

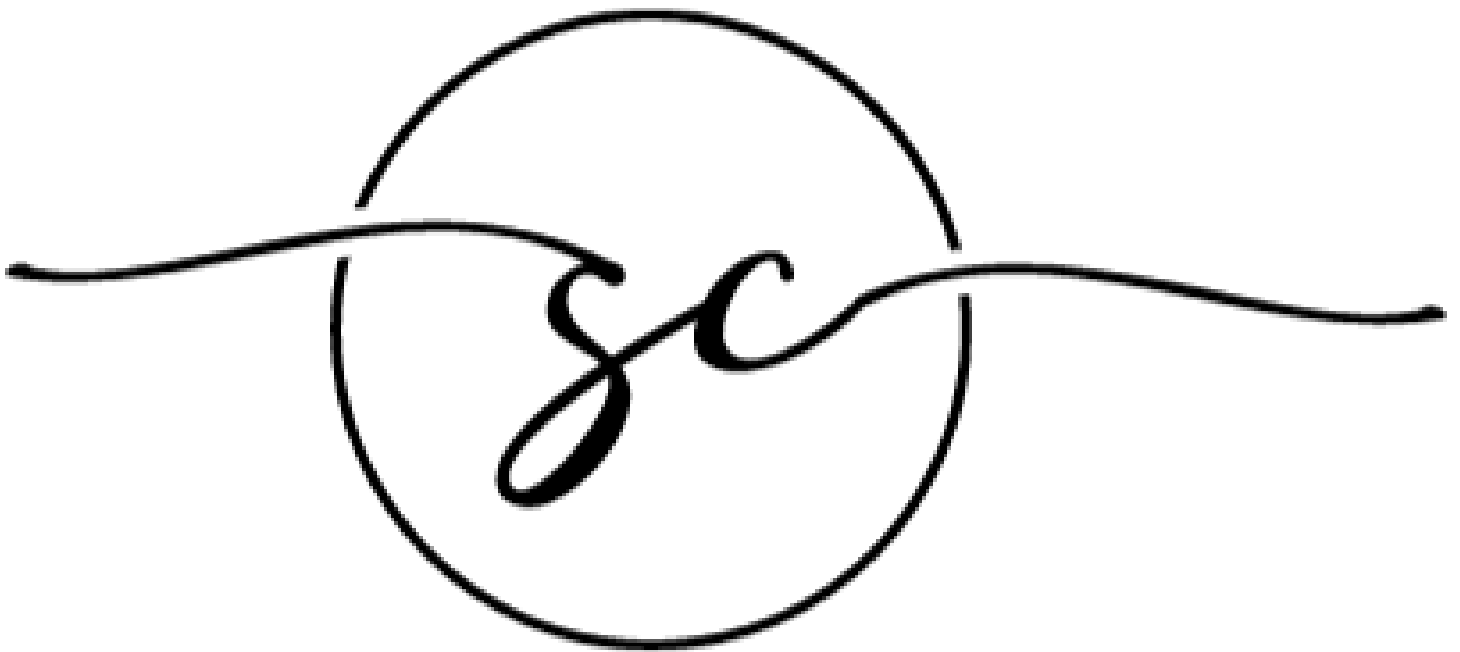


Skincare Ingredient Spotlight

Beyond the Ordinary: 49 Weirdly Effective Skincare Ingredients from Around the World You Need to Know

the what, why, & where

R o b i n L e e



I want to inspire and celebrate the beauty, creativity, and uniqueness of all of us and encourage you to be the most beautiful version of your precious self.

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TIPS FOR CHOOSING SKINCARE



Know your skin type
or condition.

Understand the
product's
composition.

Don't buy into hype
or exaggerated
claims.

Always do a patch
test.

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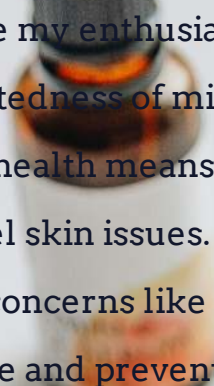
Introduction

Snail slime, volcanic ash, chebula fruit - these exotic skincare ingredients are taking the beauty world by storm! You've probably come across numerous articles and books discussing the benefits of these ingredients. And with everyone claiming to be an "expert" or influencer on platforms like YouTube and TikTok, it can be overwhelming to know who to trust.

The latest trend in skincare is all about concentrated products and the "less is more" approach. Targeted skincare ingredients are not only addressing specific skin concerns but also revolutionizing the way we approach skincare - less product overuse and more treatments that actually deliver results. Consumers are increasingly interested in the ingredients used in their skincare products, seeking clean, safe, and effective options.

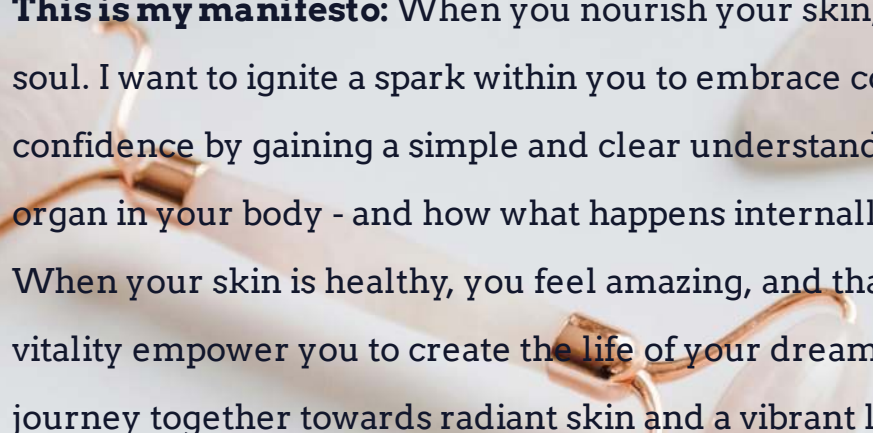
As a licensed esthetician, wellness enthusiast, and writer, my passion lies in promoting self-love and confidence through skin health, holistic living, and tapping into our creative power to manifest health, wealth, and happiness. My journey into skincare began over a decade ago when I discovered the Euro Institute of Skin Care, and the exciting field of esthetics, sparking a deep curiosity about the functions of the skin and the beauty of holistic skincare practices.

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I am thrilled to share my enthusiasm for wellness, the art of feeling good, and the interconnectedness of mind, body, and spirit with you. Taking a holistic approach to health means considering overall well-being, not just treating surface-level skin issues. By embracing holistic systems, we can effectively address concerns like aging, acne, and hyperpigmentation in a more comprehensive and preventive manner.

My passion for wellness, the art of feeling good, and the interconnectedness of the mind, body, and spirit is at the heart of what I do.



This is my manifesto: When you nourish your skin, you nourish your soul. I want to ignite a spark within you to embrace complete skin confidence by gaining a simple and clear understanding of the largest organ in your body - and how what happens internally reflects externally. When your skin is healthy, you feel amazing, and that confidence and vitality empower you to create the life of your dreams. Let's embark on this journey together towards radiant skin and a vibrant life!

Thanks for your skinterest - Glow Wherever You Go!



Andiroba Oil (Brazil)

What It Is: (Carapa Guianensis) Andiroba oil is extracted from a tropical tree that thrives in the climate of the Amazon rainforest in Brazil.

Registered into the national registry of useful medicinal plants by the Brazilian Health Department, and relatively unknown to the rest of the world, is recognized by Brazilians for its health benefits dating back to ancient times when the tree was used to cure fevers and digestive disorders.

What It Does: Lightweight and fast absorbing, Andiroba oil is anti-inflammatory, loaded with antioxidants and aids wound healing. By promoting collagen synthesis, andiroba oil helps wounds heal properly with minimal scarring. Andiroba oil is also rich in tannins, compounds that can help strengthen the walls of veins, blood vessels, and lymphatic vessels, improving circulation.

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Who Is It For: Andiroba oil is a particularly good choice for dry or irritated skin for its moisturizing and soothing properties. Blemish prone or oily should patch test before using, although this oil is very lightweight and typically does not clog pores. Also, those with nut allergies should use caution since this oil is derived from tree nuts.

Where to Find It:

- [Tribe Skincare Andiroba Oil](#)
- [Rainforest Chica Andiroba Oil](#)
- [Natura Brasil Andiroba Skincare](#)





Angelica Root (Iceland)

What It Is: (*Angelica archangelica*) Myth and folklore claim that Angelica Archangelica root gets its name from Michael the Archangel who brought the root to earth to cure the plague. Since Viking times, the bitter, aromatic herb has been used medicinally. Native American tribes relied on it as an anti-inflammatory, an antispasmodic and a pain reliever. The herb can grow up to six feet tall, with greenish white flowers.

What It Does: It helps reduce the appearance of dark spots, discoloration, and post-acne scarring. It also helps to diffuse accumulated excess melanin, a cause of hyperpigmentation, resulting in a visibly more even skin tone.

Who Is It For: Angelica root is suitable for all skin types, especially if brighter skin is your goal. Incorporate it into your daily regimen if you have uneven skin tone. You might just need less time applying concealer!

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Where to Find It:

- [Rock & Herb Arctic Miracles Brightening Angelica Moisturizer](#)
- [Lily Herbs Angelica Root Youth Restore Foaming Cleanser](#)
- [Tatcha Violet-C Brightening Serum](#)





Baobab (Africa, Madagascar)

What It Is: (genus *Adansonia*) Baobab is referred to as the “tree of life”. It is native to Africa and it definitely deserves its nickname since a single tree can live for over 500 years. The pulp which is extracted from its pods and then transformed into raw powder—has been a favorite ingredient in wellness and beauty treatments for centuries.

