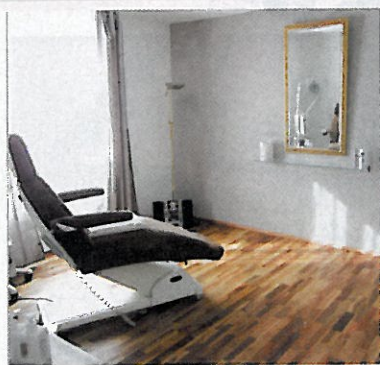


{ on the road }

## Nails & Cosmetics

Grenchen, Switzerland, might be well-known for its watch industry, but there was no need to tell time during my relaxing gel-polish pedicure in this bright, airy nail salon. BY HANNAH LEE



**FULL-SERVICE, NAIL-FOCUSED** Nails & Cosmetics is a nail salon that also offers a full range of massage and esthetics services. There are three private rooms in the two-story 1,615-sq.-ft. salon dedicated to all of the non-nail services. The salon hosts bridal parties that include makeup, as well as nail care. Lash extensions, which are \$350 CHF (that's about \$383 U.S.), are popular among her clients. Other services available include permanent makeup, waxing, facials, lymphatic drainage, cellulite treatments, and other forms of massage. But it's nails, particularly gel nails, that make up a large percentage of her business. The open nail area of the salon includes three manicure tables and two pedicure stations.



**THE COST OF DOING BUSINESS** Owner Zekiya Demirkaya explained that natural nail manicures aren't very popular at her salon, mostly because the price (the equivalent of about \$48 U.S.) isn't worth it for the nail techs. They prefer to see clients for gels (which cost the equivalent of about \$164 U.S.) because they can do the service in roughly the same amount of time, but make triple the money. Lucky for the staff, gel nails are very popular in Switzerland. Fills will cost a client anywhere from \$82-\$93 U.S. Gel-polish services are gaining some traction with both nail techs and clients, and the service price falls somewhere in between a manicure and a gel fill.



**A NICE PLACE TO WORK** The salon is open Monday through Friday. When I asked Demirkaya why she wasn't open on the weekend, she told me it's because she wants her employees to enjoy time with their families. Five employees work at the salon, which is located directly across the street from the Swatch watch factory. Many clients come from that office and other nearby watch makers. Demirkaya prefers to hire employees with little experience so she can train them in her techniques. Because they are only open during the week, the salon relies mainly on scheduled appointments but they'll take walk-ins when possible.

Owner Zekiya Demirkaya has been a nail tech since 1998. I was so happy she could squeeze me into her schedule. Pedicures aren't big in Switzerland, but Demirkaya said they are gaining in popularity largely due to gel-polish services that allow women, even in the cold months, to walk out of the salon without dinging their polish. I enjoyed an OPI GelColor service in my favorite shade (You Don't Know Jacques).



## \*FUN FACTS

- > The city of Grenchen houses a large traditional watch industry and several famous manufacturers — including Breitling, ETA (that's Swatch), Fortis, Epos, Eterna, Nivada, and Titoni.
- > In addition to owning Nails & Cosmetics, Demirkaya is an instructor for Nail International by Marlise K, and she has one of about 30 or 40 salons in Switzerland who have obtained the "Q" rating, showing they have taken a certain amount of courses in order to reach a higher level of standards.
- > There are three unofficial languages in Switzerland — German, Swiss German, and French. Demirkaya speaks all three and an additional four languages.

## MENU HIGHLIGHTS

Manicure: \$44 (CHF)  
Pedicure: \$65 (CHF)  
Gels (full set): \$150 (CHF)  
Gel Fill: \$85 (CHF)  
Gel French Fill: \$105 (CHF)  
Gel-Polish Pedicure: \$115 (CHF)  
Full Lash Set: \$350 (CHF)

## PRODUCT HIGHLIGHTS

Nails & Cosmetics uses almost exclusively OPI Products, including Axxium, GelColor, and Manicure/Pedicure by OPI. They also use German-manufactured Nail Selection products.