

Life & Work with Kazumi Yamamoto

November 2021

Hi Kazumi, it's an honor to have you on the platform. Thanks for taking the time to share your story with us – to start maybe you can share some of your backstory with our readers?

Born and raised in Japan and moved to the United States in 2000.

When I was little, Japan didn't have a lot of nail salons at the time, but for some reason, I still loved to see all the beautiful nails.

For instance, whenever I traveled to Hawaii with my family when I was in my teens, I always stopped by a drugstore and spent a lot of time in the nail section.

And when I used to buy various nail sets, I couldn't read English, but I still enjoyed using them in my own way while looking up the dictionary for translations.

As I got older and started thinking about my career after graduating from college in Japan, I decided that I wanted to be a manicurist. After some research, I found that there were only three schools for learning nails in Japan at that time.

Unfortunately, the tuition fee was so high that I couldn't afford it as a student.

I had to resort to my dad and ask, "I want to be a manicurist – can you please lend me the money to go to school?"

My dad's simple reply was, "You can't make money with just nails." I sadly had to give up on that path at the time.

Shortly after that conversation, at the recommendation of my dad, I worked for the Japanese government.

Approximately ten years into my job however, I saw exactly what my future would look like and I suddenly remembered my old dream of being a nail technician. A dream I still wanted to go after, so one day I decided to start looking for a school.

Timing was also perfect as I had the money to pay for tuition—something I didn't have back in the day.

The nail school I ended up choosing in Japan was also affiliated with the California state board, so I was able to get California license at the same time.

After graduating nail school, I officially quit my job working for the Japanese government and happily worked as a manicurist in Japan for several years.

My life since then has been filled with constant changes with sudden inspiration popping up anywhere and everywhere at a moment's notice.



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One day when I was working as a manicurist in Japan, I suddenly got the urge to work in the United States even once in my life, especially since I also had a California license.

I then made this a reality and moved to Los Angeles in 2000.

Although I still couldn't speak English, I still had the skills to be a manicurist so I worked in nail salons while learning English little by little from my customers.

I have always been ambitious in life and never let obstacles hinder me. Since my move here, I have taken many classes to acquire various new skills from famous teachers in the industry and worked hard to receive my diplomas.

Nail art was also well received by customers shortly after starting my career path and so it has been loved by many of my clients.

Now that I have my own salon, I am truly blessed and proud to have a hardworking staff and live a more fulfilling, happy life.

What was next from here? Well, I was suddenly hit with inspiration yet again.

I thought to myself, "It's very beautiful to decorate with gel nail art and it makes people happy, but is there more I could do beyond nail art?"

I then started to think of other ways to keep nails beautiful but also healthy.

I knew that this was possible if I used chemical-free and natural products as much as possible.

The gels and products I started using for all of my customers are carefully selected to ensure that they are as natural and extremely non-allergenic as possible, but they still weren't the healthiest for your nails.

With that in mind, I did extensive research and finally found a method that makes all nails healthy, beautiful and durable, using only natural ingredients without any toxic gel or acrylic involved.

I was able to learn this method in Japan and I am currently the only instructor in the United States to be able to do so.

From now on, I would like to share this knowledge and make this method known to as many people as possible.

In life, you will face multiple turning points that come with new sets of challenges, but I view those as opportunities to take your life on a new path into the future.

Would you say it's been a smooth road, and if not what are some of the biggest challenges you've faced along the way?

I have had the hardest time with my English because I am still learning, but I am grateful that I have always been surrounded by kind, helpful people. Overall, I feel lucky that I have been able to face the obstacles I have had in my life.

Thanks – so what else should our readers know about your work and what you're currently focused on?

Manicurist

What I value most is gel nail art, which is used to prevent damage to the nails.

What has been the most important lesson you've learned along your journey?

I took Japanese nail art lessons a lot. All my clients love my nail art. Also, now I'm more focused on the natural nail care that I'm educator now.

