

## LIFE AT SEA

In Cancun, Mexico for 5 years and there were many times we went out to sea. The water is so crystal clear that you can actually see all the little sea animals. The dolphins, turtles and larger fish swim right along side the boat. This was my inspiration for these nails.

I first started by sketching my design on a piece of paper. Then, I began by gluing 2 tips together (1 tip clear and 1 tip transparent blue to represent the sky). I cut and shaped the tips forming all 10 nails.

1. For the background of the sea area, I started by mixing a deep blue acrylic powder with a white iridescent glitter. I took part of this same mixture and mixed in a soft white acrylic powder and added a little silver glitter, making a lighter blue. Then, began to sculpt the sea using the fading technique, starting with the dark blue and fading to light blue. At the tip of the nail, I used clear acrylic and added broken pieces of different colored shells. I used a kolinsky #8 brush for all 10 nails on the sea area.
2. Now going back to the first nail sculpting the rocks, I mixed black and white acrylic powders and added a rock here and there using brown acrylic with a touch of gold glitter. Then I built the palm tree using the same brown acrylic for the base and a green acrylic powder for the palms with a touch of yellow acrylic craft paint for details.
3. The fish were made with ultra white acrylic powder and detailed with acrylic crafting paints in the colors fuchsia, lime green, yellow and black.
4. For the 3<sup>rd</sup> nail, this fish was made with white, yellow and black acrylic powders. I mixed a deep orange with a tiny bit of yellow and brown acrylic powders, and then added orange iridescent glitter to make the starfish.
5. For the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> nails, I mixed a little black with white acrylic powder to get a soft gray. Then, I mixed this gray together with a tiny bit of white acrylic powder to sculpt the dolphins for shading. Green and yellow acrylic powders were used for the plants.
6. Again mixing acrylic powders, blue with green and a tiny bit of silver glitter to make the body of the turtle. I used black acrylic powder to sculpt the extremities of the turtle and finished detailing with acrylic craft paints, black and white.
7. Mixing green, white and yellow acrylic powders, I first sculpted the plants behind the seahorse. Then, I took the same brown mixture described above and combined ultra white acrylic powder to make the seahorse. Black and white acrylic powders were used on the eyes of the seahorse.
8. The red octopus is a combination of bright red acrylic powder with a touch of black acrylic powder and a very fine red glitter. I made the eyes with black and white acrylic powders, and then detailed the octopus using black acrylic craft paint.
9. I mixed deep purple acrylic powder with ultra white, making a soft purple for sculpting the sea urchin. I mixed deep orange with ultra white acrylic powders, getting a peachy colored acrylic powder mix for the sea coral and detailed with white acrylic craft paint and water.

10. Again, I sculpted the rocks the same as described above for the first nail, but in the opposite direction. Then, I mixed the same brown described above with soft white acrylic powder, forming the body of the mermaid. Then I mixed together hot pink and ultra white acrylic powders and formed the legs, fin and bathing suit top and used a clear polish, putting the tiny pink sequins to her outfit. I sculpted her hair using light and dark yellow acrylic powders together. Then, detailed her face using black, blue, fuchsia and white acrylic craft paints.
11. For sculpting the sea animals, I used a #4 kolinsky pointed fan brush and for the detailing, I used a line striper brush and a 1-hair brush I made myself.
12. For the sky area on all 10 nails, using a small stamping sponge and white acrylic craft paint, I proceeded to dab on the clouds. Then took clear nail polish and added white iridescent glitter to the clouds. I finished the detailing by adding the shadowing of birds with black acrylic craft paint.

For the presentation photo, I used sand, a kids sand pail and shovel, shells and décor for fish tanks.

I really can't say how long I took to form these nails because I started this project in April 2008; using an extra 10 minutes here and 15 minutes there when I had a spare chance in-between clients. I completed this project at the end of August 2008.

I used a Fuji Fine-pix S9600 camera with MGI Photo Suite.