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Toni fights back for the big break

A FORMER Coolum girl has finally scored her big break in the hit musical *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

Toni Zaffa nearly gave the showbusiness game away 15 years ago, but has now found herself on stage with the likes of Deni Hines.

Toni, one of few Australians in a majority New Zealander cast, plays one of three "soul sisters" who are on stage throughout the entire musical.

"It's wonderful. It's better than I had ever imagined," she said.

Toni said she had known

since the age of 10 that she wanted a career on stage, but gave away serious performing 15 years ago. She travelled, sold cars and worked as a maitre d' among other things before getting serious about performing six years ago.

Stints fronting several Sydney bands followed, then a solo career in which she toured with the likes of Spy v Spy and Renee Geyer, before she decided upon a career change.

"I was tired of getting on stage at one in the morning to sing in a smoky room and thought I would rather be per-

forming to a captive audience who weren't drunk, and live a healthy lifestyle," she said.

Toni, a former Nambour High student, settled in to eight months of drama studies before scoring the *Jesus Christ Superstar* role.

The audition was her eighth. She was originally chosen as a chorus member but quickly shifted into a bigger role.

Toni, whose parents, Andrew and Dulcie, still live at Coolum, will return to Brisbane for a three-week season starting on December 4.