

**Gretchen Espina** was born January 8, 1988 in Quezon City, Philippines who rose to notability after winning Pinoy Idol, an interactive reality-based singing competition, in 2008 where she's been credited as the first Pinoy Idol. Espina came from a musically-inclined family, with her father, Biliran Governor Rogelio "Roger" J. Espina, described as a "good piano player and singer." Her mother, Cecil, works as a pediatrician; while her grandfather, Gerry, is a former mayor of Naval, Biliran. Espina was born in Quezon City, Metro Manila, where she spent her early years studying in School of the Holy Spirit before transferring to Naval Central School where she finished elementary schooling with honors. She studied high school in Cathedral School of La Naval, where she graduated as a salutatorian.



Espina pursued college in University of the Philippines Diliman campus in Quezon City, with a major in European Languages. She is a member of The University of the Philippines Singing Ambassadors and represented UP in the Inter-Collegiate Singing Contest held in Shantou University, Guangdong, China, where she won the first prize as a solo performer.