

Headline	<b>Mexican Jimena wins Miss Universe contest</b>	Language	<b>English</b>
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# Mexican Jimena wins Miss Universe contest

**LOS ANGELES:** Jimena Navarrete, a 22-year-old model from Mexico, was named Miss Universe in Las Vegas on Monday, extending Latin America's domination of the pageant to three consecutive years.

The first runner-up was Miss Jamaica, Yendi Phillipps, while Miss Australia, Jesinta Campbell, was second runner-up. Miss Ukraine, Anna Poslavska came in fourth, ahead of Miss Philippines, Venus Raj.

Navarrete, a nature enthusiast from Guadalajara, revealed earlier in the competition that she wanted to work with women who suffer from eating disorders.

"I studied nutrition and I would like everyone to understand that it is not about your looks it is how you feel inside," the 5-foot-nine (1.75-metre) brunette said through an interpreter. "And when you feel good inside you look good."

Resplendent in a flowing ruby-red evening gown, Navarrete said she has been modelling since she was 15.

She is expected to spend her year as Miss Universe drawing attention to the plight of people with HIV/AIDS and breast cancer, according to pageant officials.

Navarrete receives a one-year scholarship to the New York Film Academy, a year's supply of shoes, dresses and hair products. Her coronation ends the reign of outgoing Miss Universe 2009 Stefania Fernandez, 19, of Venezuela.

She becomes the second Mexican to take the crown, following Lupita Jones in 1991. Venezuela claimed the title in 2008 and 2009, but in a surprise the country failed to make it past the first cut, when the 83 contestants were reduced to 15.

Also eliminated at the outset was Miss USA Rima Fakhri, a Muslim of Lebanese

heritage who recently declared her opposition to a planned mosque near the former site of the World Trade Center.

From the start, the pageant was a close race among Mexico, Jamaica and the Philippines, whose contestants all rated strongly in the swimwear and evening wear sections. But Miss Philippines bombed during the question section, failing to detail her biggest mistake and what she did to fix it.

Miss Jamaica, a self-confessed adrenaline junkie who likes to jump off cliffs and swim with sharks, may have been too strong-willed for organisers. She boldly declared her opposition to the death penalty, saying only God has the right to take lives.

Miss Mexico, helped by an interpreter, had no problem answering an easy question about the perils of the Internet for the children.

Miss Australia, at 19 the

youngest to make it to the final five, was also forthright during the question segment, saying governments have no right to regulate women's religious clothing. But Miss Ukraine took a pro-authority stance by backing airport body scanners that see through clothes.

The pageant, in its 59th year, was hosted by rock musician Bret Michaels and TV news personality Natalie Morales at the Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino.

While the event remains popular overseas, its appeal

has long been on the wane in the United States. Viewership dropped to a record low last year of six million, down 55 per cent from 1997, the first year under the new ownership of property investor Donald Trump and General Electric Co's NBC. Viewership peaked at 37.8 million in 1980. — Reuters/AFP

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**GLITTERING MOMENTS:**  
(Clockwise from above left) Miss Thailand Fonthip Watcharatrakul with a bouquet after being named Miss Photogenic and the recipient of the People's Choice award. • Members of the audience. • Miss Mexico Jimena Navarrete (left) celebrates after being crowned Miss Universe by Miss Universe 2009 Stefania Fernandez (right) of Venezuela. • The final five (left to right) Miss Philippines, eventual winner Miss Mexico, Miss Ukraine, Miss Jamaica and Miss Australia. • Donald Trump stands with Miss Universe 2009 Stefania Fernandez prior to the Miss Universe 2010 Pageant Final. • Miss Mexico Jimena (left) reacts with first runner-up Miss Jamaica Yendi, after being named Miss Universe 2010. • Navarrete (right) responds to her question as she stands with show hosts Natalie Morales (centre) and Bret Michaels. — AFP/Reuters photos

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MEXICAN BEAUTY: Miss Mexico Jimena Navarrete models her evening dress before being crowned Miss Universe 2010. — AFP photo