

# Eva Longoria

## Planning For Success

Looking at Eva Longoria, two things are immediately obvious. One: she is stunning beautiful. Two: this woman is *smart*. Look into those beautiful eyes, and in a matter of moments you realize that she's been planning for success, *working* towards it, since the very beginning.

She didn't come to L.A. as a teenager looking to be the next starlet. In fact, she says, she came to acting as a career "late in life"—after she'd gone back to school and received a Master's in Chicano Studies. And even when she did finally come to Los Angeles to break into the business, she knew the "starving actress" image was not for her. She prepared for her career carefully. She took a job as a headhunter at a staffing agency to pay for her acting classes and headshots, and she was good at it—in fact, she made more money there than during her first year on *The Young and the Restless*.

*Y&R* was only the beginning, and that was only four years ago. After two years on the soap, she moved into prime time on the under-appreciated revival of *L.A. Dragnet*. And as she went, Eva made contacts and plans. Last year she became a producer in her own right, with the DVD of *Hot Tamales*

*Live*, a showcase of Latino comic talent, from Maverick Entertainment. She made a TV movie with Ann Heche and Chris Sarandon, along the way, as well as a direct-to-video thriller, *Carlita's Secret*, that will be released in December 2004. Up next: *Harsh Times*, a crime drama with Christian Bale (*American Psycho*, *Batman Begins*), and Emilio Rivera (*El Matador*, *Collateral*).

All along, Eva has known exactly who she is. "Latina is a given. That's who I am, that's my culture, that's where I come from. But I don't want to be defined by America as only successful because I'm Latina or a successful Latina. Being a woman is a hard enough job as it is; just to be a woman in this industry is difficult, and then you throw in Latina, then you limit yourself. I'm a lot of things: I'm a woman, I'm a Latina, I'm a sister and a daughter and a friend—a lot of titles. And they are all ingredients that make me

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## MILESTONES

**Born:** 1975, Corpus Christi TX

**First Break:** *Young and the Restless*, 2001

**Breakthrough:** Her portrayal of strong-willed and sexy Gabrielle Solis on the quirky hit *Desperate Housewives*, and all the well-deserved attention that it has generated.



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who I am; each one is responsible for a different part of my success."

However, Longoria believes women are the toughest judges of other women. "Women judge each other harder and unfairly so. Women should uplift each other and help each other to the place where we should be in this world. Unfortunately you don't see a lot of that, especially in our industry of actresses. It's a Catch 22, cause it takes so long for women to succeed," Longoria declares. "That's why I started producing the comedy show *Hot Tamales* to help uplift comedienne, cause it's a very difficult industry for women, making comedy, and so, to be able to provide an opportunity for Latinas, or any women, was something that I really enjoyed doing.

So, yes, Eva Longoria is beautiful. So says everyone from *Maxim* to *People en Español* and the 24.2 million ABC viewers, who watch *Desperate Housewives* every week. She is already made it to number 11 on the *International Movie Database* Star Meter. Hopefully, this rise will give her the opportunity to fulfill a personal dream: to do a film about civil rights activist Dolores Huerta of the UFW. It's in her plans. —Petra Davidson

For the complete Q&A with Eva Longoria, log onto [www.latinheat.com/elongoria](http://www.latinheat.com/elongoria). You'll find continuing coverage of *Desperate Housewives*