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AUGUST 2014

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One Killer Bag

# Directory

August 2014

## Top Ten List

*Glossy manicures, cool nail art, and flawless pedicures from SoHo to San Francisco. Get more recommendations for salons and spas across the country at [allure.com/salon-spa-reviews](http://allure.com/salon-spa-reviews).*

For a step-by-step how-to on creating this gold-foil manicure from Vanity Projects, go to [allure.com/gold-foil-manicure](http://allure.com/gold-foil-manicure).

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### New York City

#### Vanity Projects

Regina Rodriguez

99 Chrystie St.,

646-410-2928

**The place:** This nail salon doubles as an art space, with two projectors screening quirky films on the walls and visiting nail technicians from around the world as artists-in-residence.

**What we asked for:** A gel manicure that mimicked a tribal print from Mara Hoffman.

**The extras:** A large selection of nail polish from high-end lines (Dior, Deborah Lippmann) and niche ones (Floss Gloss, RGB). The art films are entertaining...for the first few loops. **Bottom line:** Nail art takes time; in our case, almost two hours. But the result was stunning, one of a kind, and lasted a full three weeks. Gel nail-art manicure, \$60.

★★★★☆

# Directory

August 2014 • Top Ten List

## Washington, D.C.

### Mimosa Salon

Paulette

1706 Connecticut Ave., NW,  
202-232-6900

**The place:** Candles, cocktails, and splashes of hot pink make this noisy, crowded spot seem more like a bachelorette party than a salon.

**What we asked for:** A bright, summery gel manicure.

**The extras:** The \$25 happy hour deal (offered Monday through Wednesday) includes two glasses of champagne and a pedicure or gel manicure. This "deal" is actually more expensive than the \$15 regular manicure.

**Bottom line:** If you want drinks and a party with your manicure, Mimosa is the salon for you. It took 30 minutes of weaving through a boozy, post-work crowd to get a seat, even with an appoint-

ment. Paulette did calm us with a cocoa butter hand massage before painting our nails, which looked beautiful, although we were relieved to get out of there. Manicure, \$15; happy hour special, \$25.

★★★★☆

## Miami

### NailBar & Beauty Lounge

3301 NE 1st Ave.,  
305-514-0305

**The place:** Futuristic pedicure pods, a flat-screen TV on one wall, and Lucite chairs give this hip white-and-lime-green salon a space-age vibe.

**What we asked for:** We chose two polishes—soft cream and beige-gray—and trusted our manicurist with the decision for our nail design.

**The extras:** An iPad loaded with new magazines.

**Bottom line:** The two-tone design in ivory and glittery

gold was elegant enough, but when our manicurist started gluing on rhinestones, we had to apply the brakes. Spa manicure with nail design, \$33.

★★★★☆

## Chicago

### AstroWifey

Ashley Crowe  
House calls and by appointment,  
773-241-4120

**The place:** Crowe works out of her private studio and also makes house calls; she books all appointments through her website (astrowifey.nails.com).

**What we asked for:** A manicure based on the kaleidoscopic Clover Canyon prints.

**The extras:** Crowe's impressive tool kit of crystals, foil strips, and appliques of spikes, grommets, and flowers.

**Bottom line:** Crowe spent an hour and a half designing each nail differently with stripes, checkerboard patterns, and three-dimensional adornments to give us our wildest manicure ever. And even though it's too pricey for anything but a special occasion, we loved the convenience of a house call, especially for such a long appointment. Gel nail-art manicure, \$65 and up at the studio; \$105 and up for a house call. ★★★★★

## Dallas

### Onyx Nail Bar

Nina Do

4123 Cedar Springs Rd.,  
214-599-0255

**The place:** When they say "nail bar," they aren't kidding—think rows of pedicure stations facing a huge cocktail counter and four TVs. The treatments are named after drinks, such as the Chocotini-mani (chocolate hand scrub and mask) and the Double Shot Pedicure (hot-stone massage and milk soak).

**What we asked for:** A manicure and pedicure with a glass of Malbec.

**The extras:** Our nail technician offered us a choice of oils, lotions, and scrubs, and she gave us a neck rub to pass the drying time.

**Bottom line:** The paraffin wax was so soothing, it almost put us to sleep (although that might have been the wine). And despite the corny bar

theme, we actually did enjoy the nails, drinks, and TV. Pink Cozmo Manicure and Double Shot Pedicure, \$80.

★★★★☆

## Phoenix

### Repose Salon and Spa

Johanna Root  
11 W. Washington St.,  
480-478-1701

**The place:** The bright blue, sun-drenched salon is part of Phoenix's CityScape, a two-block complex of luxury apartments, restaurants, stores, offices, and a hotel.

**What we asked for:** A classic manicure and pedicure.

**The extras:** Root used Davines Authentic Replenishing Butter on our hands and arms and Davines Authentic Nourishing Oil for our rough cuticles—both contain organic jojoba, sesame, and safflower oils.

**Bottom line:** Besides the natural products and a few great restaurant recommendations, there were no other frills. But our nails were flawless. Manicure and pedicure, \$70. ★★★★★

## San Francisco

### TopCoat Nail Studio

Parris Hodges

50 Post St., 415-500-2860

**The place:** The studio's floor-to-ceiling windows showcase a large shadow box of nail tools and polish bottles. Known as Uber for nail art, the TopCoat app sets up manicures with local nail artists, who make home or office visits for an extra fee.

**What we asked for:** A Galaxy Manicure—deep blue polish with layers of pink, purple, and metallic shimmer.

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Samples of nail art from Vanity Projects in New York City