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GET YOUR GLOWON

Korean skin care trends to wow your clients

BY JANEL LUU

Bored with traditional skin care? Tired of hearing the same catchwords and promises? Then all you need to do is take a closer look at the skin care that Korea has to offer, and you'll be surprised (and occasionally entertained) by the trends that are taking the beauty industry by storm. In fact, the breakneck speed of innovation is driving the growth of South Korea's buzzing beauty industry, estimated at \$13 billion in just the past year. Whether it's about a new twist in a facial protocol, an innovative product, or an unusual ingredient, there's always something to learn from K-Beauty.

NOT JUST A PRODUCT, IT'S AN EXPERIENCE

K-Beauty blurs the lines in creating innovative experiences and surprises. Ten-step regimens that include double-cleansing are not the only path to achieving "glass skin," known for its clear, luminous, dewy, and seemingly poreless quality. With every new trend, it's almost as if skin care goes hybrid as textures combine and transform. Masks become foam, oil morphs into cream, exfoliants double as moisturizers. Here are a couple of interesting skin care methods and unusual products that are not only effective, but are also an unforgettable experience in themselves.

Fascia-Firming Massage

For those who prefer more of a handson approach to skin rejuvenation before age prevention products are applied, it's essential to know what lies underneath the skin in order to sculpt it-and that's the beauty of fasciafirming techniques. This type of facial resculpting zeros in on the superficial fascia, which is the connective tissue laying underneath the skin, right next to the layers of muscle. During massage along Meridian lines, wrinkles and creases in the fascia are smoothed out by rolling and pressing along the jawline and neck. The look of drooping eyelids, dull skin, and puffiness can be minimized by using the forefinger and thumb to gently pinch and roll along the eye sockets and eyebrows. As an added bonus, the experience of being touched releases oxytocin for a sense of overall well-being.

The basic fascia-firming protocol starts at the scalp ("the governing vessel"), continues at the décolleté and the ten primary Meridian points on the face, and then sweeps down the side of the neck to move out toxins. Basic steps for the protocol are as follows:

STEP 1: Press scalp along Meridian pathways to release energy blockage. **STEP 2:** Massage scalp oil into skin along Meridian pathways on the scalp,



making sure that none drips into the eyes.

STEP 3: Press and release Meridian jade tool in an upward and outward direction along Meridian pathways on the scalp.

STEP 4: Cleanse the facial area and pat dry.

STEP 5: Apply facial oil or facial balm to the face, neck, and décolleté.

STEP 6: Starting from each of the primary ten Meridian points on the face, use Meridian jade tool to perform slight strokes upward and outward.

STEP 7: Use the forefinger and thumb to perform gentle pinching, rolling movements along the eye sockets and eyebrows.

STEP 8: Glide tool down the side of the neck to sweep down toxins and clear energy flow.

STEP 9: Cover the face, neck, and décolleté with a warm towel. Remove. **STEP 10:** Apply a sheet mask. Meridian massage may be performed over the mask. Remove after fifteen minutes.

STEP 11: Apply products that contain peptides, stem cells, growth factors, and antioxidants, including toner, serum, moisturizer, and sun protection.

The Seven Skin Method

Also known as the "Seven Toner Method," the "Seven Skin Method" is a regimen where seven layers of toner are layered on in succession. In this way, the skin is drenched with moisture, without the heaviness or greasiness that may come with layering traditional oils and creams. Providing the optimal balance of hydration and skin's natural oils, it's the fast track to the Korean ideal, "chok chok," referring to a plump, luminous, dewy glow to the complexion. This is a great addition to any deep cleansing facial, as it is intensely hydrating without being occlusive. It's great for clients with oily or clog-prone skin. With this method, however, it's important to avoid toners with alcohol, which will dry out the skin and potentially cause irritation if layered more than once.

🕕 Bubble masks

Due to this obsession with Korean beauty, masks come in an infinite variety of choices, ranging from splashed-on liquid to painted-on mud. One popular version is the bubble mask, with activated bubbles that introduce micronized ingredients into the skin. The sensation is unique—like tiny champagne bubbles tickling skin as they oxygenate skin cells. Bubble masks provide a sensorial quality that is exciting for clients, who rarely have experienced anything like it. It's a great surprise during a facial: clients feel a playful tickling, an unusual effervescent "crackle, pop" sensation. Bubble masks are a fun and effective way to hydrate and oxygenate skin, and even provide a brightening effect.

INNOVATIVE (AND SURPRISING) K-BEAUTY INGREDIENTS

No one would blame you if you thought that ginseng, jellyfish, bamboo, bird nests, and pig collagen were the ingredients of a traditional Asian family stew recipe dating back hundreds of years. But these ingredients have also become trending on facial back bars in addition to the pantry shelves. Here are some unusual ingredients that have also been trending across the globe.

🕒 Silk worm cocoons

You probably wouldn't associate worms with beauty, but silkworm cocoons are another K-Beauty novelty. Silkworms create their cocoon to protect themselves as they metamorphose into a future butterfly. For skin care use, the cocoons are dried and cleaned. Before using, they should be immersed in hot water until they become a soft, soggy "sock" to put on the finger. This can then be used as a silky-soft way to exfoliate your client's skin and get rid of flaky patches.

Sericin is a protein found in the silk threads making up cocoons, which can be extracted as a powder and used in skin care oils or creams. Sericin is said to help improve the skin barrier by keeping skin hydrated and sealing in moisture.

🕒 Starfish

These amazing creatures are usually sought after by tide pool sight-seers, but now starfish are receiving a closer look for their skin care benefits in the latest "must-have" face creams. Since starfish can regenerate their own lost or injured limbs, can they hold the secret to skin regeneration as well? Starfish extract is loaded with collagen, calcium, and skin-loving vitamins, which are all skin care ingredients that help plump skin, smooth out wrinkles, and rejuvenate the complexion.

As this ingredient trend spreads, it's not likely that the ocean's supply will be depleted. Scientists have indicated that the starfish used in beauty creams are bi-products of environmental groups that reduce the overgrowth of the starfish population in order to prevent the destruction of coral reefs and other essential fish habitats.

😗 Bamboo

Not just food for pandas, bamboo has been used for centuries in Korea for helping heal skin. Not surprising, since bamboo regenerates itself incredibly fast, skyrocketing upward at an average rate of three to five feet a year, and some varieties actually grow over a foot a day. Used in skincare, bamboo is known as an excellent hydrator, drawing moisture to the skin to plump it up. And no worries about depleting the bamboo forests of the world-due to its rapid growth, it's one of the most sustainable ingredients in skin care you'll ever find!

SPREAD THE GLOW

Stay on top of K-Beauty trends by pepping up your own skin care regimen, transforming your facial protocols, and passing along the information to clients. In this way, you'll be at the forefront of the global skin care industry by continuing the spread of this amazing "K-phenomenon." You won't just find ways to benefit skin... in the process, you'll add a lot more fun, excitement, and surprises to your practice! And who doesn't love a good surprise?



Janel Luu has over 30 years of experience as an international educator, skin care researcher and developer, international

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