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Meet Live Native Skincare!



This month John interviews Vicky Ewbank, co-owner of Live Native skincare based in Skye.

So, Vicky, why did you decide to set up your own natural skincare company when there is so much competition?

A combination of the right thing to do and the right time to do it! I have been interested in health and nutrition since I started work at Hanover Healthfoods at the age of 19, which is also when I became vegetarian. A few years later I became vegan and since 2002 I have enjoyed a raw vegan diet. I also studied nutrition and homoeopathy (qualifying in 1999) and have been in private practice since.

When I became a raw vegan I realised that although there were many organic skincare ranges, there wasn't any *living* organic skincare!

Having made a conscious personal choice to cleanse my body by eating only fresh, organic and living vegan foods, I couldn't then use conventional organic moisturisers or I would simply be putting the 'dead' ingredients that I had eliminated from my diet onto my skin instead. Trans-fats, hydrogenated oils, alcohol and sodium benzoate can all be

and the conventional production methods strip the vitality from the raw ingredients.

I decided to make my own 'living skinfoods' from premium, fresh ingredients with proven therapeutic benefit and formulated with the knowledge that I had accumulated. It was after using my own skin recipes for a couple of years and feeling how nourished and healthy my own skin had become that my partner Ian and I decided to set up Live Native skincare which we officially launched in 2008.

What is your philosophy when it comes to skincare?

"If you wouldn't eat it, then why would you use it on your skin" sums up our philosophy pretty well! We take this concept to its ultimate expression with Live Native skincare. In addition to our organic, fairly traded and food-quality ingredients we also seek to use only the freshest, unpasteurised and cold-pressed ingredients, which we then raw-blend at low temperature (below 40C) in order to retain nature's store of life-loving enzymes and nature-intact nutrients. This results in skincare with a real affinity with our living skin.

Our products are quickly and cleanly absorbed with no greasy residue, and contain an abundance of nutrients to truly nourish and care for all skin types. Also, every ingredient has been chosen for its therapeutic benefit to the skin, resulting in what we term 'adaptogenic skincare' - skincare that is suitable for all skin types - as the nutrient-rich formulations simply restore even problem skin to health.

How thorough are you in picking your ingredients?

(continued overleaf)

DEFINING: Turmeric

Turmeric is one of the most widely used of spices, particularly in Asian cooking where it imparts its orange colour and warm, earthy aroma to food. However, research over the past few years shows that Turmeric has some really remarkable properties which make it one of the real superstars of herbal medicine.

Turmeric has long been established in the Indian system of medicine for rheumatic pains, coughs, and to increase milk production. Health stores have sold it for a couple of decades now, mainly for its anti-inflammatory properties in arthritis.

These benefits are now only the tip of the iceberg. Turmeric is an extremely strong anti-oxidant, it helps protect the liver from damage and, most importantly, there is a growing wealth of early stage research showing its anti-tumour abilities and reduction of pre-cancerous states. Even Cancer Research UK describes the benefits as promising, with some caveats of course.

The main active chemical in Turmeric is Curcumin (diferuloyl methane). The two names are used interchangeably which causes some confusion. Curcumin is the extract from Turmeric and will be slightly stronger, but only slightly so.

An article published in the British Journal of Pharmacology in February compared the anti-inflammatory benefits of Turmeric against drugs which have a similar pathway, such as Infliximab which is used for psoriasis and Crohn's Disease. They conclude that Curcumin is cheap and effective



for all of the ailments that the drugs are currently used for. And safe too.

On the cancer side the results are pretty promising but have still a long way to go. In the lab Curcumin seems to be effective in killing breast, bowel, stomach and skin cancer cells and preventing others from growing. An animal study in 2007 seemed to show that Curcumin stopped the spread of cancer cells to other organs. Another study showed that Turmeric plus chemotherapy gave better results than chemo alone. Needless to say, speak to your doctor before you reach any conclusions!

One of the major problems with Turmeric though is actually getting it into the body. Taking it in food fried in oil, blending it with coconut oil or using fresh black pepper are all different ways of giving it a better chance of getting in. A good teaspoon a day would give you levels covered by most research.

John, Diploma in Health Food Retailing

What are the key products in the Live Native range?

A daily skincare routine would comprise of cleanser, toner and moisturiser with perhaps a serum for additional nourishment. I don't recommend a traditional night cream as these tend to be clogging at a time when the skin needs to detoxify and produce its own moisturising oils. I do recommend using our Botanic Earth Mud Mask once a week to draw out impurities and to flood the skin with anti-oxidants - essential to protect the skin from the effects of daily stress and pollution.

Our key products are: Essential Earth Exfoliating Cleanser in the morning (think 'breakfast for the skin'), followed by Essential Mist Toner with MSM (to build collagen). Then Essential Woman or Everybody Every Day moisturiser, with Essential Beauty Serum being optional. In the evening I recommend cleansing with Pure Native Cleansing Balm, and a simple spray of Essential Mist Toner.

Our ingredients are the most important asset to our business, and our criterion for selection is incredibly stringent. Ingredients must be fresh, organic or wild-harvested, fairly traded, food-grade, freeze-dried, cold-pressed or extracted at less than 40C to retain the maximum enzymatic and therapeutic benefits!

Selection of some of our key ingredients took months, and we are fortunate to have discovered some incredible producers. Our Shea Butter is the only truly raw shea in production - hand made by a women's co-operative in Ghana from untoasted shea nuts, cold-water maceration and dehydrated at 115F to dry. Our pure, fresh Aloe Vera gel is hand filleted in France, charcoal pressed, unpasteurised and simply preserved with Vitamin C and essential oil of orange.

We even avoid using alcohol, water or any food grade preservative such as potassium sorbate or sodium benzoate, all of which are acceptable in organic skincare, as these would compromise the purity of Live Native. We pride ourselves on producing fresh, pure and zero-toxin - yet truly effective - skincare.

Is it easy to run a skincare company from the wilds of Skye?

I'm sure there are easier places to run a company from, but not too many with such clean, fresh air and breathtaking views! Thankfully we are well served with broadband!

Introductory Offer: Live Native are offering a Free 20ml Mist Toner and a 2ml Beauty Serum (total value £11.50) with every Live Native purchase over £20. Only one deal per customer and whilst stocks last!