What It Does: Because Baobab is packed with vitamins B, C, and Omega 3s, when used in skincare it can help nourish dry and mature skin. As an oil it helps soothe eczema and relieve dandruff, (does not replace medications for the conditions).

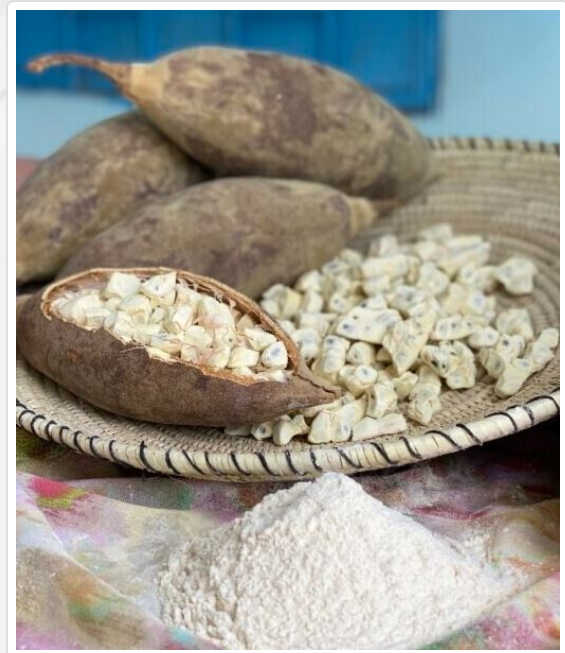
There is not a lot of scientific research on how baobab seed oil works for the skin. A small 2017 study found that baobab oil moisturizes and improves skin barrier function, due to the three major fatty acids in the oil: linoleic acid, oleic acid, and palmitic acid, which help reduce water loss and help improve moisture retention in the skin.

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Who Is It For: Baobab is very gentle, so it is recommended for sensitive skin conditions as well as dry and dehydrated. As with any new product, start slowly and do a skin test patch prior to regular use.

Where to Find It:

- [Sable Labs Baobab Moisturizer](#)
- [Ustawi Skincare Radiance Bi-Gel Serum](#)
- [Odacite Skincare Eye Contour BA+S Serum Concentrate](#)





Bhringraj Oil (India, Brazil, Thailand)

What It Is: (*Eclipta alba*) A trending beauty oil emerging in both skin and hair products that helps with everything from dandruff to dry skin. This oil is derived from an herb that has been used for centuries in Ayurvedic medicine. Also known as False Daisy Oil, it grows wild in tropical and subtropical climates, including West Africa, Brazil, India, and Thailand. Rich in phytonutrients and minerals, such as flavonoids, potassium, magnesium, and iron, it is a potent antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and anti-microbial.

What It Does: It can help reduce inflammation in blemish prone skin, and its anti-microbial and soothing properties make it useful in relieving itching and redness in eczema, psoriasis, and dermatitis skin conditions. It helps prevent bacterial and fungal infections on the skin and scalp. The oil is said to be cool and calming and in Ayurvedic medicine is often used as a stress reliever.

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Who Is It For: All skin types benefit, including blemish prone and oily, dry scalp conditions like dandruff due to its hydrating properties. It is also said to promote hair growth.

Note: *Blemish prone/acneic skin conditions should test patch. Although the oil is an anti-inflammatory, it may be comedogenic (pore clogging) for some individuals.*

Where to Find It:

- [Banyan Botanicals Bhringraj Oil](#)
- [Sea Kind Brilliance Beautiful Shampoo](#)
- [Maui Rituals Grow Strong Hair Oil](#)





Black Rice (Japan)

What It Is: (*Oryza sativa*) Known in Asia as “forbidden rice”, in ancient China it was reserved for use by royalty only. Black rice has amazing nutritional properties. It has 18 amino acids, minerals and vitamins like copper, iron, zinc, and carotene. Black rice contains antioxidants which helps protect the skin from environmental stressors like pollution and sun damage. It is used both fermented and non-fermented. from fine lines and wrinkles to dark spots. Black rice will also help to balance and restore skin elasticity.

What It Does: Black rice contains Vitamin E, which helps to keep skin hydrated and supple. It is also a source of Vitamin B, which helps reduce hyperpigmentation, dark spots, and even skin tone. The antioxidants in black rice can help reduce inflammation, which may be beneficial for relieving the redness and inflammation associated with breakouts. Black rice peptides activate the metabolism of the skin and encourage the production of collagen.

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Who Is It For: Black rice's antioxidants, particularly anthocyanin, (the same compound that gives blueberries their health benefits) help combat free radicals – unstable molecules that can damage cells, including skin cells, leading to premature aging. The amino acids in black rice assist in the production of new skin cells.

Where to Find It:

- [Dearboo Black Rice Hyaluronic Acid Rejuvenating Toner](#)
- [HaruHaru Black Rice Bakuchiol Eye Cream](#)
- [Perlier Black Rice Renewing Booster Serum](#)





Buah Merah (Indonesia)

What It Is: (*Pandanus conoidus*) Hailed as a super fruit, Buah Merah is an exotic fruit from the islands in Indonesia, Australia, and New Guinea. Buah Merah is believed to have one of the highest amounts of antioxidants in the plant world, more than double the amount of goji berries and almost seven times the amount of acai berries! Buah merah oil is prized for its nourishing and softening benefits. It is quickly absorbed into the skin. It is loaded with natural carotenoids, Vitamins A,D,K,E,F, tocopherols, linoleic and Oleic acids, Omegas 6 and 9.

What It Does: This non-irritating, lightweight, fast absorbing oil easily penetrates the skin and helps to minimize wrinkles and fine lines, helps with hyper-pigmentation, stimulates elastin and improves the skins elasticity, making it an excellent ingredient choice for mature skin and concerns with signs of aging. It's anti-inflammatory properties helps to reduce redness and irritation, helping with conditions such as dermatitis, eczema, and psoriasis.

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Who It's For: Excellent for mature or sensitive skin conditions prone to redness or irritation.

Where to Find It:

- [Skincare for Hope Skin Relief & Moisturizing Cream](#)
- [Ladson's Buah Merah Mandarin Lotion Bar](#)
- [TigerLilly's Buah Merah Oil Cold Pressed](#)





Burdekin Plum Fruit Extract (Australia)

What It Is: (*Pleiogynium timoriense*) Burdekin plums are large, black, pumpkin-shaped fruits that grow in northeastern Australia and contain high levels of vitamin C and cyanidin 3-glucoside, an anthocyanin (pigments found in fruits and flowers that give them their color) antioxidant. These compounds may help slow down free radical damage to the skin, which can be caused by pollution, UV rays, and unhealthy lifestyles.

What It Does: It can hydrate skin up to 60% in 30 minutes and up to 127% in 30 days. It's often used in anti-aging skincare products, and is sometimes combined with other superfruits, such as kakadu plum and Illawarra plum, in bioactive complexes. Applying plum-based products or using a plum mask can provide relief from redness and discomfort. The antioxidants and vitamin C in plums can help fade dark spots, age spots, and hyperpigmentation.

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Who Is It For: All skin types, especially mature and skin showing signs of aging.

Where to Find It:

- [Sharla Plum & Berry Toner](#)
- [Glow Recipe Plum Plump Hyaluronic Serum](#)
- [BioElements Plump Start](#)





Buriti Oil (South America)

What It Is: (*Mauritia flexuosa*) One study claims that buriti fruit (from a large palm tree that grows in South American swamps) is the richest natural source of beta-carotene known to man. Natives of the region use the oil to treat sunburns and soothe the skin.

What It Does: Buriti oil is rich in fatty acids that can penetrate the skin and hydrate it on a cellular level. It's a natural antioxidant (contains Vitamin C) that can help protect the skin from UVA rays, which can cause free radical damage and lead to wrinkles and spots. (but not UVB). It contains vitamins high amounts of vitamin A making it good for blemish prone skin. It's anti-inflammatory and wound healing.

Who Is It For: All skin types (always patch test any product, especially if you are prone to sensitivities).

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Where to Find It:

- [Typology Paris Complexion Serum with Botanical Blend with Buriti](#)
- [Terrain Brazilian Botanicals Luz Brightening Face Oil with Buriti](#)
- [Sonya Dakar Buriti Oil Cleanser](#)





Camellia (Japan)

What It Is: (*Camellia japonica*) Extremely light weight and fast-absorbing, camellia is a treasured secret in Japanese skincare. Also known as the Japanese Rose, it is a flower native to the Himalayas but flourishes as far as Japan and Indonesia. Camellia oil was used by Japanese geisha to preserve youthfulness and boost radiance in their skin and hair. In Kyoto, at the Buddhist temple Ryoan-Ji, there is a camellia that is said to date back to the 14th century where the trees branches were used to chase away evil spirits. The oil is made from the seeds of the flower.

What It Does: It is deeply hydrating and conditioning, and is rich in Vitamins A & E, oleic acid & stearic acid, to help smooth, soften and firm the appearance of the skin. It is naturally rich in antioxidants, essential fatty acids, and vitamins, which benefit the skin by providing deep moisturization.

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Who Is It For: All skin types can benefit, but especially dry and dehydrated skin conditions.

Where to Find It:

- [Wo Beauty Daily Base Revive Oil](#)
- [Eminence Camellia Glow Solid Face Oil](#)
- [Tatcha Camellia Cleansing Oil](#)

Did you know? Ama (aka “sea women”) are Japanese divers famous for harvesting the ocean’s treasures, from seafood to pearls. Their traditions date back over 2,000 years including free diving to depths of 80 feet. They are said to coat their bodies with camellia oil to protect them from the cold ocean temperatures.



