

Perched On The Rim Of Her Soap Pot

A Handmade Soap And Natural Cosmetic Formulator Who Ponders, Muses And Is Sometimes Amused.

Oh yes, I have been a bit busy.

This is one reason:

Botanica Basics™

*A Midsummer Night's Mead
Handmade Soap*



**A shooting star and a soft, fragrant, slightly hypnotic breeze:
White moonflowers, patchouli, carnations and ripe plums.**

wrapped in a soft backdrop of orange blossom honey, elderberry flowers, sandalwood and leather, with a playful, lingering wisp of coriander and smokey oak wine casks.

Blue shades of a midsummer night's starry sky, with a shooting star leaving a trail of wonder dust in it's wake.

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This entry was posted in Bath and Body, Fragrance, Soap and tagged blue, mead, midsummer, shakespeare, starry, wine on July 9, 2015 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2015/07/09/oh-yes-i-have-been-a-bit-busy/>] by Sandra.

Puppy Sighs

My husband Kevin and I had a sweet Border Collie named Ali for just over 10 years. She died in 2010. Right now we have a Boxer -a pure nut ball, and several cats. For the last 3 years or so we've talked about maybe getting another Border Collie as we really love the intelligence and sweet dispositions they have. We've got a farm and a big fenced back yard for him/her to play and do their thing in. But every time we run into a Border Collie pup or dog, it's never been *quite* the right one. I can't always put my finger on it, but I just know they're not the right one. When this happens, I'm always reminded of the story called "Puppy Sighs":

PUPPY SIGHs!

"Danielle keeps repeating it over and over again. We've been back to this animal shelter at least five times. It has been weeks now since we started all of this." Danielle's mother told the shelter volunteer.

"What is it she keeps asking for?" the volunteer asked. "Puppy size!" replied the mother.

"Well, we have plenty of puppies, if that's what she's looking for." "I know...we have seen most of them," the mom said in frustration. Just then Danielle came walking into the office. "Well, did you find one?" asked her mom. "No, not this time," Danielle said with sadness in her voice. "Can we come back on the weekend?"The



two women looked at each other, shook their heads and laughed. "You never know when we will get more dogs. Unfortunately, there's always a supply," the volunteer said. Danielle took her mother by the hand and headed to the door. "Don't worry, I'll find one this weekend," she said.

Over the next few days both mom and dad had long conversations with her. They both felt she was being too particular. "It's this weekend or we're not looking any more." Dad finally said in frustration. "We don't want to hear anything more about puppy size either," Mom added.

Sure enough, they were the first ones in the shelter on Saturday morning. By now Danielle knew her way around, so she ran right for the section that housed the smaller dogs. Tired of the routine, mom sat in the small waiting room at the end of the first row of cages. There was an observation window so you could see the animals during times when visitors weren't permitted. Danielle walked slowly from cage to cage, kneeling periodically to take a closer look. One by one the dogs were brought out and she held each one. One by one she said, "Sorry, you're not the one."

It was the last cage on this last day in search of the perfect pup. The volunteer opened the cage door and the child carefully picked up the dog and held it closely. This time she took a little longer. "Mom, it's him!! I found the right puppy! He's the one! I know it!" she screamed with joy. "It's the puppy size!"

"But it's the same size as all the other puppies you held over the last few weeks," Mom said. "MO-OOM, not SIZE — SIGHs!!!! When I held him in my arms, he sighed," she said. "Don't you remember? When I asked you one day what love is, you told me love depends on the sighs of your heart. The more you love, the bigger the sigh!"

The two women looked at each other for a moment. Mom didn't know whether to laugh or cry. As she stooped down to hug the child, she did a little of both. "Mom, every time you hold me, I sigh. When you and Daddy comes home from work and hug each other, you both sigh. I knew I would find the right puppy if it sighed when I held it in my arms," she said. Then holding the puppy up close to her face she said, "Mom, he loves me. I can hear the sighs of his heart!"

And then today, at my Farmers Market, while I'm there selling our soap and **not** looking for a dog, I met a Border Collie/Heeler mix puppy who was the *right puppy sighs*. Meet Anya.





Anya

8 weeks old and utterly adorable. Snuggled in my lap the whole time at the market and the drive home. When I got home, a few of the cats gave her the side eye and 2 started licking on her. But there was peace in the valley! My boxer wanted to play. Anya will play -on her terms- thank you very much. Kevin knew I was bringing her home and he got home about 15 minutes after me. He and Anya fell in love with each other about 30 seconds in.



Anya

And he agreed, she was the right puppy sighs.

Share this:





This entry was posted in Family, Home, Life on the farm and tagged dogs, pets, puppy love on April 30, 2015 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2015/04/30/puppy-sighs/>] by Sandra.

The 10 Most Bizarre Beauty Treatments

"Vanity, thy name is woman. Over the years, the fairer sex has tried some pretty insane things to keep themselves looking foxy, but the ten beauty treatments in this article really push the envelope. Here's a tip, ladies: if you're smearing blood all over your face, we're going to be too terrified to ask you out. Please don't try any of these treatments at home. (And that goes for you, too, pretty boys.)" <http://goo.gl/GDhLMf>

And I thought the [urine treatment](#) was odd. I have no words...And for me that's rare! May I suggest you try our Spa PhytoBotane line instead.

Share this:



This entry was posted in Bath and Body, Cultures, Skin Care and tagged cultural, natural, skincare on April 21, 2015 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2015/04/21/the-10-most-bizarre-beauty-treatments/>] by Sandra.

It's Here! 2015 Farmers Market Season

Saturday, April 18th kicks off the outdoor Farmers Market Season for me. Starting out with the Greater Polk County Farmers Market at the Bolivar Home & Garden Show, 9:00am – 2:00pm at the Bolivar YMCA, Hwy 32, Bolivar, MO.

I'll have our Handmade Soaps, plus our fizzy Bath Bursts, Aloe Lotions and Sugar Scrubs. Natural Bath & Body products can't handle hot, outdoor weather, so while the weather is mild (under 80F) I'll be bringing the



lotions and scrubs to the markets. Once the heat rolls in, they can't come out except for prepaid orders for pick up only.



The outdoor season of The Greater Polk County Farmers Market start Tuesdays, April 21, 2015 from 3:30pm – 6:30pm. I'll be there on Tuesdays ONLY. If the weather goes sideways, we'll duck inside the old yellow Fire Station building next to us.



The Fair Grove Farmers Market starts Wednesday, April 22, 2015, from 3:30pm – 6:30pm. BONUS: It's Earth Day!! The market will be giving away shopping bags filled with goodies to the first 50 shoppers. I've got goodies going into those bags too: Samples and coupons.

For future reference, if the Fair Grove Farmers Market Wednesday weather is hellacious (freaky cold under 50F, snowstorms, monsoon-ish rain storms, tornado warnings, thunder/lightning, etc.) I won't set up that day. Wet weather doesn't play well with Soap, Bath & Body and I don't play well with the rest. I'll post my market weather update by 1:00pm on my Facebook page and this blog.

I can't wait to see you all again!

Share this:



This entry was posted in Food, Markets and Expos, Sales, Skin Care on April 17, 2015 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2015/04/17/its-here-2015-farmers-market-season/>] by Sandra.



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2015 is the year of the sweet pepper!

National Garden Bureau declares 2015 to be the Year of the Sweet Pepper
<http://goo.gl/NA0p6Z>

Share this:



This entry was posted in Uncategorized on April 16, 2015 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2015/04/16/2015-is-the-year-of-the-sweet-pepper/>] by Sandra.

Our Redesigned Website

My goodness, our redesigned website is LIVE! Desktop, Mobile & Tablet friendly. #HandmadeSoap #Makers #Indies Click here and take a peek!

Share this:



This entry was posted in Uncategorized on March 30, 2015 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2015/03/30/213-our-redesigned-website/>] by Sandra.

We're Giving Our Website A Spring Makeover!

