

NATURALLY BEAUTIFUL

But for people who are concerned about the synthetic chemicals present in what they eat, where they live and what they clean their surroundings with, it's logical to pay attention to what they put on their skin. Many people are worried about the state of the planet, as much as their own good looks and may also feel that these products are better for their health. According to the Organic Makeup Company, up to 60 per cent of what is applied to the skin soaks through to the blood vessels where it is processed by the liver. So, perhaps it's in your best interests to try to find natural alternatives to your favourite cosmetics.

Let's have a look at the following companies that consider themselves to be natural and/or eco-friendly.

THE ORGANIC MAKEUP COMPANY

This company, which just launched in May, says that they use 100 per cent natural, vegan and genetically modified organism-free ingredients. They even endeavour to use certified organic ingredients where possible.

The Organic Makeup Company has a wide variety of blushes, eye shadows, powders, concealers, lip colours and skin care products. They also carry soaps, as well as neck and eye rest pillows (which contain scents like lavender and chamomile to help you rest). Their products are available online at www.organicmakeup.ca.

Some companies make an effort to be natural and eco-friendly, but be careful when evaluating their claims. *By KIM EDWARDS*

Lately, everywhere you turn there are cosmetics that are called "natural," "organic," "cruelty-free," and "environmentally friendly." But what do these terms actually mean and how do we know that companies are being honest about their claims? Paula Begoun, the "Cosmetics cop" and author of *Don't Go to the Cosmetics Counter Without Me* says the buyer should be wary of cosmetics companies making these claims. "None of these terms are regulated nor

do they have agreed-upon definitions within the cosmetics industry. These terms are used haphazardly and indiscriminately by cosmetics companies. I've seen lots of products with very unnatural ingredients be called by any and all those terms."



Health by Chocolate
Instant Bliss Beauty
Bar, \$4.49



Flower Color
lipsticks, \$17.95

Organic dark chocolate mask, \$27.95

ECCO BELLA

Ecco Bella, which has been based in New Jersey since 1992, say that their cosmetics are pure and natural, contain no animal ingredients and are free from animal testing. They also say that holistic dermatologists often recommend their products.

They have a wide variety of cosmetic products, including lipsticks, foundations, and skin care products.

Recently, Ecco Bella has been promoting our favorite treat, chocolate, as a beauty ingredient. Their organic dark chocolate mask is rich in iron, magnesium, vitamins and antioxidants, which they say nourishes and cleanses skin. Going even further with the health effects of chocolate, their Health by Chocolate Instant Bliss Beauty Bars and Drinks contain polyphenols, powerful antioxidants that are in fruits, vegetables and green tea. They also contain cranberry seed oil for omega 3 fatty acids, plus blueberry extract, lutein, lycopene and as much fiber as an apple.

Finally, Ecco Bella's Flower Color cosmetics use flower waxes which make the products go on smoother, more evenly and last longer.

Ecco Bella products are available at various salons and spas, and at Loblaws stores.

THE BODY SHOP

One of the lines most associated with the idea of "natural beauty," The Body

Shop say that none of their ingredients or products are tested on animals, their products are natural-ingredient rich, and that they use ingredients such as almond, aloe vera and wheat germ oil from sustainable sources. However, they admit that they use some synthetics, which they say is due to their high volume. They encourage

recycling of their packaging, and have a program where you can get your containers refilled with their products.

The Body Shop is currently revamping their cosmetic line, formerly called Colourings, so you can look forward to

say that more than 75 per cent of their products are unpreserved). Their use of synthetics is somewhat controversial, as they say claim to use safe synthetics when they absolutely have to, such as sodium lauryl sulphate to create bubbles. However, Begoun says that sodium lauryl sulphate can be quite irritating, and that many other companies have phased out the use of this ingredient.

They use minimal packaging since many of their products come in bar format, and they encourage recycling.

Lush does not have cosmetics, but they do have fragrances which are non-alcohol based and are made from their own blends of essential oils.

Karma is a blend of patchouli and ylang ylang, and is described as "hippy at heart and full of eastern promise."

Ginger has notes of ginger and juniper berry, as well as floral-green notes of mimosa, ylang ylang, geranium, rose and jasmine.

Both fragrances come in gift sets with bath bombs, bubble bars and dusting powder. Lush products are available at their stores or online at www.lush.com.



Honey, Nettle and
Olive shampoos and
conditioners, \$11
for small

more makeup options. They've also just come out with a new hair care line designed to combat common problems. Shown here are shampoos and conditioners designed for specific types of hair. Honey is designed for dry/damaged/chemically-treated hair, olive is for normal/dry hair and nettle is for normal/oily hair. The Body Shop's products are available at their stores.

LUSH

This U.K.-based company, features handmade, "fresh" products. They say that they do not test on animals and do not buy ingredients from companies that test on animals. They claim to use natural ingredients whenever possible, and very little preservatives (they

Karma fragrance,
\$38.95

Ginger
fragrance,
\$59.95



Ecco Bella products photographed by James Gayler. All other photos provided by their respective companies.