Camu Camu (Brazil/Colombia/Bolivia)

What It Is: (*Myrciaria dubia*) A superfruit which is prized for its vitamin C—up to 60 times more than an orange and one of the highest contents of natural vitamin C known on the planet. It is a native of the Amazon rainforest.

What It Does: The high concentration of vitamin C means cam camu combats hyperpigmentation, brightens and tones skin, and promotes collagen production. It is also anti-inflammatory and antibacterial to help with blemishes and breakouts.

Who Is It For: Mature and skin showings signs of aging, blemish prone, and skin showing photo aging (hyperpigmentation).

Where to Find It:

- [Fourth Ray Beauty So Radiant Brightening Eye Cream](#)
- [CT Organics Camu Camu Vitamin C Hyaluronic Acid Serum](#)
- [Eminence Organic Skin Care Yuzu Solid Body Oil](#)



Chebula Fruit Extract (Southeast Asia)

What It Is: (*Terminalia chebula*, chebulic myrobalan, birhara, harada, haritaki, black) aka, “the king of medicines.” Chebula is best known as one of three fruits that make up triphala, a go-to Ayurvedic herb combination that's used to treat everything from digestive issues to diseases and has been employed by practitioners for centuries.

What It Does: Chebula extract is stronger than the antioxidants generally considered the best for the skin, including vitamin C (ascorbic acid), vitamin E (tocopherol). Chebula can scavenge more free radicals, and for a longer duration of time than other antioxidants. It deeply moisturizes and brightens skin, helps reduce inflammation, softens, and in studies has been shown to have wound healing properties. When studied, Chebula has been shown to correct the effects of sun damage and it has exhibited potent anti-psoriatic activities.

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Who Is It For: Chebula is beneficial for skin conditions with redness, irritation and inflammation like dermatitis, psoriasis, and eczema. Mature and dry or dehydrated will benefit from its moisturizing and brightening properties.

Where to Find It:

- [VegnClevr Chebula Active Serum](#)
- [True Botanicals Chebula Active Serum](#)
- [Seoulceuticals Activated Chebula Serum](#)





Chilean Boldo Tree Extract (Chile)

What It Is: (Diacetyl boldine) Concentrated oils are derived from extracting leaves and flowers from the bark. Boldo is a slow-growing plant used as a medicinal/ therapeutic herb and cooking spice in South America. Boldo grows in Brazil, Italy, South America, and North Africa.

What It Does: Boldo extract helps to promote an even skin tone, while delivering an immediate brightening effect that improves skin. Boldo reduces hyperpigmentation, environmental skin damage, and aging signs. This happens while visibly firming, lifting, and refining the skin texture to reveal a healthy-looking glow.

Who Is It For: Especially beneficial for mature skin conditions and skin showing signs of photo damage or premature aging.

Where to Find It:

- [Pevonia Lumafirm Body Moisturiser](#)
- [Dr. Hazi Lightening Serum](#)
- [Revision Skin Care Lumiquin Hand Cream](#)



Cloudberry (Norway)

What It Is: (*Rubus chamaemorus*) A species of flowering plant in the rose family, native to cool temperate regions, Arctic tundra, and boreal forest. It can survive at minus 40 degrees Celsius while maintaining its moisture levels. Cloudberry is rich in Vitamins A, B, C and E. They are one of the best sources of ellagic tannins, (an antioxidant found in many food sources, supplements, and skin care products, studied for its anti-inflammatory and skin brightening properties) and also contains beta-carotene, which is transformed into retinol by enzymes in the skin.

What It Does: Cloudberry's antioxidant properties help to heal blemished skin, and have potent calming powers. Cloudberry seed oil contains omega-3 and omega 6-fatty acids to help skin retain moisture. It helps soothe and protect all skin types, especially ones that are prone to dryness and sensitivity. It plumps and hydrates skin cells and protects against environmental damage.

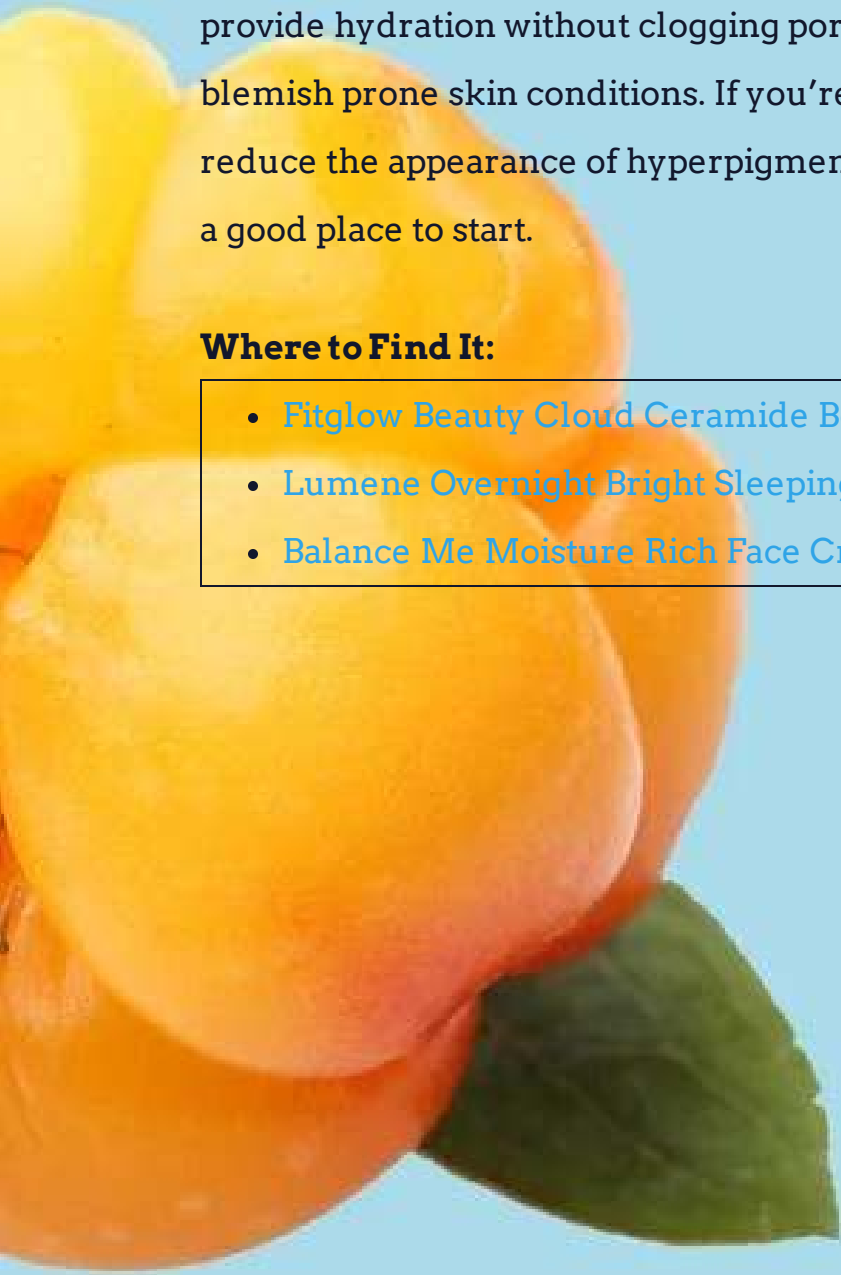
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Who Is It For: All skin types can benefit from this powerful ingredient.

Cloudberry seed oil is lightweight and easily absorbed by the skin, so it can provide hydration without clogging pores, so it checks the box for oily or blemish prone skin conditions. If you're looking to improve cell turnover, reduce the appearance of hyperpigmentation and fine lines, cloudberry is a good place to start.

Where to Find It:

- [Fitglow Beauty Cloud Ceramide Body Cream](#)
- [Lumene Overnight Bright Sleeping Cream](#)
- [Balance Me Moisture Rich Face Cream](#)





Dead Sea Salts (Jordan/Israel)

What It Is: (Maris sal). Taken directly from the Dead Sea in the Middle East, Dead Sea salt has a much lower 30.5% sodium chloride content than regular salt. It contains magnesium, sodium, potassium, and calcium, among other minerals, and they come with a host of benefits for skin health.

What It Does: Salt is an excellent hydrator for the skin. Don't let the fact that's it is a salt fool you. It contains a lot of magnesium, which hydrates the skin by directly strengthening the skin's lipid barrier, while keeping moisture locked in. The minerals in Dead Sea salt are ant-inflammatory (sodium & bromide), and it also detoxifies, exfoliates, and cleanses the skin. It contains sulfur which has antimicrobial properties making it effective for the treatment of blemishes and acne. It is excellent for treating muscle soreness and relieving the pain of arthritis.

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Who Is It For: All skin types (test for sensitive skin).

Where to Find It:

- [The Salt Box Dead Sea Salt](#)
- [Ahava Moisturizing Dead Sea Salt Soap](#)
- [Seacret Salt & Oil Scrub Ocean Mist](#)

Salt scrubs are easy to make at home, and a Dead Sea salt scrub will bring you the benefits of skin exfoliation along with therapeutic benefits.

Ingredients:

1 cup Dead Sea Salt, fine grain

½ cup almond, jojoba, sunflower, or other light carrier oil

5-15 drops essential oil (single or a blend)

Pour the salt into a mixing bowl and slowly add the oil, mixing well with a wooden spoon. Add the essential oils and continue to mix.

Recipe makes approx. 3 home treatments.

Massage into damp skin before showering, rinse.



