

DESIREE DE LA ROSA

Professional Piercer: 6 years
Current Employment: Sink or Swim Studio
and Gallery

Desiree De La Rosa, a piercer since age 18, has been in the business for about six years. She brings her colorful personality and her energy to the studio and strives to make her clients feel at ease. Desiree sees a variety of clients of all ages and helps them choose jewelry, often recommending basic options for healing. She prefers working with needles and is interested in expanding her skills to include scarification and implants

DESIREE'S BACKGROUND AND EARLY CAREER

How did you get started in the piercing business?

When I was 18, I went to a studio in Atlanta with a friend to get a piercing. After that I wanted to learn more about piercing, so I hung out at the studio and eventually asked for an apprenticeship.

CURRENT WORK ENVIRONMENT AND PIERCING PRACTICES

How did you come to be employed by Sink or Swim Studio and Gallery?

I went to Sink or Swim Studio and Gallery to get piercings before I started working there. When I go to other studios, I usually want to just be a client, so I don't usually talk about what I do. But one day I was getting a piercing and while we were talking, the piercer asked what I do for a living. When I told her that I was a piercer, she let me know that Sink or Swim Studio and Gallery was looking to add to their staff. It was a good opportunity and I've been there ever since.

“Piercing has evolved and the jewelry is different than it used to be.”



Do you do any continuing education or are you learning from the more experienced piercers in the studio?

Most of my learning continues to be from the other piercers in the studio. There are three of us and we all share information on new techniques or best ways to approach when different situations occur. There's always a lot to learn. Piercing has evolved and the jewelry is different than it used to be.

What kind of trends are you seeing in terms of jewelry or the locations that people are getting pierced?

I believe the ear piercings, the lobes and helixes, and the nostril are the most popular. Anything that's blingy is trending.

Do clients need to stick with something more basic when they get the piercing, and then they can switch to blingy or fancier jewelry after the healing?

We see a variety of clients of all ages and helping clients choose their jewelry is important. While sometimes they can go for fancy pieces, initially we will often recommend more basic, healing-friendly options.

CHALLENGES AND FUTURE ASPIRATIONS

What is the most interesting piercing that you've done?

I did a pretty cool piercing on a client who had a unique situation with his ear, requiring a consultation and careful piercing due to previous surgery complications. We did the one piercing on the lobe. It looked so good!

What's your biggest challenge?

Sometimes trying to get the client to relax is a challenge. The anticipation tends to make people tense up, especially depending on where a client may be getting the piercing. For example, the lobe is easier, but it can get a little spicier as you get higher up on the ear and that can make people tense up.



“ Anything that's blingy is trending. ”



Do you see yourself being a piercer long term; is that like your career path?

Yes, I do. In addition to the piercing, I want to learn to do scarification and implants. Scarification is a permanent body modification that involves cutting, burning, etching, or scratching designs into the skin. Other body modifications also called “body alterations” or “body mods” can include implants or tongue bifurcation. I have an implant on my hand and I also have my tongue split. These advanced skills also require apprenticeships and are similar to piercing in terms of learning on the job.