Our Websites will be down for maintenance from Thursday, March 26 until Saturday, March 28, 2015.

We're consolidating our main site with our shopping site, making it more concise as well as mobile and tablet friendly. The old has to come down in order to bring you the new. We thank you for your patience as we make this transition.

Share this:



This entry was posted in Uncategorized on March 26, 2015 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2015/03/26/were-giving-our-website-a-spring-makeover/>] by Sandra.

The Medicinal Herb Garden

Grow these 10 medicinal herbs in your garden, and enjoy having the keys to natural wellness just outside your door. <http://goo.gl/6F2wER>

Share this:



This entry was posted in Uncategorized on March 24, 2015 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2015/03/24/the-medicinal-herb-garden/>] by Sandra.

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<https://www.mimichatter.com/what-your-skin-really-reveals-about-your-health-1049238683.html>

LINK

Share this:



March 20, 2015 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2015/03/20/nice-article-on-your-skins-health/>]

Leave a reply

Infographic: Essential Oils as Antimicrobials

From the wonderful and informative Robert Tisserand

<http://tisserandinstitute.org/infographic-essential-oils-as-antimicrobials/>

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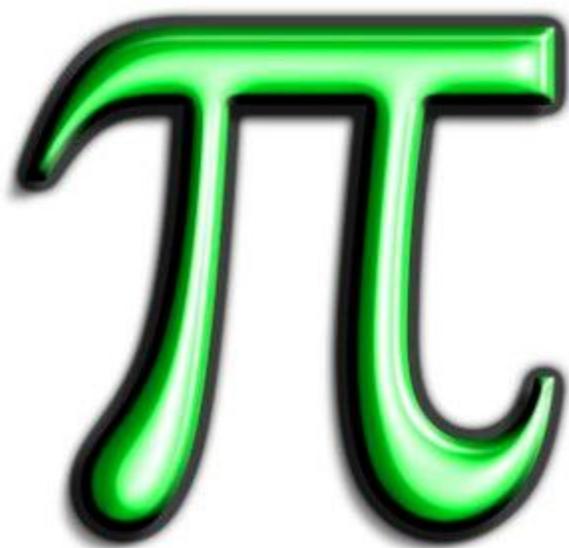


This entry was posted in Uncategorized on March 19, 2015 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2015/03/19/infographic-essential-oils-as-antimicrobials/>] by Sandra.

It's time for pi!

HAPPY ULTIMATE PI DAY

3.14.15



UNTIL THE ULTIMATE PI MOMENT 3.14.15 9.26.53

Let the celebration begin! 😊

Share this:



This entry was posted in Uncategorized on March 14, 2015 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2015/03/14/its-time-for-pi/>] by Sandra.

[A very interesting article on American perfumery](#)



My quest to find the great American perfume

From France to Dubai, scent is viewed as high art – but not in America. What is it about our relationship to smell that puts us so far behind in this field?

<http://goo.gl/6CYlt6>

Share this:



This entry was posted in Cultures, Fragrance and tagged American, perfume on March 6, 2015
[<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2015/03/06/a-very-interesting-article-on-american-perfumery/>] by Sandra.

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Go make something. ANYTHING!

Find something constructive that will help you relieve the pressure or inspire your joy.



Share this:



It's National Craft Month, Go Make Something!

March 3, 2015

[<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2015/03/03/its-national-craft-month-go-make-something/>]

Leave a reply

Natural Homemade Beauty Ideas

Natural and natural based really catching on in skin and hair care. For years, we've been putting too many synthetics into and onto our bodies. Synthetics that can potentially build up and possibly make us feel tired, sick, itchy or inflamed, whether we eat them or use them topically. While the skin is an excellent barrier, research is now showing that while our skin is impermeable, **it is not impenetrable**. And people are catching on that in many cases, natural and natural based skin care can be better.

While we make Handcrafted Bath & Body products, they're made for a longer use and longer storage. But many skin beneficial remedies can be made at home by you and it's not too difficult. Here are 4 quick and easy recipes you can make at home for yourself.

Eating nutritious food helps give you the right nutrients you need to look good. You can get help get more of these vitamins and minerals by putting the good stuff right on your skin.

FACE MASKS



multi-colored natural skin masks

Combine 1/2 mashed banana, 1/8 mashed avocado (for oily skin skip the avocado and use 1 tablespoon real, plain yogurt) with 1 teaspoon lemon juice and mix well. Add a beaten egg plus 1 tablespoon of honey to create a great face mask that provides vitamins, and improves the tone and texture of your skin. Wash your face first, then apply the mask to your face with a gentle massage, avoiding eye area, then let sit for about 15 minutes. Wash off with cool water. Store excess in the refrigerator and use within 7 days.

FACE SCRUBS

If you like gentle face scrubs, you can add 2 tablespoons cornmeal or sugar to the above recipe, blend well and gently scrub your face with circular motions, avoiding the eye area. Rinse well and pat dry. Store excess in the refrigerator and use within 7 days. Never use scrubs more than twice a week. After you're washed and nourished your skin, you can use a slice or two of juicy cucumber as a toner to help tighten and tone your skin to help keep your skin looking great.

PRE-WASH HAIR CONDITIONER

Do you use styling tools on your hair? Blow dryers, flat irons and curling irons can seriously take their toll on your hair. Many people pay a lot of money for a pre-wash hair conditioner to help make their hair look and feel good. Here's a great natural recipe to save you money and help your hair.





woman with long hair using flat iron

Thoroughly mix 1 egg yolk (no white) with a tablespoon of castor oil and a tablespoon of coconut oil. If you have very oily scalp and hair add 1 tablespoon lemon juice (skip this if you color your hair). Apply to hair and cover with a plastic hair processing cap (in a pinch a plastic grocery bags will do great). Keep it on for about for about ten minutes and rinse out with warm (not hot) water. Wash and condition your hair as normal. Use this once a month as a conditioning treatment for healthier, shiny hair.

HAND & FOOT SCRUB

A quick, fresh made natural face mask will help your skin look better in not a lot of time, but hands and feet require extra care.



sugar-grains scrub

Use 2 tablespoons of oil (like olive, rice bran, melted shea butter) or your favorite **unfragranced** natural based lotion or cream mixed with 2 tablespoons sugar or corn meal and gently massage onto your hands or feet. Leave on a few minutes to let the oils soak in and soften, then rinse off with warm water. Be careful with your feet as the oil can make the tub or shower floor slick and slippery.

When it comes to DIY natural beauty, these basic recipes can be just the start. Do you have any special DIY creations skin care?

Share this:



This entry was posted in Bath and Body, Health, Skin Care and tagged DIY, homemade, natural, skincare on February 26, 2015 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2015/02/26/natural-homemade-beauty-ideas/>] by Sandra.

How Etsy Alienated Its Crafters and Lost Its Soul

How Etsy Alienated Its Crafters and Lost Its Soul.

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This entry was posted in E-commerce and tagged crafts, e-commerce on February 23, 2015 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2015/02/23/how-etsy-alienated-its-crafters-and-lost-its-soul-2/>] by Sandra.

This Is the Most Disturbing Skin Care Fad Yet

http://www.popsugar.com/beauty/Urine-Treatment-Acne-36698265?utm_source=beauty_newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=beauty_newsletter_v1_02022015&em_recid=151570109&utm_content=placement_6_title

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This entry was posted in Skin Care on February 21, 2015 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2015/02/21/this-is-the-most-disturbing-skin-care-fad-yet/>] by Sandra.



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SNOW DAYS! Use This Time To Your Advantage



Photo Credit: [MotoWebMistress](#) via [Compfight](#)

cc

Right now 1/3 of the US is either snowed or iced in, along with all of eastern Canada. Instead of going stir crazy, use this time to take care of or clean up things in your home, home office or work space. If you can't leave the house for the next few days, take care of these important tasks before Spring. For us and many of our business associates, once Spring officially comes, we don't have time to do "Spring Cleaning" as the Event Selling Season starts. That's usually either around mid-March or about 3 weeks before Easter, depending on when it falls. And if you're like us, a Maker (those who make the products they sell), we have to keep up with production. But these tips and ideas can be used by everyone. So these snow days are a good time to get some things in order.

