a contemporary flair with the clean lines and sleek design of our styling stations,” Judge says. In addition to eight styling stations, the space features a dedicated makeup station, one manicure and two pedicure stations and a facial treatment room. Trü is a full-service hair salon also offering skincare, waxing, and natural nail manicures and pedicures, as well as CND Shellac manicures.

Every December, Trü hosts a customer appreciation night. “This is our opportunity to say thank you to all of our guests,” Judge says. “We offer experience stations where guests can receive free express services such as makeup touch-ups or hand massages. We also partner with our local businesses to offer wine tastings and hors d’oeuvres.”

The Erie Canal still figures into the prosperity of the little towns along its banks, though these days, instead of lumber, coal and hay, it brings tourists. That means lots of walk-ins, especially during the summer months. Judge says her goal is to make them feel like family. Like it says in the song: “You always know your neighbor/you always know your pal/you’ve ever navigated on the Erie Canal.”

—Karen Ford

**BIG FISH, SMALL POND**

**Trü Salon**

*In every small town across America, there’s at least one salon that raises the bar for everyone else. Pittsford, NY, (population 27,217) has Trü Salon.*

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