

Farm to Table: Brenda Brock, Founder of Farmaesthetics

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Brenda Brock knows a lot about natural ingredients. Her beauty line Farmaesthetics boasts complete natural ingredients and sustainable cultivation practices. The formulae for her products are kitchen-based as opposed to those concocted in a lab. Her ability to work with natural ingredients does not just stop at beauty products. Brenda, a close friend of Martha Stewart, is also a master of creating delicious and natural dishes in the kitchen.

Brenda believes that the keys to a balanced lifestyle are "... fresh air, fresh food, a positive attitude, a policy of honesty; friends, family and a little time each day for reflection." You might say she has a no-frills attitude to life. It's about keeping everything natural. Her products use herbs and natural ingredients, lacking any synthesized compounds. Just like the food she makes for her friends and family, her products started at the farmer's market.

She first sold her products at an organic farm stand in 1999. Today, you can find Farmaesthetics at some of the nation's most exclusive spas, a flagship boutique in Newport, Rhode Island and in popular retailers like Urban Outfitters. Most recently you can find her beauty line at the historic Castle Hill Inn's spa, located in Newport. However, you better hurry because the spa is pop-up in nature, offering clients natural pampering till May 22.

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Farming and sustainable practices are very important to Brenda who hails from a long lineage (eight generations) of Texas farmers. Some of her concerns are land conservation and sustainable farming. Brenda relays, "If you can do both at the same time, that is the sweet spot and it is a top priority at Farmaesthetics. Specifically, we support productive organic farmland in the United States by prepaying for organic crops and sourcing other raw materials and ingredients from the family owned farm-based businesses available to us in the U.S."

Brenda's food philosophy also reflects these notions. "Keep it fresh, organic and seasonal if you can," she says. Just in time for spring and summer, the peak time to harvest lavender (which is also a major ingredient in her beauty line), Brenda offers up a great recipe for Lavender Dream Fingers. This original cookie recipe is perfect for a tea time or with a glass of fresh squeezed lemonade on your veranda.

Lavender Dream Fingers

Makes about 2 dozen cookies.

Ingredients (organic wherever possible):

1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened
1 cup granulated pure cane sugar
1 egg, beaten
1 3/4 cups sifted white flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/8 cup finely chopped lavender buds
Powdered sugar & lavender dust finish
1 egg white, lightly beaten
2 tablespoons powdered sugar, mixed with 1/4 teaspoon crushed lavender buds

Preparation:

Cream butter and sugar and stir in well beaten egg.
Sift flour, baking powder and lavender buds together, blend with creamed mixture to make a soft dough. Roll into log
Set in refrigerator to chill.
When cold, place on well-floured board (or use powdered sugar). Knead in more flour if needed.
Cut and roll into quarter sized balls and shape each ball into a crescent moon shape
Brush with egg white and sprinkle with powdered lavender sugar dust.
Bake on a lightly greased baking sheet at 275° about 20 minutes or until lightly browned.

Original farm stand recipe by Brenda Brock, founder/CEO Farmaesthetics

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Some of Brenda's Favorites:

Beauty Product: *Farmaesthetics* Complexion Conserve and Remedy Reserve Serum

Current Book: *Horseshoe Crabs and Velvet Worms: The Story of the Animals and Plants That Time Has Left Behind* by Richard Fortey

Exercise: "Yoga with a hot sauna finish."

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