Dilo Oil (Fiji)

What It Is: (*Calophyllum inophyllum*) This nut oil, (also known as tamanu oil) which is cold pressed from the nuts of dilo trees is chock full of lipids that work with your skin's own lipid layer. The oil was reportedly once reserved for Fijian royalty. Dilo oil is a rare oil native to the islands of Fiji and can be found nowhere else in the world. It has been used in skincare for centuries to treat skin irritation and enhance skin's natural beauty.

What It Does: It has anti-inflammatory, moisturizing, and healing properties, and is rich in essential fatty acids that promote skin cell regeneration and improve skin hydration, elasticity and firmness. It is fast absorbing, lightweight, and helps tone the skin and minimizes the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles. Dilo oil can be used to treat a variety of skin issues, including sunburn, insect bites, rashes, acne scars, rosacea, eczema, dry or dehydrated skin.

Who Is It For: Irritated or rosacea skin conditions, dry, dehydrated, mature and sensitive, blemish prone/oily, acneic. (Proceed with caution or avoid entirely if you have nut allergies.)

Where to Find It:

- [Pure Fiji Anti-Aging Dilo Oil Booster](#)
- [Earthly Beauty Dilo Oil](#)
- [WooHoo Body Dilo Oil](#)





Edelweiss (Swiss Alps/Germany/France/Italy)

What It Is: (*Leontopodium nivale*) Edelweiss is part of the family of extremophiles - organisms that survive and even thrive under the worst conditions on Earth. The term extremophile comes from the Latin *extremus*, meaning "extreme," and Greek *philiā*, meaning "love."

The white edelweiss flower is adapted to the Alpine regions of Austria and Switzerland. It grows at high altitudes (6,000-10,000 ft), mostly in limestone where UV exposure is high and temperatures are very cold. This makes edelweiss an expert at protection, and it can bring some of that expertise to the skin. Note: There are several types of extremophiles: (Edelweiss is a cryophile)

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- **Thermophiles** are heat-loving, and found in environments like deep sea vents, volcanic soil and around geysers.
- **Psychrophiles**, also known as cryophiles, are adapted to extreme cold and live in places like polar seas, or mountains.
- **Halophiles** thrive in high salt conditions like brine and may be found in salt flats or lakes.
- **Acidophiles** are adapted to very acidic conditions, such as volcanic landscapes.
- Organisms adapted to multiple extreme conditions are called **polyextremophiles**.

What It Does: The edelweiss plant contains tannins, flavonoids, phenylpropane and hydroxy cinnamic acid (natural compounds that have antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and antimicrobial properties) derivatives. Edelweiss helps to strengthen the skin barrier, balancing skin and providing moisture. It also has strong free-radical scavenging capabilities to fight the effects of UV exposure.

Who Is It For: All skin types can benefit. The soothing and anti-inflammatory properties in Edelweiss extract make it a great remedy for conditions with skin irritation, redness, and sensitive skin.

Where to Find It:

- [PureErb Bulgarian Rose Soothing Toner](#)
- [Origins A Perfect World Antioxidant Moisturizer w/White Tea](#)
- [Pure Edelweiss No1 Cream](#)



Fig Extract (Mediterranean)

What It Is: (*Ficus carica*), is a flowering plant native to Mediterranean and countries with warm to temperate climates. It has been used medicinally and topically by indigenous peoples for centuries.

What It Does: The enzyme ficin in fig extract can help loosen dead skin cells, revealing newer, more uniform skin. Fig extract can help prevent water loss from the skin's top layers, and act as a moisture reservoir to combat dryness. Fig extract may have antimicrobial properties that can help soothe the skin and heal acne. The antioxidants in figs can help protect the skin from environmental damage and premature aging. It is a natural humectant, high concentrations of antioxidants to combat free radical skin damage and are anti-inflammatory.

Who Is It For: An excellent gentle exfoliator for all skin types. It is also used for its hydration, antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties, making it suitable for blemish prone and sensitive skin conditions.

Where to Find It:

- [I'm From Fig Boosting Essence](#)
- [Farmhouse Fresh Chocolate Fig Vitamin Recovery Serum](#)
- [Ere Perez Fig All Beauty Jelly Cleanser](#)





Gettou: Shell Ginger (Japan)

What It Is: (*Alpinia zerumbet*) Gettou is a plant related to ginger which grows in Okinawa and is used in the region for cooking and medicine. The plant's leaves, flowers, and roots are used in cosmetics and have anti-aging properties. Gettou is resilient and can grow in the Okinawa islands' extreme climate conditions, including strong UV radiation, humid and hot weather, and strong sea winds. They survive thanks to their strong antioxidant levels. For generations, the women of Okinawa have used this ingredient to ward off signs of aging honoring the famous "island of longevity."

What It Does: This powerful antioxidant ingredient helps maintain beauty and healthy skin; correcting signs of age, preventing sunburn, and aiding skin repair. Gettou has exceptionally high antioxidant levels (containing 30 times more polyphenols than red wine) and delivers radical rejuvenating results. Gettou has calming aromatherapy benefits.

Beyond the Ordinary: 49 Weirdly Effective Skincare Ingredients

Who Is It For: All skin types can benefit, but especially dry, dull, and sensitive skin types and conditions.

Where to Find It:

- [Ruhaku Gettou Reset Cleansing Oil](#)
- [Rikumo Gettou Balance Lotion](#)
- [Wellness East Alpinia Shell Ginger Glow Oil](#)





Guava Leaf Extract (Mexico)

What It Is: (*Psidium guajava*) With 5 times as much Vitamin C as an orange, guava is a super fruit. It is native to Mexico and Central America. Its leaves contain antioxidants and anti-inflammatories, and the acids in the leaves have excellent antimicrobial properties.

What It Does: Guava's antioxidants can help protect your skin from photo damage and slow down the aging process. The vitamins A and C in guava can also help brighten and exfoliate the skin and reduce oxidative stress. Guava leaf extract can help loosen and break the bonds between dead skin cells, dissolving them to make skin brighter, clearer, and more even toned. Vitamin C increases collagen production, which helps create firmer, more supple skin. Vitamin C also has anti-inflammatory properties to relieve chronic skin inflammation that contributes to acne, rosacea, and premature signs of aging.

Beyond the Ordinary: 49 Weirdly Effective Skincare Ingredients

Who Is It For: Guava can benefit all skin types because it contains vitamins A, B, and C, as well as antioxidants and lycopene, an antioxidant compound that helps protect skin from sun damage and regulates free radicals in the body. Vitamin A promotes skin cell regeneration and can help reduce the appearance of acne scars and blemishes.

Where to Find It:

- [Free & True Skincare Nature & Nurture Guava Seed Oil](#)
- [Glow Recipe Guava Vitamin C Dark Spot Serum](#)
- [Leahlani Kalima Cleansing Powder](#)

Try It!

Buy some fresh guava with leaves, crush the leaves into a paste and use it as a DIY face mask.

- Take 10-12 guava leaves.
- Wash them all well in normal water.
- Add in a blender with 1 tablespoon of rosewater.
- Blend well to form a thick paste.
- Apply to cleansed skin and relax for 10-15 minutes. Rinse with tepid water.



Hibiscus (West/East Africa/India/Southeast Asia)

What It Is: (*Hibiscus syriacus*) The beautiful hibiscus plant has exotic, vibrant petals that are fanned in the shape of a trumpet. It blooms in a variety of colors including red, pale yellow and pink and has long been used as an ingredient in herbal teas and medicines, traditionally to help with loss of appetite and even colds. Hibiscus contains AHAs, BHAs, citric acid, and malic acids, which can help exfoliate the skin and rejuvenate its tone.

What It Does: With the incredible ability to inhibit the activity of the enzyme elastase, which is responsible for breaking down our skin's precious elastin, Hibiscus helps to slow the visible signs of aging by firming and lifting the skin. Hibiscus is rich in vitamin C, antioxidants, and other nutrients that can help stimulate collagen production. This can help the skin retain its shape and firmness and reduce the appearance of wrinkles and fine lines. Hibiscus can help even out skin tone and treat hyperpigmentation, dark spots, and discoloration.

Beyond the Ordinary: 49 Weirdly Effective Skincare Ingredients

Who Is It For: Hibiscus can be beneficial for many skin types including dry, sensitive, and photo damaged (hyperpigmentation).

Where to Find It:

- [UpCircle Beauty Hand Cream with Hibiscus Flowers](#)
- [LaRocca Hibiscus Cream Cleanser with AHA](#)
- [Kiehl's Ginger Leaf & Hibiscus Firming Mask](#)





Icelandic Kelp (Iceland)

What It Is: (*Laminaria hyperborea*, *Ascophyllum nodosum*). Icelandic Kelp is a type of seaweed that grows and thrives in Iceland's pristine waters and the Arctic have a short growing season and that, combined with the region's mineral-rich volcanic soil and clean air, creates plants with extremely potent properties. The same botanicals which grow in other climates don't have the same strength.

What It Does: It naturally aids in hydration by forming a layer between the skin and the environment, acting as a sealant and thus reducing the loss of moisture. It is purifying and detoxifying, removes dead skin cells, and helps maintain skin elasticity. Commonly used as an anti-inflammatory and with anti-bacterial properties, Icelandic Kelp also helps treat skin conditions like psoriasis and acne-prone skin.

Who Is It For: Kelp can be tolerated by most skin types (sensitive skins should test before using.)

