



Salma Hayek

Actress

Actress Salma Hayek Takes Charge of Her Career

When popular actress Salma Hayek came to the United States from her native Mexico in 1991, she found herself starting over.

Hayek, whose father was a prominent Lebanese businessman in Mexico, had been known for her title role in the television show *Teresa*, but she found few immediate opportunities in Hollywood.

She eventually broke ground as a U.S. celebrity when she starred opposite Antonio Banderas in the successful 1995 film *Desperado*, but by then she had begun to take steps to launch her own career. She started her own film company, Ventanarosa.

Hayek went on to star in more Hollywood feature films — *Fools Rush In*, *In the Time of the*

Butterflies, *Wild Wild West*, *From Dusk Till Dawn*, *Once Upon a Time in Mexico* and many more — but through her own company, and following her own interests, she has received notable critical acclaim as an actress and producer.

Her first feature film, *El coronel no tiene quien le escriba* (*No One Writes to the Colonel*) (1999) was shown at the Cannes Film Festival and was Mexico's entry for that year's Academy Award for best foreign film.

In 2002, Hayek produced and starred in *Frida*, a film about celebrated Mexican artist Frida Kahlo, whom Hayek had long admired. The film stars Alfred Molina as Kahlo's cheating husband, Diego Rivera, and features a number of other celebrities, including Banderas, Ashley Judd,

Geoffrey Rush, Edward Norton and Valeria Golino. The film received six Academy Award nominations, including best actress for Hayek, and won two of them, for makeup and original score.

As a producer, Hayek also found success on the small screen as one



of the executive producers who adapted the American version of the Colombian television program *Yo Soy Betty La Fea*, which became the hit show *Ugly Betty* from 2006 to 2010. Hayek played the role of magazine editor Sofia Reyes in the show.

Ugly Betty, about a young Mexican-American woman, depicted as unfashionable and naïve but courageous and good-hearted, who worked for a competitive high-fashion magazine, won several Image, Golden Globe and Peabody awards. The show was praised for raising the visibility of minority characters and teaching audiences, especially girls, that appearance is not the most important or valuable characteristic.

Hayek has spoken out on stopping violence against women and has worked with UNICEF in its campaign to halt neonatal tetanus in developing countries.

Salma Hayek, producer and Pampers spokeswoman for the global Pampers/UNICEF campaign "One Pack = One Vaccine," speaks at a news briefing at the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, in 2008. photos© AP Images



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