HOME

Organize Your Clothes Closets. It's too easy to throw stuff in the closet. If you've been doing this all year, there's sure to be quite a pile up. Start your spring cleaning by organizing your closets. While you are organizing everything, sort through your clothes and shoes and get rid of the things you are no longer wearing or are damaged. If it's good but you can't fit it, can't trade with another or just don't want it, donate it. If it's not wear-



Photo Credit: [OnTask](#) via [Compfight](#) cc

able and you've got an H&M store near you, you can turn them in and may be able to get a \$5.00 off coupon on purchases of \$30.00 or more at H&M! More info here: <http://www.hm.com/us/longlivesfashion> Their sustainability effort was still going on as of December 2014. Check to see if it still is.



Photo Credit: [peyri](#) via [Compfight](#) cc

Clean Up Your Storage Closets.

Organize your cleaning items, your linen closet. Your laundry room is included in this, if you have one. Your pantry, too. Half the time you don't feel like doing any cleaning is because you can't find what you need. (The other half is you're just too damn tired to be bothered! I understand.)

Give The House A Good Cleaning. Set aside a few hours to catch up cleaning your home. Vacuum, scrub, polish, and shine. It may not sound like the greatest way to spend a day, but once you're done, it will be well worth it. Make this a joint effort if you've got a spouse and/or kids home for the snow days. If they live there, they contribute to the mess and they can help clean there. Don't micro manage, how you vacuum and clean may not be how they vacuum and clean, but they are vacuuming and cleaning. THAT is what matters most.





Photo Credit: [simplegreenor-ganichappy](#) via [Compfight](#) cc

HOME AND HOME OFFICE



Photo Credit: [torres21](#) via [Compfight](#) cc

Get Rid Of Clutter. Clutter can build up fast! Do you have old receipts, magazines or junk mail piled up? Set a timer for 15 minutes and concentrate on getting rid of the paper clutter in one spot. Sort and separate. When those 15 minutes are up, do another spot for 15 minutes.

Do you have things just piled up because there isn't an actual spot for them to go? Order online for some organizers and create definite spaces for all of these miscellaneous objects. Or put post-it notes in the spots and pick them up when you can finally get out.



Photo Credit: [brosner](#) via [Compfight](#) cc

Clean Your Computer. Is your computer lagging? Give it a basic cleaning:

Back Up Your Files – Has it been a while since you've backed up your work? Back up your files and get rid of the duplicate files or files you no longer need. You do back up, right? You should have either a stand alone back up drive or one in the cloud. I use a complete cloud backup plus a standalone for special files backup. Saved my bacon when my desktop decided to have a stroke.

Get Rid Of Software You're Not Using – Did you download some software to try out and end up not using it? Go through the software you have installed and uninstall the ones you're not using.



Run your PC or Mac's Disk Clean Up – You can free up more space on your computer by using their Disk Clean Up tools. Oh, and clean up your old emails.

YOUR WORK AND INVENTORY SPACES



Photo Credit: [storebukkebruse](#) via [Compfight](#)

cc

Organize your supplies and clean the shelves. If you're a Maker, even though you probably did inventory at the end of 2014 or the beginning of 2015, take a **2nd inventory** of products made, **products being made** and your supplies on hand as a just in case. I realized a few days ago that I'm out of a fragrance. A fragrance I need for a special product in April. I accidentally put the empty bottle back on the shelf. Whoops!

Also, look at your Sales Event display props. How are your table clothes? Your shelf units? Your display racks, baskets or boxes? Anything looking tired, dented, dingy, torn or thread bare? If so, make a To Do list to fix, paint, repair or replace now, so you can sail into the Spring Season prepared.

I hope this helps you make it through your Snow Days. And if you're one of the lucky ones who are super organized and don't have to worry about these things, enjoy your Snow Day of binge-watching Netflix or Hulu.

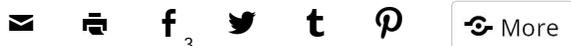


Photo Credit: [dionhinchcliffe](#) via [Compfight](#) cc

So, what do YOU do on your Snow Days?



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This entry was posted in Holidays, Home and tagged clutter, home, office, organization, snow days on February 17, 2015 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2015/02/17/snow-days-use-this-time-to-your-advantage/>] by Sandra.

Healthy breakfast and lunch in a flash

In this rush-rush world it is hard to take the time to have a healthy breakfast or lunch. When kids and work calls, most people usually grab what that they can get our hands on just to keep the hunger pains at bay. For my hubby and I, March through December is a constant mad run. Upkeep on product production, Farmers Markets, Special Events, Fairs and Festivals. Add to that hubby having overtime plus our garden work (which saves us buckets of cash on veggies the whole year) and sometimes it seems like there isn't enough time in the day to eat something healthy. Over the years, I've used many methods to make sure I've got healthy meals and I've found the best ones are those that don't require mass quantities of "prep" work and are done either the night before and some can even be done a few days in advance for the whole week. But for those who need it, today is a new day with a few suggestions for healthy breakfast and lunch options that won't take up too much time and energy.

The first tenet of eating healthy is planning. With a plan in place, you'll begin to see how healthy eating can be easier for you and yours. Prepare breakfast and lunches the night before. If you over sleep or wake up to find the weather has gone to crap and you have to leave a bit earlier, that blows all your well meaning healthy food ideas. There's no time to fix breakfast or lunch so you all grab something on the way with less nutritional value. Taking a little time at night to get everything together goes a long way. You'll be glad you did when you or family are in a rush the next morning.

Have EVERYONE pitch in and help do this. That way no one can complain about what they're eating, because they helped make it. Daughter picks eggs, Son like turkey, Dad likes ham, Mom likes cheese. Everybody's happy.





Kids stirring food



toasted bread sandwich

Here are some ideas for healthy meals in a flash.

Toast with add-ins – Toast is just the beginning. Try choosing whole grain and multi-grain breads. And if biscuits or English Muffins are more your thing, they work just as well. From here, you can add a little protein to help feed the hunger and also stop mid-morning cravings. Add a piece of sliced turkey, cheese, peanut butter or scrambled egg. All of those can be made the night before. The eggs can be scrambled ahead of time and reheated in the morning for a few seconds.



Smoothie

Smoothies – These look just like glorified shakes but they are power packed with good stuff. You don't just have to add fruits (banana, strawberry, mango,

pineapple). You can also put in a cup of low-fat yogurt, flax-seed, wheat germ and other good things to boost your vitamin intake. The night before, mix your ingredients together in a bowl. In the morning, put them in



the waiting blender and in a minute or two, you're ready to go and can take it to go if need be.



Sliced hard-boiled egg

Eggs – Eggs are quite versatile. If you're in a hurry and most of us are, boil them. You can boil them the night before and have them ready to go. Eat one as you drive to work or cut it up on toast for a quick sandwich. My sister and my late father both boiled a weeks worth ahead of time so there was always breakfast available if time was too tight. Sis still does this. Keep bananas, plums or pears around, they make a great "grab and go" along with a hard-boiled egg or your pre-made breakfast sandwich.



Sub sandwich

Who says that bag lunches are dead? They just have fancier packaging. Get your lunches ready at night so all you have to do is either line up the bags or boxes in the refrigerator or on the counter for everyone to grab as they leave. Make any salads or sandwiches the night before. For the adults, leftovers from that night's dinner make a great (and inexpensive) lunch the next day. With microwave ovens in most businesses break rooms and cafeterias, you can enjoy hot or cold healthy fare.

I hope these suggestions help to get you moving on the right track even though you're already moving fast. Got any other healthy solutions for quick breakfast or lunch dilemmas?

Share this:



This entry was posted in Family, Food, Health and tagged food, healthy, time on February 2, 2015



[<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2015/02/02/healthy-breakfast-and-lunch-in-a-flash/>] by Sandra.