Where to Find It:

- [Jules & Kate Icelandic Kelp Soap](#)
- [Blue Lagoon Skincare Algae Mask](#)
- [Skyn Iceland The Antidote Cooling Daily Lotion](#)





Japanese Leopard Lily (Japan, China)

What It Is: (*Belamcanda chinensis* or *iris domestica*) The lush, patterned leaves of the Japanese Leopard Lily are believed to attract prosperity, making it a favored plant in homes and businesses. The extract from the plant contains irisflorentin (a naturally occurring isoflavone found in the roots used in traditional Chinese medicine as an anti-inflammatory) and has soothing properties that can help calm skin and reduce signs of irritation. It is used in skincare products for people with acne-prone or oily skin and is non-comedogenic (non-pore clogging). It is often used in combination with other botanicals, such as Japanese wild rose, which can help tighten pores and smooth skin texture. As of this writing, there is limited research available on the impact of this ingredient.

What It Does: It helps control excess oil production without clogging pores. It is hydrating and moisturizing and helps reduce inflammation and irritation. It is cleansing and astringent. The isoflavones contained in the root extract, can act as a metabolism booster for skin epidermal layer.

Beyond the Ordinary: 49 Weirdly Effective Skincare Ingredients

Who Is It For: All skin types, but especially oily, blemish prone, combination, and acneic skin conditions.

Where to Find It:

- [Tatcha The Water Cream Moisturizer](#)





Kangaroo Paw Extract (Australia)

What It Is: (*Anigozanthos flavidus*) The kangaroo paw flower, which blooms in a wide range of yellows, reds and greens grows in a shape similar to a kangaroo's paw. For thousands of years, indigenous Australians have used the plant in traditional recipes to help heal wounds, cuts and burns. The flower is loaded with fatty acids that encourage cell growth with their regenerative properties.

What It Does: The extract contains flavonoids, tannins, and phenolic acids (polyphenols which are naturally occurring compounds found in plants) which help protect the skin from free radical damage. It also contains linoleic acid which can strengthen the skin's barrier and help it retain moisture. The extract can help the skin synthesize collagen and elastin, and increase the skin's absorption of vitamin C, which can help boost collagen production and improve skin tone.

Who Is It For: All skin types, especially mature and dry or dehydrated skin.

Where to Find It:

- [PCA Skin Pro Max Age Renewal Serum](#)
- [Leitin Resurrect Night Cream](#)
- [Clarins Extra Firming Face Emulsion](#)





Kiwi Seed Oil (New Zealand)

What It Is: Kiwi seed oil is derived from the seeds of the golden kiwi fruit, which is native to China but commercially grown in New Zealand. It's rich in vitamins E, potassium, and magnesium. Kiwi seed oil is the perfect skincare ingredient thanks to its particularly high concentrations of alpha linoleic acid (ALA) or omega 3 fatty acids, which have been repeatedly shown to have excellent results in building and maintaining moisture in the skin.

What It Does: Kiwi seed oil can help treat dry, damaged, and aging skin, as well as eczema, acne, psoriasis, and blemish prone, due to its antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. Kiwi seed oil can also help protect skin from UV sunlight, reduce damage from free radicals, soften the appearance of fine lines, and brighten the skin.

Beyond the Ordinary: 49 Weirdly Effective Skincare Ingredients

Who Is It For: Because it's gentle and nourishing, kiwi seed oil can be used on almost any skin type, including sensitive. It is a 'dry' oil, so it absorbs quickly into the skin without a greasy feel.

Where to Find It:

- [Peach & Lily Glass Skin Water-Gel Moisturizer](#)
- [True Botanicals Pure Radiance Oil](#)
- [AO Skincare Raw Nourish AM Treatment Moisturizer](#)





Madecassoside (Native to Asia)

What It Is: Madecassoside is a water-soluble triterpenoid (naturally occurring compounds found in plants, animals, bacteria, and fungi, that are antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, and antiviral) found in the centella asiatica plant, also known as gotu kola or tiger grass. It's a primary ingredient in cica creams, which are known for their wound healing and soothing effects. Madecassoside is rich in fatty acids, amino acids, antioxidant beta carotene, and phytochemicals.

What It Does: Madecassoside's antioxidant properties can help reduce skin damage caused by environmental factors. Madecassoside stimulates collagen production, which helps skin maintain its firmness and elasticity. Madecassoside can help reduce inflammation and oxidative stress, helps hydrate the skin and strengthens the moisture barrier. Madecassoside soothes and reduces redness and irritation.

Beyond the Ordinary: 49 Weirdly Effective Skincare Ingredients

Who Is It For: It can be beneficial for all skin types, but especially sensitive, irritated, and weakened skin. It's anti-inflammatory properties make it a good choice for blemish prone and acneic skin conditions.

Where to Find It:

- [Dr. Jart Cicapair Tiger Grass Color Correcting Treatment SPF 30](#)
- [La Roche Posay Cicaplast Balm 65 for Dry Skin Irritations](#)
- [Peach & Lily Glass Skin Refining Serum](#)



Mistletoe (United States & UK)

What It Is: (*Viscum album*) While you may immediately think holiday and Christmas when you think of mistletoe, the fact is it has been used medicinally for centuries and was believed to be sacred, with both magical and therapeutic powers among the ancient Greeks, Romans, and the Celts. The word "mistletoe" comes from Celtic and means "all heal". Mistletoe's skincare benefits are due to its antioxidants, which have anti-inflammatory and anti-aging properties. Mistletoe is categorized as a parasitic plant that latches on to many different host trees. Mistletoe extracts are one of the most studied complementary and alternative therapies for cancer.

What It Does: Mistletoe helps speed up skin cell regeneration, is wound healing, hydrating, and anti-inflammatory. It is also used in haircare products to strengthen the hair follicle and promote hair growth.

Beyond the Ordinary: 49 Weirdly Effective Skincare Ingredients

Who Is It For: This quirky plant may be beneficial for mature skin and skin showing signs of aging, blemish prone and acneic skin conditions.

Where to Find It:

- [Alive4Real Miraculous Renewal European Mistletoe Probiotic Moisturiser](#)
- [Gabriel Cosmetics Purifying Tonic](#)
- [Blithe Cosmetic Vital Treatment 5 Energy Roots](#)

Did you know? The custom of kissing beneath the mistletoe is unknown, but possibly originated in ancient Greece during the winter celebrations and later became popular in England (after illustrations in the iconic Charles Dickens' story, A Christmas Carol) and in the United States. It was thought that kissing under the mistletoe would lead to marriage.



Monk's Pepper (Mediterranean & Asia)

What It Is: (*Vitex agnus-castus*). It's also called vitex, chaste tree, chasteberry, Abraham's balm, lilac, or monk's pepper. It is a plant native to the Mediterranean region and parts of Asia, a genus of tropical and subtropical flowering plants. Monk's pepper has been known throughout history for its medicinal properties, referenced in many disciplines including Ayurveda, Chinese traditional medicine, European and ancient Greek medicine.

What It Does: Monk's pepper shows strong antioxidant protection against skin (compounds found in plants and fruits with antioxidant properties) help to tighten and brighten the skin. It is used specifically in the treatment of hormonal acne.

Who Is It For: Skin with acneic conditions, blemish prone or oily, combination skin types and skin showing signs of aging.

Beyond the Ordinary: 49 Weirdly Effective Skincare Ingredients

Where to Find It:

- [PCA Skin Après Peel Hydrating Balm](#)
- [Eminence Skin Care Eight Greens Youth Serum](#)
- [Dr. Dennis Gross On The Spot Eliminator](#)





Moth Beans (India)

What It Is: (*Vigna aconitifolia*) These beans are pure magic. They function as a botanical retinol, rich with antioxidants and nutrients that boost collagen production and cell renewal. They are protein-rich seed pods and are eaten as a thick puree with rice or curries in Indian food. Also known as dew bean, moth bean extract contains phenolic compounds like caffeic acid, cinnamic acid, ferulic acid, and kaempferol, which can help repair the skin and protect it from environmental pollutants. It can also penetrate deeper into the skin than other ingredients.

What It Does: Moth beans help repair photo-damaged skin, boost collagen production and help heal blemishes. It is helpful in decreasing the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles, exfoliating the skin, improving skin texture and brightening skin tone.

Who Is It For: All skin types including sensitive and blemish prone, however it's a good idea to introduce products containing moth bean slowly into your skincare routine over a few weeks.

Beyond the Ordinary: 49 Weirdly Effective Skincare Ingredients

Where to Find It:

- [Lilfox Dewy Bean Dream Smoothing Serum](#)
- [Graydon Super Moon Serum](#)
- [Dirty Girl Farm Moth Bean Retinol Lotion](#)





Mugwort Extract (South Korea)

What It Is: (*Artemisia princeps*) Mugwort is a perennial herb that is highly regarded in Korean history for its medicinal properties. It is a potent anti-inflammatory and antioxidant making it a main ingredient in many of South Korea's cutting edge skincare. As a plant it is considered very invasive due to its rapid growth and tolerance of poor soil conditions. It is illegal to grow in some states. Mugwort is often compared to tea-tree for its antibacterial, antifungal and wound healing properties, but mugwort is gentler than tea-tree and also has calming and soothing properties.

What It Does: It's great on sensitive skin, and is used to treat eczema, psoriasis and atopic dermatitis, and it calms skin, reduces redness and even helps retain moisture. It stimulates collagen production, which helps reduce the appearance of fine lines.

Beyond the Ordinary: 49 Weirdly Effective Skincare Ingredients

Who Is It For: All skin types, especially acneic, blemish prone, combination and sensitive.

