



All-Natural Beauty Health Concerns Revolutionize the Cosmetics Industry

by Marlaina Donato

From red carpets to *Teen Vogue* magazine, the natural beauty trend has taken the industry by storm. Consumer whims may have sparked its beginnings more than a decade ago, but demand is now spiking profits into the billions.

“Consumer need is influencing retailers to offer cleaner formulas reflecting firm eco-values,” says Karen Behnke, the pioneering entrepreneur who founded Juice Beauty, in San Rafael, California. Behnke aimed to create meaningful change in the industry when she assembled her dream team 13 years ago. The company now owns a trailblazing patent and sets the standard for clinical organics.

“We’re excited that traditional department stores such as Bloomingdale’s, Neiman Marcus and Holt Renfrew are adding our products to their beauty departments,” says Behnke, who attributes Juice Beauty’s tremendous growth in recent years to a surge of interest in chemical-free, luxury alternatives.

Natural Replaces Toxic

A recent Green Beauty Barometer online survey revealed that more than half of women want their skincare products to be

all-natural, a result likely driven by the scientific information age (see KariGran.com/pages/greenbeauty for details). Reputable scientific studies revealing parabens in breast cancer biopsies have demonstrated that everything applied to the skin also enters the bloodstream, hence the effectiveness of dermal nicotine and birth control patches. Thus, it can be alarming to realize that the average woman will unknowingly consume seven pounds of lipstick containing petroleum-based emollients, synthetic preservatives and artificial dyes during a lifetime, undoubtedly another reason consumers are switching to natural options.

Katey Denno, a Los Angeles makeup artist to the stars, noticed cosmetic red flags early in her career. “The first time I turned over a palette that most makeup artists carry and saw specific colors that couldn’t be used on eyes or lips, I was confused; if something isn’t safe for lips or eyes, how can it be good for any part of us?” queries Denno, who switched from social work to makeup artistry 11 years ago. “The change in the industry has been substantial. Now green is mainstream, and most artists have included

some green beauty brands in their kits.”

Millennials continue to drive consumer demand for higher standards. “Retailers understand that the skincare/makeup landscape is changing,” advises Behnke. “Traditional brands are no longer attracting younger consumers that are demanding organic, clinically validated products.”

Denno concurs, stating, “The spotlight on clean products comes from the growing acknowledgement that we can and must do all we can to lower our overall toxic load.”

Demand Escalates

Women are fueling the natural beauty movement, yet more men than ever are also seeking healthy alternatives. Grooming products with unisex packaging and fragrances are among top sellers. Informed teen and 20-something buyers are inclined to choose people- and eco-friendly brands that are also cruelty-free.

A wide selection of aluminum-free, natural, personal care products including underarm deodorants are showing up in supermarkets. Women are ditching toxic hair dyes and going silver to avoid thinning hair and allergies, and unwittingly, creating a new fashion statement. Plus, there’s growing interest in DIY cosmetics using everyday good-for-you ingredients found in the kitchen.

Artisan perfumes are gaining popularity among women that want the mystery and allure of fragrance without the side effects of manmade, chemical-based brands. “Some new customers are frustrated by commercial products giving them headaches, while others say that they just don’t like perfume, when what they actually don’t like is synthetic fragrance chemicals,” says Ananda Wilson, a botanical perfumer and owner of Gather Perfume, in South Hadley, Massachusetts.

“It’s inspiring when they smell real plant scents and see how their world lights up! The molecules in natural perfumes are active and interact with personal chemistry, so they unfold differently on each wearer, creating a unique signature and experience.”

Wilson ventured into botanical blends when both awareness and supplies of appropriate ingredients were scarce. “Perfume history is largely rooted in natural

CELEBRITIES GO NATURAL



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Senator Dianne Feinstein
Kate Hudson
Miranda Kerr
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Kirk Hammett, James Hetfield,
Robert Trujillo, Lars Ulrich
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Christine Taylor
Shailene Woodley

materials, but until recently, there was a mass blackout of this precious lineage. When I started, there was barely anything available, and only through a handful of aromatherapy companies,” she explains. Now, Wilson bases her products on botanical infusions from plants she’s grown or collected, including wild beach roses,

clover and spring poplar buds.

It only takes a whiff to dispel the myth that natural perfumes lack sophistication or tenacity. “Naturals have a breadth of possibilities—opulent white florals, fresh and clean, or dirty and smoky,” expounds Wilson.

Eco-beauty is emerging from conscious lifestyle choices and creating the next era

of cosmetics. “It’s fun to be called a pioneer in organic beauty,” muses Behnke. “Our products, employees and happy customers comprise an encouraging accomplishment.”

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