Well this is fun! New blog platform

Where have I been you ask? I've been in blogging limbo land. My hosting platform discontinued a very convenient product last August: It's built-in blog platform. For whatever reason, they chose to discontinue it. It was a case of "Too bad, too sad". I had to migrate over to a new blog platform, in a totally new type of format for me. Totally a case of terra incognita.

So I had some learning to do. Which I had no time for until the last couple of weeks. March – December is just NOT an optimum time for me to have to learn new internet toys. Too much to do. My other internet endeavors are pretty much self-maintenance at this point: Write, click, upload, drag and drop, shuffle around, center, blah, blah. Now that I've got the hang -more or less- of this shiny new toy, it will eventually become that way too.

Good news: The old platform had tools to transfer all my written content to here.



upset toddler

Bad news: It didn't move any of the pictures and graphics with the old posts, even though I was told it would. And they purged the graphic files. And then I was *really* feeling like the little tyke here.

Worse news: Anyone who had subscribed to my old blog will have to re-subscribe to this one. (Upper right hand side of the page, says: Subscribe to blog by email). So thanks in advance for subscribing. I've missed you all.



Share this:



This entry was posted in Uncategorized and tagged blogging, social media on January 28, 2015 [http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2015/01/28/well-this-is-fun-new-blog-platform/] by Sandra.

It's The Start Of Our Outdoor Farmers Market Season!



On April 16th, 2014 the Spring/Summer Outdoor Farmers Market Season starts for Botanica Basics. We've got a few changes regarding our upcoming markets schedules. These changes are for the integrity of our products, our customers protection and also for our health's sake.

1. MARKET ATTENDANCE:

As of now, we'll be at The Greater Polk County Farmers Market on **Tuesday afternoons only** and The Fair Grove Farmers Market on Wednesday afternoons. We are unable to attend the Saturday markets at this time. We're increasing our attendance at Ozarks Area Festivals, Women's Expos, Business Expos and Trade Shows and the majority of them include Saturdays.

2. WEATHER:

If it's raining (more than a gentle mist or drizzle), no matter how warm, we're not coming. And if it's a thunder storm, no one should be out in a field anyway. (I've actually had someone tell me I should show up during a T-storm. REALLY?)

If it's cold (lower than 55F), we're not coming unless the Market goes inside the building for the day. If it's snowing, we're definitely not coming.

We've made this decision because over the years too many of our products became damaged or outright ruined and had to be discarded because of exposure to wet weather. At an outdoor farmers market the produce, plants and items in jars do not suffer damage from wet environments. Bath & Body products do. Being under a tent and covering the tables with plastic only mitigates some, not all, of the problems of wet weather. Even covering the tables with plastic sheeting only relieves some of the problems. When rain and



wind is blowing and humidity is 100%, the Tub Teas packaging get damp and then the insides get damp and must then be thrown out. For product integrity and safety, they can not be dried and repackaged. When the soap gets wet, this means after the market, we have to come back to the studio and strip off (and discard) the wrapping and labels and then place the soap on the drying racks under fans for at least 48 hrs. This means then re-wrapping and re-labeling those soaps. The time and cost constraints of doing this are astronomical and in order to avoid this we've decided to avoid the environments that causes these problems.

Cold Weather: Standing around outside in cold weather for 3-4 hrs aggravates our health and we'd prefer to avoid that. It's one thing to be in a car, go shopping for an 30 minutes and then hop back in the car. It's another to be standing out in the cold weather for 3-4 hours.

So if the weather is snowy, stormy, raining more than a mist or below 55F 1 hour before a market's opening time, there is a 99% chance we won't be able to come. You can always shoot us a Facebook Personal Message or you can call us too (417-376-0269) to find out for sure. For your convenience, our web store is open 24/7 . We also have free shipping in the 417 Area Code and our products are available at Local Unique Arts & Antiques in Marshfield, MO and Southern Scentsations in Bolivar, MO.

If you know of a store that you'd like to carry our products, put us together! Anywhere in the USA! Tell us! info@botanicabasics.com Tell them, send them here: www.wholesale.botanicabasics.com. We have a low wholesale minimum for local retailers (50 miles or less). And if your lead works out, after the store takes it's first delivery from us, there's an extremely nice soap gift from us to you as a Thank You!

Thank you very much for your understanding of our schedule changes and continued support of a local business.

Sandra

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This entry was posted in Bath and Body, Markets and Expos on April 10, 2014 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2014/04/10/its-the-start-of-our-outdoor-farmers-market-season/>] by Sandra.

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Perched On The Rim Of Her Soap Pot

A Handmade Soap And Natural Cosmetic Formulator Who Ponders, Muses And Is Sometimes Amused.

Acupuncture and Acupressure: What are they and how do they work?

Acupuncture

Acupuncture is a 5000 year old medical treatment within what is called Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), and is often considered a new treatment in the western world. Whether or not acupuncture is effective is still debated within the medical community. What is certain is that the number of practitioners and patients grows each year and each one of them is a believer that acupuncture works.

The basic concept behind acupuncture is the idea that our human bodies are kept healthy and alive by our life energies. The life energies Qi (or Chi) flow through a specific channel and affect the entire body with certain points affecting specific locations. When this flow is interrupted or limited, illness, pain or even death can occur. Acupuncture is a way to manipulate the 14 channels, or meridians, in the locations where they come closer to the surface of the body. Long needles are inserted through the skin into the specific acupuncture locations. Once inserted, a variety of methods can be used to stimulate through the needles.



These methods include raising and lower the needle, twirling the needle, vibrating the needle, warming the needle, or using small electrical charges with the needles. The patient's ailment dictates the acupuncture method used. Nobody really knows exactly what acupuncture does to heal the body, in scientific terms anyway, but there are many ideas.

It has been suggested that acupuncture raises various hormone levels, blood counts, anti-bodies, endorphins, and neurotransmitter levels. It may contribute to proper constricting and dilating of blood vessels. The "Gate Control" Theory suggests that acupuncture tem-

porarily closes certain neurological gates, effectively blocking pain both small and large. It has been effectively used to treat a variety of pain, including its use as an anesthetic during surgery. Similarly, some paralysis has been helped through the opening of "stuck" gates. Conditions which acupuncture is useful in treating include pain in various places, arthritis, allergies, muscular problems, depression, anxiety, and chemical addictions.

Acupuncture has had questionable results in clinical studies; however, the process and theory behind acupuncture make it difficult to test with a control group. Many mainstream physicians believe the benefits of acupuncture are nothing but a placebo effect, or the idea that believing it works is what makes it work. Regardless, those who practice and benefit from acupuncture firmly believe that it does indeed work, and state that only using the method can prove to you that it does.

Acupressure

Traditional Chinese Medicine can also be credited with one of the other well-known and practiced methods of relieving various health and pain problems. Much more than just massage, acupressure helps the entire body function better, heal faster and remain stress-free. It is related to acupuncture in the basic concept that pain and problems in one part of the body are controlled and alleviated by pressure points in other parts of the body.

Acupressure also works on the basic concept that energy, the Qi (or Chi) flows through the body but can be impeded by built-up pressure. The practices of both acupressure and acupuncture release that pressure and open up channels for the energy to flow smoothly. When these channels are open the corresponding body locations are pain free and body processes and organs function fully. When one studies acupressure they learn exactly where to pinpoint the pressure points associated with locations of pain or illness. By applying pressure with your thumb, knuckle or the eraser end of a pencil you can often alleviate pain and reduce symptoms of illness.



Unlike acupuncture, acupressure is relatively easy to perform on yourself from the comfort of your home. It can even be performed in a limited way while at work or going about daily routines.

Here are few useful acupressure points:



Acupoint #1. This location is just about where the thumb meets the hand when following a line down from the side of the forefinger. Applying pressure here is believed to help with many problems on the upper torso, including facial pain, nervousness and most respiratory illnesses.