Where to Find It:

- [Beauty from Joseon Matte Sun Stick SPF 50](#)
- [Facetory Artemisia Refreshing Relief Sheet Mask](#)
- [April Skin Artemisia Squalane Hydra Gel Cream](#)





Nettle Leaves (Europe, Asia, North America)

What It Is: (*Urtica*). The skincare benefits of nettle have been well-known for centuries. Common Nettle or stinging Nettle is a native herb to Europe, Asia, North America, and North Africa. Some species contain prickly little hairs called trichomes which act like needles. These hairs can irritate if accidentally touched, but regardless, this powerful little herb has been used for its health and skincare benefits for centuries in traditional and folk medicines and skincare products.

What It Does: Nettle extract is an anti-inflammatory and helps reduce redness and irritation. Nettle oil is one of the best oils for daily skin cleansing. Its antibacterial and soothing properties protect skin from daily dirt, germs, and toxic effects of the environment. Nettle extract contains powerful antioxidant benefits, which helps reduce free radical damage to the skin. Nettle has natural astringent properties that can help treat dry, itchy, and inflamed skin.

Beyond the Ordinary: 49 Weirdly Effective Skincare Ingredients

Who Is It For: Nettle can balance sebum production and is recommended for all skin types, especially acne-prone skin. Nettle can help ease skin conditions like eczema, psoriasis, and dermatitis. It can help with minor skin injuries like scrapes and razor nicks.

Where to Find It:

- [Free & True Mama Pacha Moisture Infusion Cream](#)
- [Ilike Organic Skin Care Nettle Exfoliating Wash](#)
- [Alpyn Beauty Wild Nettle & Niacinimide Firming Serum](#)



Panax Ginseng (South Korea)

What It Is: (*Panax quinquefolius* L.- American ginseng; *Panax ginseng* C.A. Meyer – Korean ginseng). *Panax ginseng*, also known as Korean ginseng, is an ancient herb that has been used in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) for its health benefits. Ginseng is a popular skincare ingredient that has been used in Asian cultures for centuries. Derived from a root found in mountainous regions of Asia, ginseng has long been valued as an herbal remedy and beauty aid due to its healing and hydrating properties.

What It Does: Ginseng promotes circulation and promotes new cell growth, helping to diminish wrinkles and fine lines. It reduces inflammation associated with acne, eczema, and rosacea and increases elasticity and collagen production which can plump the skin. It has mild exfoliation properties that can brighten and lighten the complexion. It also inhibits melanin production, helping to treat dark spots, age spots, and hyperpigmentation.

Beyond the Ordinary: 49 Weirdly Effective Skincare Ingredients

Who Is It For: Panax ginseng can benefit all skin types, but some skin conditions may benefit more than others: Sensitive skin: Ginseng can reduce redness and inflammation and is a calming remedy for acne and psoriasis. Dry and mature skin: Ginseng can improve circulation and reduce the appearance of signs of aging. Acne-prone and oily skin: Ginseng can reduce oil production and treat breakouts.

Where to Find It:

- [Kypwell Eternal Youth Collagen & Elastin Booster](#)
- [Beauty of Joseon Ginseng Essence Water](#)
- [Gunilla Organic Skincare Hyaluronic Acid & Ginseng Serum](#)



Pearl Powder (China)

What It Is: Pearl powder is made by harvesting freshwater or saltwater pearls and boiling them to remove bacteria. The pearls are then ground into a fine powder that can easily be added to skin care products. Pearl powder has been around for centuries. Ancient Chinese cultures used pearl powder not only for skincare cosmetics, but also for overall health and wellness. Historically, pearls were crushed into powder and taken with tea or water. It was said to keep the skin bright and ageless.

What It Does: Pearl powder is used in skincare to help skin detoxify from environmental stressors and harsh product ingredients. The high magnesium content of pearl powder helps encourage the removal of toxins in the skin. Although pearl powder is an antioxidant source, it does help boost two of the body's own natural antioxidant enzymes: superoxide dismutase (SOD) and glutathione. Pearl powder helps increase your skin's natural moisture levels due to its high levels of calcium. Calcium helps the skin regulate natural oil production and can also encourage more efficient cell turnover. New skin cells means newer, healthier, more hydrated skin.

Beyond the Ordinary: 49 Weirdly Effective Skincare Ingredients

Who Is It For: Pearl powder is gentle and can be used on all skin types and tones. It is an excellent micro-exfoliant. However, if you are vegan, remember pearls come from oysters.

Where to Find It:

- [Klavuu Rejuve Pearlsation Multi Pearl Peptide Cream](#)
- [Glowbiotics Probiotic Hydraglow Cream Oil Pearl](#)
- [Alitura The Pearl Cleanser](#)



Rambutan (Southeast Asia)

What It Is: (*Nephelium lappaceum*) Rambutan is a tropical fruit that is gaining attention as a skincare ingredient because of its antioxidant properties and potential to improve skin health. A tropical, flowering fruit tree with evergreen leaves that originally comes from southeast Asia, rambutan is the cousin of the lychee and in the Sapindaceae, or soapberry family. Its fruits grow in small clusters like grapes and take around three months to ripen. The extract is a natural retinol alternative and a powerful antioxidant that helps protect natural collagen levels in skin from the negative effects of environmental stressors.

What It Does: Rambutan acts like retinol, but is gentler, more nourishing, requires no downtime, can be used both AM and PM, and is agreeable for most skin types. It reduces the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles and is also clinically proven to promote collagen synthesis and help support skin structure to keep skin looking bouncy, dewy, and firm.

Beyond the Ordinary: 49 Weirdly Effective Skincare Ingredients

Who Is It For: It is literally for anyone, and especially those who may have sensitive skin or who don't like the side effects of products containing retinol. Younger skins can use rambutan as a preventative tool, while more mature skin types and everyone in between will enjoy its protective and repairing benefits.

Where to Find It:

- [Dr. Dennis Gross Advanced Retinol & Ferulic Intense Wrinkle Cream](#)
- [Fresh Black Tea Advanced Age Renewal Cream](#)
- [Fieldtrip Skin Wandermist Hydrating Facial Spray](#)



Red Bean (South Korea, Japan, China, Tibet)

What It Is: (*Vigna radiata*) Also called adzuki or mung bean – this widely used legume comes from east Asia. Adzuki beans are rich in antioxidants, fiber, and protein, and have been used in Japanese skincare for centuries to cleanse, exfoliate, and brighten the complexion. Other benefits of adzuki beans include reducing redness and irritation, reducing the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles, and softening and refining skin texture.

What It Does: Adzuki beans contain saponin which has a natural foaming action to help remove dead skin cells and help draw out dirt, surface skin debris and sebum which clog pores. Saponins also help tighten and soften as well as promoting circulation in the skin, creating a healthy glow. Red bean provides a skin smoothing exfoliation to the skin, leaving it soft and supple. It contains antioxidants that help neutralize harmful free radicals in the skin.

Beyond the Ordinary: 49 Weirdly Effective Skincare Ingredients

Who Is It For: Adzuki bean scrubs and skincare products can be used by any skin type but start by introducing the product once or twice a week and work up to more frequent use if your skin tolerates it.

Where to Find It:

- [Beauty of Joseon Red Bean Refreshing Pore Mask](#)
- [Mixsoon Mung Bean Seed Essence](#)
- [Blithe 8 Beans Clear Essence Lotion Moisturizer](#)



Did you know? After harvesting the pods of the bean, women would use stones to grind them into a powder, place the beans in a small silk bag, and mix with water to create a creamy exfoliating scrub for their face and body.



Red Maple Bark (Canada)

What It Is: (*Acer rubrum*) Red maple is a deciduous tree native to North America that is well-known for its beautiful autumn foliage and delicious sap used to make maple syrup. However, the benefits of red maple go far beyond maple syrup. The bark of a tree serves as its true skin and contains a range of bioactive molecules that enable it to withstand external threats. Within the bark, concentrations of natural compounds are synthesized, and these protective compounds help protect against external environmental stressors as well as activating collagen and skin elastin production to fight wrinkles and signs of aging. The bark is rich in polyphenols and vitamin C, and contains a compound called glucitol-core-containing gallotannins, which helps prevent elastin from being destroyed.

Beyond the Ordinary: 49 Weirdly Effective Skincare Ingredients

What It Does: Red maple bark extract can help reduce the appearance of wrinkles and fine lines by improving skin elasticity and firmness. It does this by boosting collagen and elastin production and reducing the production of collagenase. It has anti-inflammatory properties which help reduce inflammation, redness, and irritation. Red maple bark extract can help improve the skin's barrier function and control hydration. The extract has been known to especially help with dark spots around the hands, neck and face. It is a natural humectant, which means it helps the skin to retain moisture.

Who Is It For: All skin types can benefit from incorporating red maple into skincare routines to improve the overall health and appearance of your skin.

Where to Find It:

- [Ed&I Full Body Collagen Protection Serum](#)
- [Cela Northern Face Oil](#)
- [Pangea Organics Daily AHA Gentle Exfoliator](#)



Rhassoul Clay (Morocco)

What It Is: (Moroccan stevensite) Rhassoul clay is also known as ghassoul clay or red Moroccan clay. It comes from Morocco. People have used it as a shampoo and soap for centuries. The word “rhassoul” comes from the Arabic word “rhassala,” which literally means “to wash.” Volcanic activity and geothermal processes are thought to have created this ancient clay beneath the Atlas Mountains. When Rhassoul clay is mined, it is lumpy, black, and soap-like. It’s washed in mountain-sourced river water, filtered, and dried naturally in the desert heat. The texture of this nearly untreated and sun-dried clay is silky smooth, with a pinkish brown color.

