

# HEADLINERS

## THE ONE AND ONLY LORENA MARQUEZ,

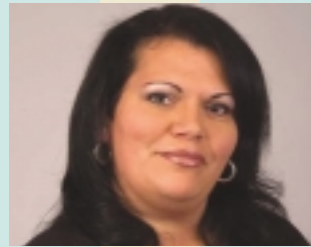


BY GINA WALLACE  
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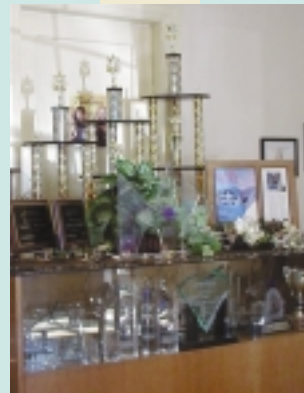
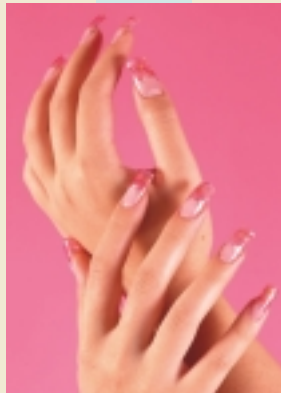
Gina Wallace is the principle international educator for Essential Nails. She is a ground-breaking tutor who passionately believes in high standards in nail education. She presents and teaches on the Home Learn videos, is a three-time UK nail art champion, a former salon owner and is webmaster of [www.ginawallace.com](http://www.ginawallace.com) where she promotes the Home Learn range of courses and the Nail Trainer.



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How would you like to be the proud owner of over 80 nail competition trophies? This month's headliner, Lorena Marquez, 34, knows just what it feels like to have earned every single one of them. It's an inspiring collection of awards in which the glare off each engraved plate spotlights yet another accolade.



### SALON SUCCESS

Watsonville, California is residence to one of America's most accomplished nail technicians, Lorena Marquez. It is also where her salon, 'At Your Fingertips' has been based since 1990. Lorena and two other accomplished techs, including her sister, Isabel Olmeda, make this salon what it is today. At \$75 a set, Lorena works 40-50 hours per week and she and her staff service over 150 clients in that time! Lorena is also heavily involved in all the training aspects of the business.

At Your Fingertips offers Design Sculptured Nails, Nail Art and Pink and White Salon-Success Competition Nails, but it specialises in Design Color Acrylic and Deluxe Spa Pedicures. The most popular services in this salon are Nail Art and Glitter Acrylic with picture-perfect Pink and White acrylic nails leading the selection.

### FAMOUS FINGERS

Lorena's work is so outstanding that in September 2003 Showtime Productions contacted her to create Ashanti's nails for a video shoot (the popular R&B singer who is often featured on MTV). Lorena was very pleased to be asked to do her nails, but due to scheduling conflicts, Ashanti was unable to keep the nail appointment. Still, Showtime Productions paid Lorena in full.

### GROWING, GROWING, GONE!

In earlier years, Lorena was a lifeguard, a clerk at both an art supply store and a video store and she even worked briefly as a supermarket checker. But at the time, her sights were set toward being an architect...or so she thought. To capitalise, she attended the University of Hawaii on an art scholarship but eventually returned home to pursue a career in the beauty industry. She had realised that in architecture she lacked direction and the results were unfulfilling for her. And so it was in nails that she finally found where her true interest and talent lay.

### CHEERLEADER-LIKE SUPPORT

As with any type of success story, there are those that can be credited with having been supportive cheerleaders along the way. Among Lorena's cheerleader squad are her sisters, Isabel Olmeda and Elsa Henriquez, along with Jessica Luna and Jeannie Smith who is a fellow salon owner and INM (International Nail Manufacturers) educator. However the person who most helped her to achieve her goals is Lysa Comfort, former educator for EZ Flow Nail Systems, and the current director of education for the INM. Lysa was the driving force that catapulted Lorena onto the national competition circuit. Lorena confesses, "It was Lysa who helped me to believe in myself and to aspire to succeed as a nail artist and competitor. She is solely responsible for me being appointed head educator for the INM in January."