Acupoint #2. Located in the middle of the wrist, about two inches below the hand, this pressure point is believed to help with arm pain, stomach pain, menstrual cramps, respiratory illnesses and smoking cessation.

Acupoint #4. This point is located behind the outside anklebone. Pressure on this spot is believed to help with ankle problems, back aches, leg cramps and a variety of other problems all over the body.

Acupoint #10. At the base of the thumbnail, on the side away from the fingers is a pressure point that is believed to help with nasal congestion, headaches, arm pain and a variety of serious conditions.

Used correctly, acupuncture or acupressure may help reduce your stress levels, general aches and pains, may ease the symptoms of many illnesses and may aid in recovery from injury and surgery.

This article is for for informational and entertainment purposes only and is not intended to diagnose or treat any disease, illness or ailment nor recommend any type of medical treatment over another. Always talk to your healthcare provider before embarking on any type of alternative treatment plan.

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This entry was posted in Health on March 26, 2014 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2014/03/26/acupuncture-and-acupressure-what-are-they-and-how-do-they-work/>] by .

Those Yucky Unpronouncable Ingredients In Cos-



metics

"If I can't pronounce it, I shouldn't use the cosmetics it's in." "If you can't pronounce it, it shouldn't be in your cosmetics."

I can't escape it. I keep running across these 2 assinine sayings and several variations all over the internet and in person. Splashed out across the banner headlines of the latest natural "It Blogs" for consumers who are researching natural cosmetics and Bath & Body. Blogs and agendas that seem to do more on scare tactics and less on actual product critique, the elegance and ease of use of products. Add in many natural body care manufactures websites and blogs that swear on the most holy of their holies to only bring you the best, most natural, and by the time you get done reading that review, you're almost believing that hey, that company squeezed that Argan oil out by hand all by themselves just for you. They claim to be champions of all things good and natural. And they don't use any of those yucky unpronounceable ingredients either!



Whenever I hear or read that phrase I think of a toddler sticking their tounge out, stamping their foot and turning shades of pink right before they start a tantrum because the adult won't cave and let them have free rein to run amuck.

So here's a quick test to show why this form of consumer marketing and attitude is a really bad idea for the consumers and manufactuers of cosmetics: Pronounce these 12 cosmetic ingredients, outloud, in 25 seconds:

- **Anthemis nobilis**
- **Cymbopogon nardus**
- **Eugenia caryophyllata**
- **Anethum graveolens**
- **Foeniculum vulgare**
- **Pelargonium graveolens**
- **Humulus lupulus**
- **Cymbopogon citratu**
- **Butyrospermum Parkii**
- **Dipteryx odorata**
- **Macrocystis pyriferae**
- **Maranta arundinacea**

Now if you're the average John or Jane Q Consumer -with no foreign language training, no horticulture, cosmetics or natural medicine background- you stumbled over just about every one of those words in the 25 seconds I gave you to read them. You then went back to them a 2nd time and sounded them out slowly and I bet they still sounded odd, mangled and a bit unpronouncable.





And that's okay because here's why: **Those words are all in Latin.** Yes, that old dead language that's the stuff of legends. Ancient worlds, times gone by and all that. Old Catholic bibles from back in your great nana's day. And the language still used universally, in every country on this spinning blue ball called Earth, to give a formal name to plants. Same Latin, by the way, used in the exact same manner for the cosmetics industry to name the plants ingredients they get the extracts, resins or oils from. In the world of cosmetics, it's called the INCI, short for **International Nomenclature of Cosmetic Ingredients.** And guess what? Just about **every country in the world** requires this format on the labels of cosmetics. And unless you the consumer take a little time to learn it as far as cosmetics go, it's going to be unpronounceable. You see, serious, legitimate and sincere manufacturers in the cosmetic industry take the time. We take the time to bring your safe, effective products. And many of those product ingredients have Latin names.

LATIN NAME	COMMON NAME	USE
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Anthemis nobilis = Roman Chamomile. Did you know there's actually 3 kinds of cosmetically used Chamomile? Anthemis nobilis is Roman, Matricaria recutita (or Matricaria chamomilla L- there's been some changes lately) is German, and Tanacetum annuum is Moroccan. Plus there's about 3 others that also use chamomile as it's common name. Need to know which one is which, since plain old "Chamomile" just won't cut it. I use Matricaria recutita and Anthemis nobilis in my products.

Cymbopogon nardus = Citronella. Yes, the same Citronella in your natural based mosquito repellants and torch oil.

Eugenia caryophyllata = Clove. Yes, that wonderful spice in your holiday egg nog, your Mom's Spice cake and my Pumpkin Spice soap. Oh, and clove oil is the original tooth pain numbing agent.

Anethum graveolens = Dill. That same wonder spice you season your pickles with and sprinkle on your fish. Taste good in eggs too.

Foeniculum vulgare = Fennel. That semi-spicy/semi-sweet taste you get in the middle of your tongue eating mild Italian sausages? That's fennel.

Pelargonium graveolens = Geranium. Hmm yum, geranium. Some seriously sexy essential oil comes from it for fragancing. And it's related to the ones you grow on your porch every summer.

Humulus lupulus = Hops. You wouldn't have beer. Unless you like drinking beer that's sweet. Hops tones down the sweetness of the malt.

Cymbopogon citratus = Lemongrass. The same lemongrass you love in Thai and other South Asian cooking, flavoring your rices and broths and fragancing my Lemongrass Sage soap.



Butyrospermum Parkii = Shea butter. That wonderful stuff we all slather on by the jarful every winter and on every sunburn when we we start to peel. I use it in my Footsy's Farmacy's Foot Care.

Dipteryx odorata = Tonka Beans. Has a vanilla/almond/spicy-ish scent to it. Adds a special fini' to all kinds of desserts, making good ones into great one. And evidently illegal in the US. I kid you not. (and in my best Matthew McConahay voice) "Ahhm seeing a lot of laaaaawbreakers in here."

Macrocystis pyriferae = Giant Pacific Kelp. Yes, Kelp. That green ribbon-like plant your sushi gets rolled in, you add the powder to your smoothies and I use it in my Thalassophy line.

Maranta arundinacea = Arrow Root. Yes, the same arrow root you use in your food making. Take a peek here.



Surprised a bit? Good. Embarrassed? Don't be. I'm not out to embarrass anyone, I'm out to teach. It's my job to teach and inform the consumer as much as possible on the products they use so they can make an educated choice based on facts, not misleading catch phrases, half truths and incorrect information. So why do some US cosmetic manufactures muddy up your waters and use these hard to pronounce, latin names? Because:

1. They may sell in countries other than the US and it's REQUIRED in just about every country on the planet to be listed in the common **and** INCI for uniformity and clarity;
2. The FDA gives US manufactuers the choice of using the common names (oh, which Chamomile again?) or the combination of common and INCI.

95% of my product labels will be half "unpronouncable" as I use the universal legal standard of common and INCI name. If I told you I made a wonderful serum with Starflower oil, would you know what I was talking about? But if I told you I used Borago Officinalis (Borage) oil, you'd know. Starflower is the common name in the EU and some parts of the US.

Now I hear you mumbling and thinking "What about all those nasty *chemicals* with unpronouncable names?" I have to answer that question with this question: Do you know what a chemical is? It's EVERYTHING, including you. Your body, your air, your water, your kids. Everything is made of chemicals and has a chemical name to it. I'll save THAT discussion for another day.

"If I can't pronounce it, I shouldn't use the cosmetics it's in." "If you can't pronounce it, it shouldn't be in your cosmetics." Until about 3 years ago, I used to cringe when I'd be at an event and hear this drip oh so innocently off the lips of potential customers and I'd explain to them the INCI and why I use it. Then I started hearing this from other cosmetic vendors, so I got to researching. It finally dawned on me when I read many of the labels of the ones who proclaim that phrase from the rafters and I realized what the problem was: Many of them just use the common names. Which in the US is okay, but I have to wonder what happens when they sell across borders. That's got to be seriously expensive having 2 sets of labels. Or maybe they're not selling



across borders. Their worries, not mine.

