

# LUXURY SPA FINDER

## NEW Ultra-

HUDSON RIVER VALLEY  
A GREAT SPA VALUE,  
FALL FOLIAGE INCLUDED

THE SPA LOOK  
17 SILK SEPARATES  
AND ACCESSORIES

THE CARIBBEAN  
LITTLE MUSTIQUE'S  
BIG MYSTIQUE

SPA BEAUTY  
5 ALL-STAR  
ALL-NATURAL  
PRODUCTS

### The Farm Girl

BRENDA BROCK  
FARMAESTHETICS

Brock sold her first homespun products at a friend's organic farm stand in rural Rhode Island in the summer of 1999. When winter came and orders were still pouring in, the former soap-opera actor and Texas farm girl knew she had a business. The line, now produced in Newport, has made it all the way to spas such as the Four Seasons. "I'd grown herbs and made herbal concoctions all my life. There was a kitchen culture in my farming family," says Brock, referring to the tradition of rural American herbalism that used simple recipes for health and beauty. (She's passing on the tradition to her daughter, Lela, shown here.) American dairies and organic herb farms supply most of the ingredients for Farmaesthetics products, which are chemical-free. Brock follows the ethical-labeling guidelines of the National Organic Standards Board, which means she discloses all ingredients. Developing a synthetic-free shampoo that has a two-year shelf life is Brock's current project. "I want it to give hair shine and bounce, but I'm, not there yet."



## The Purists

### FIVE WOMEN AT THE FOREFRONT OF THE NATURAL-BEAUTY-PRODUCT REVOLUTION

THEY STARTED OUT AS NATURAL HEALERS, AROMATHERAPISTS, AND small-time herbalists, and a couple even came out of the fashion industry. They didn't know one another, but they've all gone down the same path, driven by a few shared convictions: that natural is better than chemical; that the purer the ingredients, the better the product; and that a label is a compact with the customer, not just an FDA requirement.

"Few things labeled 'all-natural' actually are," says Deborah Burnes, the president of Sumbody, a California-based natural-product line. "Just compare the claim on the front of the bottle to the list of ingredients on the back." It's that kind of disappointment that has sparked the purist revolution, exemplified by the companies profiled here. This segment is a \$4 billion business today, and it shows no signs of slacking off. The demand is coming from baby-boomer, spa-going consumers with what might be called a Whole Foods lifestyle complex, and the income to afford an attitude that boils down to "it costs a bit more, but I'm worth it."

We've chosen five women who have been leaders, sometimes unwittingly, in this movement. All of them are notable for their commitment to purity, although no two define it the same way...

The five women here are striving for 100 percent purity. "Small businesses are in it for benefit not profit," says Burnes. "We do everything for results." Green chemistry is their R&D mandate. "There are so many ingredients in skin-care products that offer no nutritive value to the skin or, worse, are irritating or toxic...."

In this country, *organic* is not a synonym for *pure*. There are currently three levels of organic quality, based on the percentage of organic contents. But the designations don't prohibit the use of synthetics or preservatives, says Brenda Brock, whose chemical-free line, Farmaesthetics, is based on locally procured ingredients from family farms, co-ops, and dairies, and was just grabbed up by retail giant Origins for distribution in October. "I think labels will eventually be required to express the ingredients present without tricky percentages, such as '70 percent organic,'" she says. "Consumers are asking for full disclosure in understandable language and with less marketing spin." When the rest of the industry comes around, they'll find the Purists already there.

#### FARMAESTHETICS NOURISHING LAVENDER MILK

Used at the Mayflower Inn & Spa, Washington, CT, (860-868-9466), Spa Sureau, Oakhurst, CA (559-683-6860), and the Boulders Resort & Golden Door Spa, Carefree, AZ (480-595-3500), \$25 for 8 fl. oz., [www.farmaesthetics.com](http://www.farmaesthetics.com)

