

# AS A HAIRDRESSER I HAD SUNBEDS ON TAP, BUT A BAD SCARE TAUGHT ME TO FAKE IT



## Miss Bronz'Express, Nicola Bennett looks so nice in Nice at her first sexy shoot, by DAVE DUNNE

**T**HERE'S something about the beautiful city of Nice on France's Cote d'Azur that evokes images of a young bikini-clad Brigitte Bardot, complete with star-struck fans and a few eager paparazzi.

Safe enough to say that our stunning Miss Bronz Express, Nicola Bennett, could hold her own amongst the glam and panache of a town that's got Monaco and Cannes as its next-door neighbours.

Unfortunately, though, her first encounter with adoring fans was a little embarrassing - and just a bit unexpected.

"I thought they wanted me to take their photo, I had no idea they wanted their photo taken with me," says the 23-year-old hairdresser. "Still, it was cute,"

Nicola scooped the Miss Bronz'Express title in March, beating 12 other finalists from around the country. The final 12 were voted for by *Sunday World* readers - and the competition was stiff.

But Nicola proved to be the fairest lady of them all, and bagged a lifetime supply of Bronz'Express, a dream contract with Bscene modeling agency and this exclusive photoshoot in Nice.

And it seems that the locals in Nice think our Nic's very nice indeed. The photoshoot in the open-air market place wrapped

and the coffee ordered, a French girl approached Nicola with a camera and explained, in broken English, that two of her male pals wanted their picture taken with her.

Our girl was blushing after her first taste of fame: "I don't know whether I could get used to that sort of attention. A couple of years ago I won Specsavers' Spectacle Wearer of the Year competition, which was judged by Gok Wan, but I never got attention like that," she laughs.

"Gok was great with all the girls. When I won, I went on to the international finals in London

and came third. Gok told me to chop my hair short and go brunette, which I did.

"It's not that often you get advice from a style guru like him, so I went with it.

"If I was pushed to advise anybody on beauty issues, I'd tell them: 'don't do the sunbed thing, it's just not worth it.'

"I've been working at hairdressing for years, so I had sunbeds on tap. I was forever under them. By the time I was 16 I'd developed a skin pigmentation problem. It started as white blotches on my back, and then they spread.

"It's cleared up now, but I still have to be careful in the sun," says Nicola. "It was pretty scary at the time.

## Golden girl



**FRENCH FANCY:** Our girl Nicola has admirers in the stunning French city



Pics by Val Sheehan

**BAYOND THE PALE:** Nicola's developed a skin pigmentation problem after using subeds. Now she sensibly takes care in the sun and slaps on the fake tan

We've got one of the worst rates of skin cancer in Europe, and sunbeds raise that risk so much more.

"You can't go wrong with the bottle. Bronz'Express is definitely the best I've tried, and I've tried the lot."

"It's so handy to use; you just need the mitten and the bottle and off you go. I apply it a few days in advance of a planned night out, but you can just as easily use it a couple hours before you head out. It looks great and it's safe."

Bronz'Express self tanning lotion is available as part of the Academic range and has been on

the French market since 1958. The range has expanded to cater for every skin type and colour.

So, first photoshoot over - what's next for the ambitious Limerick girl?

"I'm looking at doing a course in journalism and media. I'd like to work as a fashion editor - choosing the styles and looks. The course is in Dublin, and I'd love to move there."

"I love Nice too. I've never been before, but I could certainly handle living here. And the weather...well, don't get many opportunities to wear the bikini at home."

Bronz'Express is available nationwide, call 046 9481091 for local stockists, [www.frenchcosmetics.ie](http://www.frenchcosmetics.ie). Make-up by Christian Breton. Manicure & Pedicure at Nail & Beauty Lounge Dublin Airport. ●