So if you get put off or are unsure about a product because you can't pronounce the ingredients, please, do yourself and the cosmetic manufacturers a favor and look those "unpronounceable" names up. You may be surprised to find you already eat, cook, grow and use it.



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This entry was posted in Bath and Body, Health, I'm Just Saying..., Pet Peeves on March 10, 2014

[<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2014/03/10/those-yucky-unpronouncable-ingredients-in-cosmetics/>] by Sandra.

An Easy Primer Of How Start Your Organic Garden

Organic Gardening is essentially gardening the way nature would. Too often non-organic gardeners attempt to force a garden to comply with their wishes, contaminate the soil, vegetables and water table with pesticides and fertilizers and spend a hefty amount for expensive soil treatments and exotic or hybrid plants. All of these might result in a pretty garden and big produce (that in my opinion is basically tasteless) but at a dangerous price: Your soil, your garden and all it produces become unhealthy.



Organic Gardening, on the other hand, is a basic method of gardening that was used for thousands of years prior to the invention of chemical treatments. It does take more work than the modern day method of attaching a synthetic fertilizer or insecticide canister on your hose and spraying away. But the big payoff is that protects people and animals from the dangers of potentially toxic chemicals leeching into drinking water and sprayed on vegetables, it reuses kitchen and yard waste and it maintains the natural diversity of native wildlife. The keys to organic gardening include staying away from most chemical pesticides and synthetic fertilizers, using organic compost, companion planting, encouraging beneficial insects and birds to help eat the bad bugs and gardening with plants suited to your local environment.

I'm writing this based on my personal experiences over the last 20 years, not the standards of the USDA National Organic Program. Every climate and growing area is different, but they are also similar. And these



steps can be used whether it's a large 1/2 acre garden, a tiny 5x5 plot or even a porch container garden. The basics steps to start organic gardening are:

Create Natural Compost. Building a compost heap is a basic step that you can take at any time. It basically turns your kitchen and yard waste into a pile of nutrient rich soil which you can separate out and spread around your garden plants. You will need to start with some loose dirt, a bunch of worms, grass clipping, fall leaves, and kitchen waste. Simply pile all of these together and using a shovel or other turning device, mix the items up on a regular basis. Do not add meat, dairy or animal or vegetable fats to the pile. Speed up the process by making sure large leaves and vegetables are chopped into smaller pieces first. Sprinkle with water every week or so to keep damp (not wet) and turn and mix at least once a week.



Use Natural Pest Control. There are natural ways to avoid the damage caused by garden pests. The solutions will vary based upon the problems you are encountering. Some natural solutions include the introduction of insects and critters that prey upon insect pests, (think lady bugs, praying mantis, wasps, frogs and toads), the complete removal of weeds and plants that encourage bug pests and using fencing or certain edging plants to repel animal pests. Also, bird feeders that encourage birds who in turn eat bugs. The Summers of 2011, 2012 and 2013 everybody was having fits over Asian beetles and June bugs. I keep year round bird feeders so I had song birds everywhere and between them, my chickens and the Hummingbirds (aphid and gnat control) I had a very low bug problem. Since the problems and solutions vary greatly by location, soil type, amount of sun or shade and types of plants, you'll need to research your specific situation for the right type of pest control. A great place to start is OrganicGardening.com or your state's university extension or agricultural outreach agencies.

Buy or use Natural Fertilizers. The compost you're creating is one of the best fertilizers you can use on your plants. If you haven't had time to develop any compost yet, you can purchase quality organic fertilizers. Many of these are specific to the type of plants you are growing: Certain plants need acidic, others need neutral, some need more nitrogen than others. Read the contents lists and make sure they don't have any additions of synthetic fertilizers or "water retention aids", a very well known name brand does this and you really have to read the label's fine print to realize it.



There's also the natural fertilizer that has been used for hundreds of years -manure. Specifically horse, sheep, rabbit and other herbavore animal manure. I have horses (yes, those are my babies) and can attest to it's usefulness. It's not that unpleasant a smelling fertilizer if it's 4 – 6 months old (depending on the type, the weather or environment it was composted in) and it's broke down to a semi-soil. Raw or less than 4 month old manure can increase the presence of mosquitos and flies, but it will certainly help your garden grow if used appropriately. Compost can also help with a soil's water retention. In times of low rainfall this can be a blessing. By the way, unless you're growing leaf crops (spinach, mustard greens, chard, etc) or green non-flowering plants, go very easy on the chicken maure. It's almost all nitrogen and will cause beautiful green plants and leaf crops but no flowering which means no fruiting. Also, make sure the manure is not from animals that were fed mineral/salt lick blocks that also contained de-wormers or insecticides. These kill parasite larve in the digestive track and don't break down. They are still active in the manure and will in turn



kill the very beneficial worms, bugs, microbes and bacteria you need to make healthy soil. I'm also purposely not including cow manure in any of this because it can be a bit tricky to properly use, and to compost cow manure for safe and effective use will take more time than this article will allow.



If your area has finally melted from under the deep snow and the temps are above 45F, now is a great time to add manures to your garden. With manures 4 months or older, break up any chunks or manure balls and spread it evenly in your cleaned garden beds 1 inch thick and then rake or lightly till in. If it's very dry, lightly wet it, then toss the worms in, one or 2 every couple of feet. If possible cover with clear plastic and let the sun heat up your beds and do it's work. Clear plastic mean the light gets through and heats faster and it's really good to cover the bed to help trap the heat and compost the manure faster. In about 4 weeks you'll see worms everywhere, not just that handful you tosed in. The worms making more worms means you're on your way. That's a good thing. It means your beds are ready for planting. When looking at your soil, you really won't be able to tell the manure compost from the other soil in the bed. Some weeds may have tried to sprout, but don't re-rake or till to get them, do it by hand (did you know that working and weeding a garden twice week can help you lose 1-2 lbs a week?) then plant your veggies or ornamental plants. If your manure is fresh to 3 months, do the same as above but give it 6-8 weeks to break down into semi-compost and be ready for planting. If you've got lots of worms, you're golden! Don't try to hurry either of these with synthetic fertilizer additions. Those can actually harm or burn out the beneficial worms, microbes and soil bacteria. And if you really want to know how your soil's pH is, many garden stores now carry a basic soil test kit, plus many university extensions or agricultural outreach agencies offer low cost soil tests.



For ornamentals: Plant Native Plants. Plants that grow wild in your area are considered native plants. These have been a part of your local eco-system longer than people, they have not been brought from another region and they will grow happily with little or no assistance. These often are the wild-flowers you see growing in un-plowed fields or along the sides of country roads. They will reproduce themselves every year, either from seed or from root. Native plants are also suited to the local wildlife, and often are the food or shelter of choice for native birds and butterflies. It also makes for a healthy bee population. This is important since bees fertilize up to 70% of plants. The same for vegetables but with a twist. Look at the areas the vegetable actually originated from and adapt them to your climate. Native Americans did the 3 Sisters (beans, corn, squash) very well in most areas of the US. If your climate has a short warm season but a vegetable you want has a longer growing season and needs warm weather start to finish, start them in your home 3-4 months out before your warm season starts, or buy transplants already half grown from organic growers if possible. It's interesting to note that because of the Ozarks topography, the soil and weather in the Ozarks is very unique. My farm sits on an area that has full blast sun, with rocky limestone hills and glades, with small sections of flat land and low land, along with woods next to them for afternoon shading. I'm able



to grow earlier many herbs with ease that would struggle just 150 miles north to north east- the middle of the state. My lavender, lemon balm and other herbs all go nuts and grows like crazy. Learn your area's climate and more importantly your "micro-climate" and what grows best under your average weather for the season.

