

Local Beauty

New England–made bath, body, and skin-care products take their cue from Mother Nature.

BY CAROLINE WOODWARD

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1 Monica Skye is a Master Herbalist who meticulously sources her materials to create deliciously scented skin-care products. If she didn't grow it herself, she probably knows the farmer who did. The scent of her "Rose Petal Facial Crème" will trigger your memories of a summer garden, because that's precisely where it came from. \$28–\$47. *Skye Botanicals, West Tisbury, MA. 508-696-6644; skyebotanicals.com*

2 In 1999, Brenda Brock took on a summer project: creating skin-care products like the ones her grandma used to make. She started selling them at a farm stand in Newport, Rhode Island, and has grown her business into one of the biggest green skin-care labels in the country. We love her "Midnight Honey Bath & Beauty Oil," a soothing and subtly scented blend that makes for a relaxing bedtime skin-care routine. \$11–\$36. *Farmaesthetics, Newport, RI. 800-711-9194; farmaesthetics.com*

3 When Tanya Palazzo started her career as a massage therapist, she couldn't find oils that suited her, so she started making her own. Now she produces a full line of soaps, lotions, cleansers, creams, masks, and serums, all made with plant-based ingredients. Her knowledge of aromatherapy makes all her products especially delightful, particularly the "Lavender Blossom Hand & Body Wash." \$6–\$25. *Organical Botanical, East Greenwich, RI. 401-451-6000; theorganicalbotanical.com*



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4 Suki Kramer started developing her unique line of 100% natural and clinically proven skin products after years of struggling with her own problem skin. Two years of kitchen trials and study later—she consulted both cosmetic chemists and traditional herbalists—she had a product line and growing fan base. Try her “Creamy Foaming Cleanser” as a refreshing natural alternative to harsh drugstore products. \$33–\$62. **Suki Skin Care, Northampton, MA. 888-858-7854; sukiskincare.com**

5 Husband-and-wife team Glenn and Stasia Penkoff Lidbeck have been maintaining and managing a bee population of 40 hives in Essex, Connecticut, since 1999. With the help of their three daughters (the company’s eponymous “three sisters”), they use the beeswax to produce high-quality, all-natural goat’s-milk soaps (beautifully scented with essential oils), plus beeswax lip balms in six flavors. \$3–\$4.50. **Three Sisters Farms, Essex, CT. 860-575-5999; threesistersfarms.com**



ARTISAN PROFILE

SAM HIGGINBOTTOM

6 Just two years ago, Sam Higginbottom was working as an auto mechanic in Salem, New Hampshire. At the end of the day, his hands were inevitably blackened and roughened from exposure to grease and oil. Unhappy with the range of hand cleansers on the market—he found them both harsh and ineffective—Sam inspired his wife, Kristen, to learn soapmaking.

After weeks of experimentation, Kristen developed the couple’s first “Walnut Hand Scrub,” made with walnut husks to slough off dirt, plus vitamin E to soothe. Sam shared it with his fellow mechanics, and it was so well received that calls started coming in from the men’s spouses, who wanted to order more.

That interest inspired Sam and Kristen to create new products, including their “Hand & Repair Lotion,” a rich cream that, like their other products, is biodegradable and made without parabens or sulfates, and “Knuckle Wax,” enriched with cocoa butter and sweet-almond oil to soothe hardworking hands. The response was overwhelming, and a business was born. Keeping with the manly theme, they’ve even added a rosemary-and-olive “Beard Oil” to smooth wiry whiskers.

Now Sam and Kristen are doing their manly best to keep up with their booming business (their products were recently picked up by West Elm). In their East Hampstead, New Hampshire, headquarters they produce more than 30 natural skin-care products geared especially for men. We love the products, and the reasonable price points. \$7–\$20. **Sam’s Natural, East Hampstead, NH. samsnatural.com**

—Amy Traverso