



Coaster Photo
Shawn Gatta, owner of Detail Dr., Long Branch, puts the finishing touches on a car in his shop.

Detail Dr. Offers Door-to-Door Service

At 21, Shawn Gatta of Ocean Township owns his own business, a Porsche and a BMW. He owes all his success to washing and waxing cars.

But Gatta gives cars no ordinary wash and wax. "When I finish with a car you could eat off the bottom," he said.

Gatta owns the Detail Dr., a wash and waxing business, in Long Branch. "I grew up with cars, they are my hobby," he said. "I started washing cars in high school to earn money. I got my first car when I was 16—a Z28, bought with my own money. It was my pride and joy. I used to wash it every day before school."

Since then Gatta has transformed his hobby into his business.

"We are in the service business," he said. "We pick cars up and deliver them. The customer doesn't have to lift a finger. We are in the convenience business. We take care of our people."

Gatta, a graduate of Ocean Township High School, attended Fairleigh Dickinson University and Brookdale Community College where he studied macroeconomics before deciding he wanted to go into business for himself. "I also have my real estate license and people get a kick out of the fact that my father has been in real estate and insurance for 40 years and I picked this," he said. "I can make

more money washing cars. And I disliked college so much I just wanted to get out."

Before purchasing the Detail Dr., Gatta owned and operated Gatta's Car Care, servicing cars at the owners' homes. "I worked out of the back of my car and I went to their house," he said. "I went on doing that for a few years. In 1987 I bought a van and worked out of that. In March of this year I bought the Detail Dr."

Gatta services cars at his business on Clinton Place in Long Branch but he still makes house calls. "Most of my customers come to the shop for service," he said. "We shampoo the interior, vacuum, wash and wax. But most of what I do can be done at someone's house. All they need is an outside spigot."

Gatta even carries 50 gallons of water in his van for house calls if no water is available at a customer's house. Although a wash, wax and vacuum at the Detail Doctor is \$59.95, Gatta said it's worth it to save a vehicle's paint job. "If you want to keep your car protected it's worth it," he said. "A paint job will cost you \$1,000."

In the future Gatta hopes to expand his business to include all car accessories such as car phones and window tinting.