What It Does: Rhassoul clay is rich in nutrients and minerals used to treat a variety of skin conditions. Rhassoul clay cleanses the face thoroughly, eliminates blackheads, and tightens pores. It is a natural exfoliant and skin detoxifier, removing bacteria and toxins from the skin. It contains silica which is known to aid in collagen synthesis.

Beyond the Ordinary: 49 Weirdly Effective Skincare Ingredients

Who Is It For: Blemish prone and oily skin types, and eczema and psoriasis skin conditions will especially benefit from a rhassoul clay treatment.

Where to Find It:

- [Magnolia Soap & Bath Rhassoul Clay Facial Bar](#)
- [Canary Clean Rhassoul Clay & Rose Face Mask](#)
- [Travertine Spa Rhassoul Clay Mask](#)

Did you know? Rhassoul clay has been used for over a thousand years as a cosmetic ingredient by several cultures. It's used in soaps, shampoos, facial and body masks, and skin conditioners. It's also an integral part of traditional Moroccan bathing rituals, such as the "Hammam".



Rose of Jericho (NE Africa, Middle East)

What It Is: (*Anastatica hierochuntica*) Native to Saharan Asia, northeast Africa, and the Middle East, Rose of Jericho is known as “The Resurrection Plant.” It has the ability to lie dormant for years and then resurrect itself — bursting into foot-wide plants covered in tiny white blooms — when exposed to a little moisture.

Its ability to regenerate again and again has made it a popular spiritual symbol in religious communities ranging from Santeria to Catholicism. Indigenous people have used its leaves for thousands of years for antibacterial properties. The magic behind rose of Jericho is due to trehalose, a plant-based sugar that allows it to effectively “freeze” its cellular metabolism when unhealthy conditions exist for the plant. Once it’s exposed to a better growing environment, it resurrects – blooms and spread seeds.

Beyond the Ordinary: 49 Weirdly Effective Skincare Ingredients

What It Does: Desert rose contains flavonoids, rich in antioxidants. It also contains quercetin, kaempferol, and luteolin, which help control inflammation. The extracts moisturize the skin due to the same sugars, amino acids, and compounds the plant uses to "resurrect" itself. It also helps improve water retention, preventing moisture loss.

Who Is It For: Whether you have dry, dehydrated skin that craves moisture, sensitive skin needing calming, or combination skin seeking balance, Rose of Jericho will benefit everyone. It is especially helpful for those who live in dry climates, urban areas (air pollution can damage skin!), or for mature skin.

Where to Find It:

- [Keys Soulcare Comforting Balm w/Camellia Seed Oil](#)
- [Dr. Althea Rose of Jericho Extract Simple Skincare Set](#)
- [Nourish London Kale Anti-Ageing Hand Cream](#)





Saffron (Greece)

What It Is: (*Crocus sativus*) Known as the sunshine spice, saffron, which is derived from a flower belonging to the Iris family, includes a number of bioactive chemicals, including crocin, crocetin, (effective in damage repair and ensuring overall cellular health, so they help skin recover from daily environmental, oxidative stress and sun damage) and antioxidants, which contribute to its skincare benefits.

Saffron has been cherished throughout history for a variety of uses, including skincare. This spice also happens to be the most expensive in the world, and it has been prized for its medicinal properties for centuries.

What It Does: Saffron is a natural skin brightener, anti-aging agent, natural moisturizer, acne and blemish treatment, improves skin texture and tone, and reduces inflammation. It also protects against UV radiation.

Beyond the Ordinary: 49 Weirdly Effective Skincare Ingredients

Who Is It For: In general, saffron doesn't pose any significant issues or side effects for most skin types. It's recommended for sensitive skin, but as with any new skincare product or ingredient, make sure you patch test it first to make sure you don't have any adverse reactions.

Where to Find It:

- [Ranavat Brightening Saffron Serum](#)
- [Saffron Cosmetics Renewal Recovery Night Cream](#)
- [House of M Beauty Saffron Silk Night Concentrate](#)





Sake (Japan)

What It Is: Sake is a Japanese beverage made by fermenting rice with koji mold, water, and yeast. The fermentation process creates a concentrated liquid that is rich in vitamins, minerals, amino acids, and organic acids. This liquid is then used to make sake extract, or rice ferment filtrate, which is commonly used in skincare products.

What It Does: One of the most important benefits of sake in skincare is that it contains kojic acid, an antioxidant that brightens the skin by inhibiting melanin production. Sake not only helps lighten acne scars, but it helps stop acne before it starts.

Sake is a natural astringent and it helps control sebum production and kill bacteria on the skin. Sake is rich in enzymes that gently exfoliate the skin's surface layer without stripping the skin of moisture.

The high concentration of amino acids and saccharides (a natural sugar that has humectant properties when applied to the skin) also help to smoothen out uneven skin texture, improve elasticity and replenish nutrients.

Beyond the Ordinary: 49 Weirdly Effective Skincare Ingredients

Who Is It For: Sake can benefit all skin types, including sensitive, mature, and oily/blemish prone skin.

Where to Find It:

- [Shiro Sake Kasu & Komenuka Lotion](#)
- [J Beauty Clear Turn Beautiful Skin Artisan Japanese Sake Moisturizing Mask](#)
- [Snow Fox Sake Ferment & Retinol Night Renewal Cream](#)



Although sake is best known as the national alcoholic beverage of Japan, it also has a long history in skincare and beauty. Sake aka “Nihonshu” production is estimated to have begun around 300 AD. Over the years, sake caught the attention of Japanese scientists as a potent skincare ingredient. They found that Toji, the master brewers of sake, retained smooth, baby-soft hands way into their old age, since they were frequently immersing their hands in fermented rice during the brewing process.



Sikeci Nut Oil (Fiji & Hawaii)

What It Is: (*Aleurites moluccanus*) Also known as the candlenut, sikeci oil is found in the nuts of trees on the Islands of Fiji and Hawaii.

It is cold pressed at the source to preserve its molecular structure and integrity. Sikeci nut oil contains high levels of linoleic and alpha-linoleic fatty acids, vitamins and antioxidants that help to soothe dry and irritated skin. It is also high in Vitamins A, E and F, which help to revitalize, rejuvenate and soften the skin.

What It Does: Sikeci oil penetrates deeply into the stratum corneum (outer skin layer) and slows trans-epidermal water loss, so it is an excellent moisturizer. Sikeci is wound healing and acts as a skin softener. It absorbs quickly into the skin and helps even out skin tone and texture.

Beyond the Ordinary: 49 Weirdly Effective Skincare Ingredients

Who Is It For: It is suitable for all skin types, especially dry skin conditions. However, it may not be suitable for anyone with nut allergies, so use caution.

Where to Find It:

- [Pure Fiji Hydrate & Nourish Luxury Face Oil](#)
- [Argentum Enhancing Day & Night Face Oil](#)
- [Hanalei Company Kona Peptide Hawaiian Eye Cream](#)



Snail Mucin (South Korea)

What It Is: That slime trail snails leave behind is actually a protein and antioxidant rich secretion that protects their bodies. It doesn't come out whenever the snail moves, but when it is under stress, so it is comprised of ingredients designed to repair and protect from injury. The secretion is loaded with elastin and glycolic acid—which is perfect for a skin care product that aims to remove dead skin cells, reduce the effects of photoaging, refine skin texture and stimulate collagen production. It may sound gross, but is it worth it? Definitely.

What It Does: Snail mucin contains moisturizing agents that work to repair the barrier function of the skin. It repels irritants from the environment while also locking in moisture. The mucin contains anti-inflammatory zinc and healing manganese, copper peptides, (collagen-increasing and wrinkle-decreasing effect) and vitamins A & E (antioxidant).

Beyond the Ordinary: 49 Weirdly Effective Skincare Ingredients

Who Is It For: Snail mucin is beneficial for all skin types, especially dry or mature conditions. Unless you're allergic specifically, it's well-tolerated by most. (However, if you are vegan, remember this ingredient is derived from an animal.)

Where to Find It:

- [COSRX Advanced Snail 96 Mucin Power Essence](#)
- [Some By Mi Snail TrueCica Miracle Repair Toner](#)
- [TonyMoly Snail Mucin Skincare](#)





Snow Algae (Swiss Alps)

What It Is: (*Coenochloris signiensis* algae) Snow algae is an extremophile, meaning it can survive in harsh conditions like glaciers and permanent snow. The algae is a single cell organism which grows in alpine or polar climates where there is snow all year round.

Snow Algae also goes by the names Watermelon Snow or Pink Snow.

Although it's a species of green algae, its chemical makeup means that it turns pink or red when exposed to bright sunlight. To survive the extreme climate where it grows, snow algae has developed a type of hibernating mechanism where the organism slows down and reduces caloric intake.

What It Does: This species of algae is known for its ability to help soothe, hydrate and strengthen the skin barrier. It also helps to stimulate collagen production and rejuvenate the skin to slow down the signs of aging. Snow algae can help reduce inflammation and redness, making it a good ingredient for sensitive skin, and protect the skin from UV damage.

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Who Is It For: Snow algae is suitable for all skin types, but is especially good for dry, stressed, or mature skin.

Where to Find It:

- [Q&A Snow Algae Intensive Face Cream](#)
- [Arcturus Star Collagen Peptide Serum with Snow Algae](#)
- [Age Stop Switzerland Swiss Snow Algae Essence](#)



Snowberry (North & Central America)

What It Is: (Caprifoliaceae) The common snowberry is part of the honeysuckle family and is native to North and Central America. It has about 15 different species and 12 species can be found throughout the United States. Their habitat ranges from dry to moist but can adapt to various conditions.