Time, effort and a bit of patience are just about all that is needed to begin gardening organically. Making the switch will save you money and can increase the health and environmental factors of your home and garden. Oh yeah, if you have a bountiful harvest and want to unload a bit of it, I know a Farmers Market you can sell at.



All images (except horses) courtesy of Microsoft Office Images

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This entry was posted in Uncategorized on February 19, 2014 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2014/02/19/an-easy-primer-of-how-start-your-organic-garden/>] by Sandra.

Ayurveda– A brief primer on what it is and how it works.

Ayurveda is a form of health practice that originated in India and focuses on maintaining a balance of all the forces at play within the body. When the body is balanced, it is healthy. Remarkably similar to modern medical practices, Ayurveda physicians focus on specific areas of the body. They educate patients on ways to maintain the balance of those areas, and work to rebuild the balance when illness occurs.

The basic concept behind Ayurveda is the balance of the five elements: Akasha (Ether or Space), Vayu (Air), Tejas (Fire), Apa (Water) and Prithvi (Earth). These 5 elements make up a whole of everything, including the world and living creatures. Each of the 5 elements are present within the human body.

In basic terms and simple explanations, they are:



Earth, or Prithvi, represents the red blood cells, spleen, moral integrity and persistence.





Water, or Apa, refers to anything within the body that has a liquid form.



Fire, or Tejas, includes all of the operations of the body that remove impurities, that cause substances to change form, and that produce heat.



Air, or Vayu, is present in the form of oxygen in the blood and also is the force that moves things through the body and mind.



Ether (Space), or Akasha, does not form a physical presence in the body, but it is very much there. Space is the part of the mind and heart that accept love, emotion and impressions.

Keeping each of these elements in balance is the key to Ayurveda medicine. They include keeping the 3 doshas (bodily humors) that make up the constitution of the body in balance. The 3 Doshas are:

- Vata: body movement, nervous system;
- Pitta: body energy, digestion and metabolism;
- Kapha: body fluid and use of nourishment

Ayurveda principles of health are basic and simple. Many of them even seem like common sense. These include the idea that proper nutrition aides in the balance of the elements within the body and thus promotes a healthy body that is able to heal itself. Add to this the inclusion of proper exercise, healthy relationships, adequate rest and mental health. The combination of all of these ensures a properly functioning body.

The body has a tendency towards self healing. This is a well-known fact and is shown by the operation of even a poorly functioning immune system. Ayurveda medicine builds upon this concept, and looks at not only the disease itself, but the human that has the disease. Ayurveda practitioners understand that even in a person with a terrible disease and intense illness, there are aspects of health. Identifying what has gone wrong within the person's balance, or the doshic disturbance, is the key to curing the disease.



Ayurveda medicine is an ancient practice that blends well with modern medical practices. Many health care environments are now incorporating "alternative" or "complimentary" medical disciplines with mainstream western medicine. Although there are few western physicians actually practicing Ayurveda, its principles seem to be a growing element of the modern health movements.



Ayurveda Elements/Humors graphic from [Wikipedia Wikimedia Commons](#)

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This entry was posted in Family, Health on February 11, 2014 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2014/02/11/ayurveda-a-brief-primer-on-what-it-is-and-how-it-works/>] by Sandra.

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Perched On The Rim Of Her Soap Pot

A Handmade Soap And Natural Cosmetic Formulator Who Ponders, Muses And Is Sometimes Amused.

Winter 2014 is ROUGH and so are your home heating bills.

There's nothing like the feeling of coming in from the cold and thawing in a warm house. But sometimes the bill for it causes serious sticker shock. Here's a few helpful ways to stay warm all winter without breaking the bank.

Full disclosure bit as required by the FTC: None of the stores, product names, brand names or pictures of products are a referral or endorsement for these products. They're just store names, product types or names or brand names I'm personally familiar with. I received no benefits, financial or otherwise from these companies for including them in my post.

 If you have an unfinished basement or a drafty front or back door, you can save lots of money and preserve your heat by using draft guards. There are now great devices that you can cut to fit any door. They block both sides so cold air can't sneak in and warm air can't leak out. They are a cheap and easy way to save a quite a bit of money on the heating bill. I've seen them at Wal-Mart, [Home Depot](#) , [Target](#) and Dollar General.

 Space heaters are a great way to keep warm without turning up the heat in the whole home. You can use them to heat just the room you're in so you're comfortable, but not wasting money. It's a matter of preference on the forced air vs radiant heaters. I for one like forced fan ceramic heaters as it gets the heat through the room quicker, and to me a radiant heater creeps through, if at all. Just remember that even newer model electric heaters can be a fire hazard so never leave them on unattended or while you're sleeping. Make sure you buy the kind that have the "Tip Over" Safety Feature. If the heater tips over, it automatically shuts off. In the last 5 years I'm seeing heaters that now have very modern safety features. For more

info on what to look for go [here](#).



If you're snuggling up in an easy chair, on the couch or lying in bed, you don't even have to bother heating the whole room you're in! Just buy an [electric blanket or throw](#) to keep you warm and cozy. Make sure to keep the cord well maintained and watch for kinks or rips in the insulating lining or cover. Use extreme caution if using on anyone in your house who's a child, unwell, infirm or the elderly. They can't always know when it's too warm.

Besides only heating the room you're in, you can also **not heat** the rooms you're **not in**. If there's a room you hardly ever use, don't heat it. Close up the vents and the door. Just remember to put one of those draft guards under the door!



If you have a fireplace and access to low cost to no cost wood, use it. Getting a roaring fire going is a great way to heat not only the room it's in, but also the area around it as well. The stone of a fireplace radiates heat. Just remember to have the flu cleaned every year and **never leave a fire unattended**. Need wood? Ask around. Many landowners, especially older to elderly landowners, have downed trees from age, storms and ice and can't cut and clear them off and in these very expensive times, lately can't pay to have it cleared and hauled off either. Ask them, make an offer. They get cleared land and a little cash, you get heating wood. Just make sure you only use seasoned wood for this years heat. How to tell? The wood/logs are dry inside and have cracks running through them. Make sure to use a humidifier too. Humidity helps to maintain the heat and your skin and hair will also thank you.

Sunlight is a great natural way to heat your house. Open the blinds and let in natural light during the day, then close them to help trap the heat in at night. Just remember that if your windows aren't the newer air-tight kind or are older than 10 years), this can actually cool your house. So if you've got older windows, don't assume that because the glass doesn't wiggle the seal is tight. Go around the window pane with new glazing. It's amazing how much window draft is stopped just doing this. My husband did ours in November and I've definitely felt the difference. Also, if need be, seal your windows with clear plastic and sealing tape. It works, it's just a pain to get it done. This is seriously a good way to help keep your house warm all winter.



While it might have a bit of [learning curve](#) to set properly, if your heating system can be wired to it, a [programmable thermostat](#) is a great way to save money on your heating bills. The concept is simple: Why heat like when you're home, when you're not at home or not awake. The thermostat lowers your tempera-



ture at night and while you're away during the day, but will turn it up to comfort range and keeps it toasty when you're at home. And you can even program it throughout the week for when you'll be there. There are several options, you just have to pick which one's features you're comfortable with.

Even though you're trying

to keep your heat bill in check, it's a given that you run enough heat in the areas that have to be kept warm to prevent any water pipes from freezing. If need be, place a heat lamp under your crawl space near those pipes so you don't wake up to frozen or burst pipes.

And finally, if you live in a house don't forget to [insulate the attic](#). Heat rises and escapes out through your roof. Insulating the dead space under a roof can make a big all around difference to your heating bills. My house doesn't have an attic and the roof was a heat drain even in our mild Ozark winters and a heat magnet in summer, but when we had a new roof put on in the fall, we got a metal roof with insulation under it. I can feel the difference in house heat retention and I LOVE IT!

I hope these suggestions give you a bit of help to reduce the bills from what is sure to be another month or two of cold, wet weather and sticker shock from the utility companies.

Share this:



This entry was posted in Family, Life on the farm on February 5, 2014 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2014/02/05/winter-2014-is-rough-and-so-are-your-home-heating-bills/>] by Sandra.

