



Liza Quin, left, and Cristina Fernandez are the regular hosts of "American Latino TV."  
**American Latino TV**

Sometimes, television phenomena can get lost in translation. Take (please, please, take it) My58TV's adaptation of the wildly successful Latino telenovela for its dreadful

nighttime soaps, "Desire" and "Fashion House."

*Como se dice "ratings train wreck"?*

Thankfully, Sacramento's MyNetworkTV affiliate also offers the syndicated program "American Latino TV," which takes the template for "Entertainment Tonight" and serves up a half-hour of pop-culture news and interviews aimed at English-speaking Latinos.

The show starts its fifth season Saturday (at 5:30 p.m. on My58TV), but it will be new to Sacramento viewers. My58TV only recently added the program, which has won three consecutive Imagen Awards (sort of like the Latino Emmys) for best national informational programming.

It's about time that Sacramento, the 15th-largest Hispanic television market, picked it up.

Like its "Access Hollywood" and "ET" forebears, "American Latino TV" is as frothy as a venti latte -- a guilty pleasure. Its hosts, Liza Quin and Johanna Gomez (filling in for Cristina Fernandez), wear tight-fitting, low-cut tops à la Mary Hart and broadcast poolside from Miami for no apparent reason.

And graphics whoosh and swirl around the bottom of the screen, as those on any good tabloid show will, while the quick-cutting camera shots make sure attention-span-impaired viewers don't become bored.

In other words, if you are searching for a serious study of Latino cultural issues broadcast in English, may we suggest National Public Radio's "Latino USA."

But that's OK. "American Latino TV" is worth watching, if only for the stories that many programs in mainstream English-language television seldom cover.

In Saturday's season premiere, for instance, "ALTV" profiled best-selling reggaeton musician Don Omar; filmmaker David Rodriguez ("Push"); three Latino boxers who took part in last season's reality-TV show "The Contender"; and, most interesting, a family in Los Angeles that hand-makes acoustic guitars.

Occasionally, the line between espousing ethnic pride and cheerleading is breached, such as when the hosts trumpet that the guitar-makers are "an immigrant success story." No need to state the obvious; viewers know that just from watching the report.

Each Latino boxer interviewed talked about how he represented *la raza*. Says boxer Sergio Mora: "It goes to show we do our things in sports, especially boxing and baseball."

And earlier, in the show's "Flashback" segment, Quin and Gomez ended a look at the Latino alt-music group King Chango with the exhortation, "*Muchas gracias* for all of your fun live shows and opening the doors for other alternative Latino bands."

Still, a little partisanship can be tolerated because the stories are compelling -- and enlightening to non-Latinos who tune in.

We wish the same could be said for My58TV's "Fashion House."