Snowberry, also known as ghostberry, is named because of its white color, which is uncommon since most berries are red. It contains saponins, which have been used for generations in skincare and medicine. Saponins are a naturally soapy substance with antioxidant, antimicrobial, and anti-inflammatory effects.

What It Does: Since snowberry contains saponins with high antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and antiseptic effects on the skin, it is a natural choice for barrier repair. It can help replenish deep hydration and restore the skin barrier.

Who Is It For: All skin types, especially dry and sensitive skin, and those with eczema-prone skin.

Where to Find It:

- [Alpyn Beauty Super Peptide & Ghostberry Moisturizer](#)





Summer Snowflake Bulb (Europe-Turkey-Iran)

What It Is: (*Leucojum aestivum*) The Summer Snowflake is known to be the first to bloom after the melting snow (hence the name). It is naturalized in many parts of the temperate world, including the eastern United States, Denmark, South Australia, New South Wales, and Nova Scotia.

What It Does: Summer Snowflake is considered a natural alternative to Botox, as it can help reduce the appearance of wrinkles by relaxing facial muscles and reducing muscle contraction. Summer snowflake extract helps slow cell proliferation and increasing the skin's natural defense against oxidative damage. It helps lighten the skin by inhibiting melanin synthesis and slowing the production of melanocytes.

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Who Is It For: It is effective for all skin types, especially mature or skin showing signs of aging.

Where to Find It:

- [Nuria Hydrate Revitalizing Jelly Night Treatment](#)
- [Hush Money Intensive Restorative Crème](#)
- [Amala Beauty Targeted Wrinkle Treatment](#)





Turmeric (India)

What It Is: (*Curcuma longa*) Turmeric is a spice that has been used in skincare for centuries and has many benefits for the skin. It has been used in Ayurvedic medicine tradition for at least 4,000 years and its use is widespread in South Asia.

It's often used at Indian weddings to revitalize skin before a big event.

Turmeric's primary compound is curcumin, which is responsible for most of its skin benefits. Turmeric is also rich in other skin-friendly substances, including fatty acids, antioxidants, and vitamins.

What It Does: With its anti-inflammatory and antimicrobial properties, turmeric helps kill the bacteria that causes acne and may counteract irritants that trigger atopic dermatitis. These same antimicrobial and antioxidant properties can help manage skin issues like hyperpigmentation, and signs of aging. Turmeric can help improve the appearance of skin irregularities like dark spots, blemishes, blotchiness, and redness, as well as helping to reduce the appearance of scarring and dark undereye circles.

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Who Is It For: Turmeric can benefit many skin types and conditions including acne or oily skin, mature skin, sensitive, dry, and uneven skin tone and texture. It is possible to have a turmeric allergy, so it's important to patch test it on a small area before applying it to a larger area.

Where to Find It:

- [True Botanicals Ginger Turmeric Cleansing Balm](#)
- [Kora Organics Turmeric Skincare Products](#)
- [Tumeri: Turmeric Powered Skincare Products](#)





Volcanic Lava Ash (South Korea)

What It Is: (The scientific term for volcanic ash is tephra.) Has the search for ageless and youthful beauty gone too far when you consider this skincare ingredient comes from a volcano? Nah! Recently, volcanic ash has begun to appear in a variety of skincare products, especially Korean skincare.

Volcanic ash is a fine dust formed from a blend of rock fragments, volcanic glass, and minerals including silica, magnesium, calcium, potassium and others. It has different colors depending on the type of volcano and its eruption, so it may be white, gray, brown, black, or red. It's also known as bentonite clay.

What It Does: Mineral-rich, antioxidant, and antibacterial, volcanic ash helps to clarify and enhance the appearance of the skin. It possesses excellent absorbent properties, acting as a magnet for impurities, excess oil, and toxins that accumulate on the skin due to pollution and daily stressors. It is a gentle exfoliator, detoxifier, and can help enhance the penetration of other skincare products. It can help clear clogged pores and remove surface dead skin cells.

Beyond the Ordinary: 49 Weirdly Effective Skincare Ingredients

Who Is It For: Most skin types will benefit from products containing volcanic ash. When using volcanic ash products, it's important to start slowly and follow up with moisturizer to prevent dryness.

Where to Find It:

- [Innisfree Super Volcanic Pore Clay Mask](#)
- [When Beauty Simply When Vegan Volcanic Ash Purifying & Clarifying Sheet Mask](#)
- [M.A.C. Mineralize Volcanic Ash Exfoliator](#)





White Tea (China)

What It Is: (*Camellia sinensis*) Known in China as the "Elixir of Immortality", white tea is packed with polyphenols—potent antioxidants that help protect from skin-damaging free radicals. White tea dates back thousands of years to the Song Dynasty in China and the Jamu customs of ancient Indonesia. Often used for medicinal purposes, this elegant tea is made from the leaves of the *Camellia sinensis* plant, which is an evergreen shrub native to China and India. White tea is made from the young leaves and buds of the plant, and the name "white" comes from the large proportion of silver-white buds used to make the tea.

What It Does: White tea extract is among the major tea extracts, known for its natural antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, anti-aging, and protective abilities. White tea's antioxidants help protect skin from damage caused by the sun's UV rays and internal aging. White tea helps strengthen collagen and elastin, which can make skin appear smoother and more youthful. White tea can help prevent acne breakouts by reducing inflammation and fighting acne-causing bacteria. White tea can help even out skin tone by reducing dark spots.

Who Is It For: White tea's anti-inflammatory properties can help with sensitive or irritated skin, and its anti-bacterial properties can help detoxify oily skin and prevent breakouts. Mature and dry skin can also benefit.

Where to Find It:

- [Amala Beauty Targeted Wrinkle Treatment](#)
- [Earth To Skin Tea Time White Tea Day Cream](#)
- [Origins A Perfect World Age Defense Skin Guardian with White Tea](#)



Wild Huckleberry (Northwest US & Western Canada)

What It Is: (Vaccinium) These small berries are similar in size to blueberries, and are found in a range of colors, including dark red, purple, and blue. Wild huckleberries grow throughout the Northwestern United States and parts of Canada. They are considered a superfruit, and scientific research on wild huckleberries found them to be extremely rich in antioxidants, Vitamin C, Vitamin B, and potassium.

What It Does: The nutrients found in wild huckleberries have been found to be helpful in treating common skin issues, such as eczema. Rich in antioxidants, wild huckleberry is used in skincare for skin brightening, and in exfoliating products.

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Who Is It For: Huckleberry as an ingredient is suitable for all skin types but is especially beneficial for sensitive skin. It is skin smoothing and helps protect the skin from free radical damage due to its abundance of antioxidants.

Where to Find It:

- [Alpyn Beauty Wild Huckleberry 8-Acid Polishing Peel](#)
- [Take Montana Home Wild Huckleberry Hand & Body Lotion](#)
- [Larchwood Farms Wild Huckleberry Lip Balm](#)





Yerba Mate (Argentina)

What It Is: (*Ilex paraguariensis*) Native to South America, yerba mate was originally consumed by indigenous Guaraní communities. As a beverage it is obtained from the caffeinated leaves of the Yerba Mate plant. Thanks to its high amounts of vitamins and minerals, yerba mate has grown in popularity across the globe in recent years, including in skincare.

What It Does: Yerba mate offers soothing and calming benefits for sensitive or irritated skin, with its anti-inflammatory properties. It contains vitamin A, which encourages healthy skin cell production and Vitamin B1 which is an antioxidant that helps protect the body from signs of aging. Yerba mate contains vitamin C, which boosts collagen production and helps diminish photo aging (skin damage) caused by sun exposure. It is a rich source of polyphenols, which promote cellular regeneration and have antioxidant properties.

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Who Is It For: All skin types, especially sensitive, oily or blemish prone (it can help regulate oil production in the skin). Yerba mate contains caffeine, which can temporarily tighten the skin, reducing the appearance of fine lines and wrinkles. It also enhances circulation, which boosts oxygen and nutrient delivery to the skin cells, resulting in a revitalized complexion.

Where to Find It:

- [Youth to the People Yerba Mate Resurfacing Energy Facial](#)
- [Good Molecules Yerba Mate Wake Up Eye Gel](#)
- [Infuse Skin Yerba Mate Night Revival Cream](#)



Yuzu (Japan, China, Tibet)

What It Is: This citrus fruit is cultivated and harvested in Japan but grows in the wild in central China and Tibet as well. Brimming with vitamin C, it helps to thoroughly cleanse the skin and flush toxins from the body. Yuzu is also known as the Japanese citron. It's very popular in East Asian cuisine, where its juice, peel, and seeds are used as flavorings for vinegars, seasonings, sauces, and marmalades.

What It Does: Yuzu oil is used as an antioxidant serum for brightening hyperpigmentation and combating dryness. In addition it is believed to support respiratory health and alleviate stress and anxiety. Its bright, crisp fragrance makes it very popular for use in aromatherapy to invigorate and refresh.

Who Is It For: Excellent for all skin types, especially mature, blemish prone or oily skin conditions, and dry or dehydrated skin types and conditions. Yuzu can help slow down the skin's aging process by preventing the formation of advanced glycation end products (AGEs). It hydrates the skin without feeling heavy to restore moisture balance.

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Where to Find It:

- [Quench Yuzu Fine 2-in-1 Vitamin C Scrub & Clay Mask](#)
- [Saturday Skin Yuzu Vitamin C Sleep Mask](#)
- [Eminence Yuzu Solid Body Oil](#)

Did you know? It is customary to take a yuzu bath in Japan on the winter solstice to soak away impurities and calm you for the season ahead. Fresh yuzus are added to a hot water bath to detoxify and brighten the skin while increasing vitality and overall health.

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