



Fifty Shades of White

WHITENING DOESN'T HAVE TO DAMAGE YOUR SKIN. JESSICA NG SURVEYS PRODUCTS THAT TAKE A NATURAL, HOLISTIC APPROACH TO PERKING UP YOUR COMPLEXION

BANISHING SUN SPOTS and brightening our complexion was once a tricky business. Many whitening products contained harsh ingredients, which gave skin the desired porcelain glow but caused irritation and dryness as well. Thankfully a raft of high-end beauty brands have discovered a more holistic way of combating the effects of the sun.

La Mer, for example, sources its natural remedy from the sea, using kelp and algae as the star ingredients in the Blanc de la Mer whitening line. The variety of brown kelp used enhances skin's natural cell turnover, so sun-damaged layers are quickly replaced by a healthy mantle of skin, while the algae inhibits the formation of age spots and stops melanin from reaching the surface of the skin and causing discoloration. "A product needs to deliver powerful yet gentle whitening joined with deep hydration and soothing benefits," says Loretta Miraglia, La Mer's senior vice president of global brand product development and innovation.

Another skincare giant to source its natural whitening ingredients from the depths of the sea is La Prairie, with its White Caviar Illuminating Système. It is named after its prized ingredient, golden caviar, which is rich in Omega-3 fatty acids that help boost antioxidant levels in the skin, keeping it firm. The whitening capabilities stem from the other natural ingredients, including Swiss garden cress sprout, liquorice root, horsetail and ginseng, which safely fade existing dark spots and prevent excess pigment formation.



The miraculous healing powers of ginseng are highlighted in Asian skincare lines. A perennial favourite in the cupboards of medicine men, the root is much sought after for its rejuvenative properties. Ginseng is a cure-all for anti-ageing and whitening; a strong antioxidant, it promotes blood circulation, prevents melanin build-up, improves dullness, relieves sun-induced inflammation, rehydrates, prevents collagen damage and restores collagen regeneration.

Ginseng is the star ingredient of Sulwhasoo's Snowise EX Whitening Line. The Korean skincare company is known for combining Korean herbal medicine with modern technology to create safer products that naturally heal the skin. The Snowise EX Whitening Line combines ginseng

LIGHTEN UP
FROM LEFT
Clé de Peau
Beauté
Brightening
Enhancer Base
and Powder;
Sulwhasoo
Snowise EX
Whitening Eye
Treatment



BRIGHT IDEAS

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP
 Sulwhasoo Snowise ex Whitening Cream; La Prairie White Caviar Illuminating Hand Cream; La Mer Whitening Essence Intense; Clarins White Plus Intensive Brightening Serum; Lancôme Blanc Expert Nuit

with snake-needle grass, a herb that relieves heat, detoxifies cells, improves blood circulation and reduces the redness and yellowness caused by too much sun.

Olivier Courtin-Clarins, the managing director of Clarins, echoes the sentiment that “good whitening products help regenerate your cells, remove melanin and strengthen your blood vessels.” Once natural, healthy skin cells are replenished, whitening will follow. Armed with its wealth of botanical knowledge, Clarins developed the White Plus line that draws on the holistic properties of ginkgo biloba and sand spurry. Long renowned for its curative effects on the mind, ginkgo also improves microcirculation, which reduces discoloration. Sand spurry helps with melanin-regulation and reducing dark spots.

The restorative properties of flowers are also crucial to Lancôme’s products. The rose, for instance, is more than a pretty symbol for the skincare company; it’s also a featured ingredient in the Blanc Expert line. The brightening effect of the rose works in conjunction with the specially formulated Blanc Expert Melanolyser to reduce dark patches and restore a healthy glow.

The healing properties of the rose also feature heavily in the Clé de Peau Beauté Brightening Enhancer Base and Powder. The wild rose extract

offers an added layer of protection from environmental harms, as well as brightening up the complexion. The skin is not the only way for the sun’s harmful rays to invade the body. “The truth is [UV] can also penetrate through the eyes” says Yamagishi Nahoko, Clé de Peau’s make-up artist “and can allow melanin to deposit in the body without being noticed.” To protect ourselves from the invasive rays, Yamagishi’s adds, “It is important to protect the eyes with adequate intake of vitamin C and wolfberries to moisturise and whiten the skin deep from within.”

Armed with this arsenal of safer and more natural whitening products, you should now be able to achieve marble-smooth skin without losing your natural glow. ■

