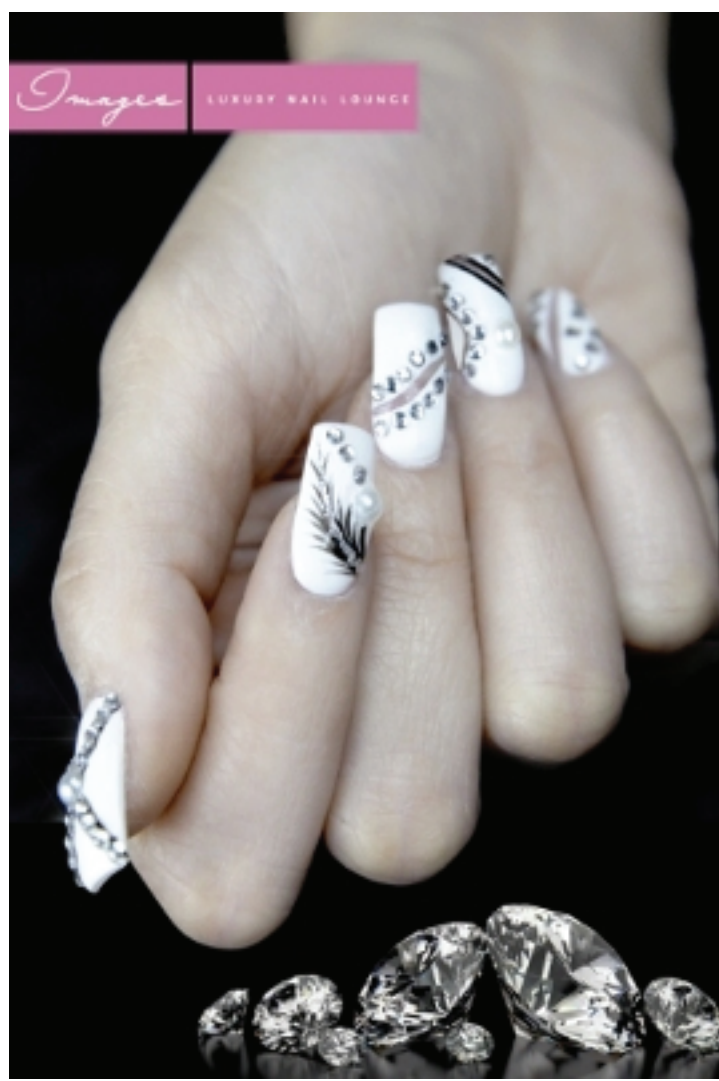




June 10, 2015
BY CAITLIN HEIKKILA

This is what a \$25,000 manicure looks like.



Outrageously expensive manicures, Kelly Ripa's color change, and Rita Ora's curly hair tips, ahead.

When it comes to getting our nails done, most of us are more concerned with finding a salon that is both affordable and ethical than anything else. But in SoCal — with a nail shop on nearly every corner — it takes a little more than great polish colors and happy employees to bring in customers.

Enter Newport Beach fixture Images Luxury Nail Lounge, which just launched a new menu of nail services that start at \$500 and go up to \$25,000. Yes, you read that correctly: Your next mani could be worth more than your car. And, it turns out, the menu isn't just a wild marketing scheme; it's actually based on special requests from some of the salon's wealthiest flashiest customers.

"We have clients that request services like this, so when we decided to do a luxurious menu, we talked with them about all the things they would want together," Tony Nguyen, general manager of Images Luxury Nail Lounge, told us. "I can't tell you their names, but there are women in Newport and Irvine that want to really splurge once in a while."

In fact, since they opened last year, the salon has had manis with diamonds on the menu, priced at between \$500 and \$600 for a full set, and people have been getting them. The only downside? "Diamonds can only be applied to acrylics," Nguyen says.

Okay, so let's talk about the three new menu options. For between \$500 and \$2,500, you can get the "Haute Couture Manicure," which includes luxurious bells and whistles (mineral bath, massage, polish), plus nail art using up to 20 diamonds. Oh, and you get a facial, too.

Willing to spend between \$2,500 and \$10,000? Choose the "Gold Rush Manicure" and you'll get everything in the previous manicure, but done in a private room. Plus, they'll use Models Own Gold Rush polish (the salon partnered with the polish brand to have one of only two bottles of this lacquer, priced at over \$100K thanks to the diamond-encrusted bottle) and 24-karat flakes of gold in your nail art. Expect add-ons to your facial (like lash extensions and threading) — and they get you boozed up with free Champagne.

Want to go even bigger? For between \$10,000 and \$25,000, you can get real fancy with the "Glitz & Glam manicure": They'll close the entire salon for your treatment, which includes everything mentioned above, plus a personal jeweler on hand to help you choose the best diamonds for your nail art and hair and makeup services.

Luckily, if you're shelling out this much on a mani, you don't need to worry about tipping. The salon has only one technician who does these types of services, and they receive a commission, Nguyen told us. (We're not sure who has it better: The customer getting gold leaf applied to her nails or the technician making a big, fat cut off the price?)

Of course, we're dying to know your thoughts on this story. Wild? Weird? Wonderful? Tell us in the comments below.