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The Perfection Myth

Japan's kaiseki
revolution • Fashion
does the right thing •
The new mind-set
for success

— Plus —

The Next Beauty
and Wellness
Pioneers



HEALTH & WELLNESS

that claims to smooth and firm the skin, the doctor now has us covered from head to toe with just three products. "I believe in simplicity," he says. "But more than anything, I'm focused on creating sustainable products that deliver measurable results." (augustinusbader.com)



The Purist

For Irene Forte, healthy living isn't just about what you put in your body—it's about what you put *on* your body. The founder of Irene Forte Skincare, a clean skin- and body-care collection of more than two dozen products that launched via Net-a-Porter in July, has a healthy obsession with natural ingredients. "I've always believed in the power of plants," she says. "As Italians, we are passionate about the Mediterranean diet, but I strongly believe that it is also the healthiest diet for your skin."

The London-based Forte, who also serves as the wellness director for Rocco Forte Hotels (the hospitality brand her father established in 1996), began to study the benefits of plants when she realized she was sitting on a wealth of organic ingredients at her family's Verdura Resort in Sicily. The property's 570 acres are home to thousands of trees bearing olives, oranges, almonds, pomegranates and lemons, all of which would become the basis for her collection. "We have some amazing ingredients in Sicily that really work wonders on the skin," she explains. "Prickly pear is a plant-origin hyaluronic acid and the latest

superfood, for instance, and hibiscus is known as the 'Botox plant.'"

Armed with enough ingredients to create an arsenal of moisturizers, serums, face masks and body creams, Forte turned to Dr. Francesca Ferri of Italy's EffegiLab. Known for her studies in psoriasis, as well as her research in extracting resveratrol from grapes, the doctor spent three years co-developing a new skin-care line that satisfied Forte's natural ethos. Essential oils were forbidden—"they can create the illusion of moisturized, hydrated skin, all the while suffocating your pores," Forte warns—and chemical emulsifiers, a common ingredient that makes it easier to establish a stable skin-care formula, were also banned. So were fragrances—even natural ones—that carried any traces of allergens. The stringent rules left Ferri and Forte with numerous challenges; the study of natural emulsifiers alone took upward of two years. "We are still doing a number of stability tests for additional products," Forte adds.

What their tireless testing ultimately created is a truly comprehensive and sustainable skin-care collection. The pistachio lip balm (\$24) hydrates with shea and mango butters and pistachio oil, the hibiscus serum's (\$145) lifting effect comes from the flower's hyaluronic acid, and the pomegranate face mask (\$115) brightens with the fruit's antioxidants. "These ingredients are also 100 percent recognized by the body, given that they are ingredients that we actually eat," Forte says. It's a pure taste of Italy... for your face. (ireneforteskincare.com)



The Crusader

Ronit Raphael's skin-care mission is a personal one. As a teenager with acne, she sought out the expertise of a specialist—and the results were life-altering. "I tried a chemical peel that caused second-degree burns and seriously damaged my skin," says the founder of the skin-care brand L.Raphael. "It became my mission to educate myself so I could heal myself."

Though doctors told Raphael she had little chance of recovering, she dedicated her life to meeting scientists and dermatologists who would eventually prove them wrong. "I honestly didn't know what I was looking for when I started," she recalls. "I had many scars and pigmentation and was driven to find a solution and get my confidence

L.Raphael's
Ultimate Anti-
Wrinkle Lifting
Hydrating Mask,
\$325



back—and that's exactly what the L.Raphael brand turned out to be about."

More than two decades later, in 2003, Raphael founded her brand on what she calls the "seven foundations of beauty": stress management, age management, nutrition, aesthetics, medicine, leisure and physical activity. Her collection—dressed in Hermès-orange packaging and ranging from detoxifying scrubs with nourishing Dead Sea mud (\$131) to masks that use powerful doses of vitamin C to reduce pigmentation (\$1,350 for a pack of 28)—is, as Raphael says, part of an ethos that's ultimately about cultivating self-esteem, not just wrinkle-free faces. "There are no youth genes, no longevity genes," she explains. "We're optimizing health of the skin with an integrated approach."

Now in her 50s, Raphael may be as much the poster child for her brand's anti-aging effects as she is for its healthy attitude. There are no traces of her childhood scarring, and her youthful look is natural, not surgical. Though her skin care is backed by science—its products tout the regenerative benefits of concentrated oxygen and use rare ingredients like green caviar, Japanese microalgae known to encourage skin-cell rejuvenation—it is also supported by a holistic experience of fitness and nutritional wellness. At her Temple of Beauty in Geneva, this approach is especially evident: In addition to facials and body treatments, she offers yoga, nutrition assessments and electrical muscle stimulation. She also brings "private spas" to clients' homes (or jets or yachts) for bespoke programs.

Still, Raphael remains true to the scarred young girl who initially kicked off her skin-care crusade. Though her Oxy Green Caviar spa treatments stripped years off my face, she insists that no facial or cream can instantly change anyone's life. "L.Raphael is not about miracle creams—it's about dedication and resilience," she says. "It's about ensuring that we help our guests become their best selves, and there's no doubt in my mind that our approach will soon become a standard practice in the beauty industry." (l-raphael.com)



Irene Forte's
Hibiscus Night
Cream, \$168