

SHOP



Etc.

FEBRUARY 2006

BEAUTY

Elegant Nails

LET YOUR HANDS DO THE SWEET-TALKING WITH INSTANTLY LONGER, MORE SEDUCTIVE NAILS.



SUBTLE: A GOOD PAINT JOB
To make nails look longer (even if they aren't), great shape is crucial. To get it, use a damp nail stone to push back the cuticle at the moon to reveal a bit more nail, suggests manicurist Jin Soon, owner of Jin Soon Natural Hand & Foot Spas in New York City. File your nails into a soft oval shape (too squared-off is a visual shortener) and choose a light, shimmery pink or nude polish, which, in addition to creating the illusion of length, happens to be runway-hot this season. Try (1) **Maybelline Express Finish Advanced Wear Fast-Dry Nail Color in blushing bride, \$4.12** (CVS and other drugstores or walgreens.com), which could be seen adorning the models' nails at the spring 2006 Libertine fashion show.

MORE: GLUE-ONS
For the most believable (and secure) fake nails, good glue-ons are the way to go. **Dashing Diva Virtual Nails, \$25/application** (Dashing Diva, NY, 212-673-9000, or dashingdiva.com for salons), use a secret flexible plastic (the company won't divulge details) that comes in 16 sizes and 30 lengths for each finger, and the service doesn't require chemicals or excessive filing during application. Want to try glue-ons at home? **Revlon Flex-to-Fit, \$7.99** (Target or walgreens.com), are bendable for a truer fit, and (2) **Kiss Custom Fit Handpolished Nail Kits, \$5.99/each** (Target or Walgreens and other drugstores), are designed to suit flat or high-arched nails. Just remember: Glue-on nails should be changed every two to three weeks to prevent nail infections.

WOW: SALON NAIL GELS
New technology has made brush-on gels look more genuine and require less maintenance. After a removable extension is placed over your nail, colored gel is brushed on and set under UV light. Once dry, the extension is removed to reveal a longer nail. We recommend (3) **Creative Nail Design Brisa Gel, from \$65** (creativenaildesign.com for salons). As the gel grows out, buff nail bases and clip ends.

DON'T GO THERE: REGULAR ACRYLICS
"Asking which acrylic is safer is like asking if Marlboro or Marlboro Lights are safer," says New York manicurist Carolyn Cianciotto, a sentiment echoed by our hand model, Dana Della Valle (right). "A big-name manicurist gave them to me and I ended up with dent in my nails for nine months," she warns.

PROFESSIONAL FAKER

Witchy woman: Actress Rose McGowan of *Charmed* recently dropped by NYC's Dashing Diva Salon for a set of Virtual Nails.

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