Updated Auction List For Sew Nicaragua Fundraiser

This Facebook Online Auction Event is to help raise funds for the mission trip of Sew Nicaragua in (if you missed it [read about it here](#)). Starts **Wed. January 29, 2014 at 6:00pm and runs until 7:00pm Sunday February 2, 2014**. In case you get a bit busy and it slips your mind, I'll Facebook, Tweet and Blog reminders right before it starts and about twice a day until it ends. Go to the Event's [Facebook Page](#) to see and bid. I person-



ally know several of these merchants and they are very reputable. Thank you again and please check out the page and see all the wonderful items from local merchants and beyond that are up for auction to help this talented lady doing extraordinary things.

Updated Auction Items list for the Rebekah Fuentes Batson Sew Nicaragua Fundraiser:



Custom Head band for newborn to adult. Retail \$15 [Mrs. B's Accessories](#)

[Webstore](#)



Custom Head band for newborn to adult. Retail \$15 [Mrs. B's Accessories](#)

[Webstore](#)



Avon gift basket with Banana & Coconut shower gel and body mist, Cherry & Nutmeg body lotion and a shower sponge. Retail value \$25



\$25.00 Gift Certificate from Origami Owl





\$25.00 Gift Certificate to make something special just for you from

Kel's Custom Designs Website



2

separate items to spoil your beloved furchildren from Sassy's Goodies: A

Paw Cake (your choice flavor) Retail value \$15.00;

Gift Certificate for 16oz Goody Treats Retail value \$20.00 Sassy's Goodies Webstore



\$25.00 Gift Certificate to make items uniquely yours from My Initials



\$25.00 Gift Certificate for Scentsational Pink Zebra Candle Wax Sprinkles



Adult tumbler for the kid in you with your choice of fabric and 3 Initials; Retail value \$15 Mrs. B's Accessories Webstore





Katie Miller Custom Baking: One dozen delicious assorted handmade gourmet truffles; Retail value 15.00 [Katie Miller Custom Baking](#)



The Silver 3x3 Gift Set: 3 Scentalicious Handmade Soaps with matching Herbal Tub Teas in an elegant silver box dressed for Valentines Day; Retail value \$33.00 [Botanica Basics Webstore](#)



This lovely, feminine Bella Esparanza (blank); Bracelet Retail value: \$16.00



Boost your health with a Saba gift certificate for one month supply of ACE or Xtreme5000 Retail value \$24.00



2 nights at the "Almost Famous".

**A Cute, Clean and Remodeled Vacation House in Jamaica Beach, Texas
This is regularly \$160/ nt plus tax and \$80 cleaning fee. www.vrbo.com/431581**





Adorable Thermal Lunch Tote in brightly styled Organic Poppy by Thirty-One

Bags 6.5" x 11"W x 5"D; Retail value \$18.00

Share this:



This entry was posted in Uncategorized on January 29, 2014 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2014/01/29/updated-auction-list-for-sew-nicaragua-fundraiser/>] by Sandra.

Project HOPE: SEW NICARAGUA

Hello Handcrafted Bath & Body Lovers! Today I'm not going to write about the world of soap, cosmetics or Botanica Basics. Instead, I want to tell you about the world of a young lady I know who's doing a good thing with her talents to help others help themselves. She needs a bit of help to do it though, so I thought I'd write about her. Why? Many of us have found ourselves in a crappy environment, tight or desperate situations and pulled through because of a little help from others. But when you see what goes on in many other countries and that there aren't many avenues and almost no safety nets to help, you start to realize that quite a few of our problems are really small compared to others. So here's her story and the history. It's a tad long, but I believe that the more information you have and know, the easier it will be for you to consider donating to her mission. FYI, many of her Mission links are to the Missions Facebook page because it allows them to use a *free medium* to post information and updates and have continual interactions with people.



This is Rebekah Fuentes Batson and she works with [Project H.O.P.E Sew Nicaragua](#). I've known Rebekah for about a year and I've known her Mother and Father in-law for about 3. She lives in the Fair Grove, MO area. Rebekah has been doing a good thing with teaching sewing skills and self sufficiency to women who have escaped the sex trafficking trade in Nicaragua. She's doing a



2nd trip in a few weeks (March 6 to March 14th) and I'd like to help her with more. Her main exposure of her fundraising has been through her [Go Fund Me](#) Page and Facebook. But exposure and solicitations via Facebook are becoming limited and a bit stunted as it's Facebook, which now does it's damndest to not show subscribed to posts or slow post feeds to a crawl unless your friends and subscribers go through 5 rings of hell to get them or businesses pay to promote them. *Ask me later how I know that.*

Who and What is SEW NICARAGUA?

SEW NICARAGUA, an outreach of [Project HOPE](#), Inc. Women's Ministry, is compelled by Christ's love to empower women with marketable skills and equipment. SEW NICARAGUA group was formed to teach women of Nicaragua the basic skills of sewing and operating an electric sewing machine.

Rebekah

Batson of Mrs. B's Accessories and Mary Ann Lengyel, director of La Esperanza Preschool, combine their knowledge of sewing to teach women a marketable skill. The first series of one-on-one workshops was June 1-8th, 2013 with the Fellowship Bible Church missions team to Nicaragua. The next trip is March 6 – March 14th, 2014.

Their goal is to not only teach a trade but to inspire confidence, build relationships, and bring hope to those who lack basic resources. As SEW NICARAGUA progresses they will post stories, accomplishments, finished products and the need for consumable supplies. Please remember this infant outreach program as they trust God to multiply their efforts and encourage the Nica ladies to become self-sufficient.



This is Rebekah at her June 2013 trip. She's the big grin, flower wearing, pretty-in-pink young lady in the center.

Monetary donations to fund Rebekah's mission will pay for her expenses. Also, donations of sewing machines are needed and greatly appreciated. The women she teaches can use electric or even the old style manual foot pedal as some of them do not have easy access or financial means for electricity. The women



learn to sew, make patterns, make feminine hygiene pads and so many other things that you and I just pick up at a store or grab out a closet or drawer.



From left to right: Mary Ann, Fatima, a star sewing pupil and Rebekah.

Also, they go to the Women's Cancer Hospital for sewing and hand embroidery. They teach how to make bags and do embroidery projects. The women here are battling various forms of cancer and when they finally get into the center for treatment, they live here (which is right next door to the hospital). There is no commuting back and forth for treatment. It gives the women getting treatment at the cancer hospital something they can do sitting down or in bed. Small sewing or hand embroidery projects are perfect for them to keep them busy, distracted and feeling productive.



Sewing group at Sala de Oncologia (Women's Cancer Hospital)



2 sewing residents of Sala de Oncologia



Rebekah and Mary with the women at Sala de Oncologia

The trip with [Project H.O.P.E Sew](#)

[Nicaragua](#) was so impressive our NBC station did a [segment on it](#).

About Rebekah



Rebekah is a wife, mother and business woman. One could pretty much say she seeks to live her life through [Proverbs 31](#). She could not do this type of purposeful outreach without the support of her family. They know she has to go a long way from home to do this. They know and support the idea that the blessings and care they've received through her skills can be passed on and shared with others. And that the women she



teaches can then pass it on even further.

She's very industrious

and her business is making clothes and goodies for kids: [Mrs B's Accessories](#). And they're adorable too. I've done sales events with her and many times she brings a sewing machine and you can see her work at making or customizing her products.



On the left is event hostess Shannon Lightfoot Cook and Rebekah on the right at the 2013 Bolivar Christmas Gift Event

For the past 2 1/2 years she's done a Spring and Fall Women In Business Expo and it has grown so much in the last 2 years that she's moving it to the Springfield, MO Expo Center for the Spring Expo April 26 – 27, 2014. She doesn't make much on these expos, the majority goes to the expenses to make sure it's a top notch event. She knows how hard it is to get a business established, run, promoted and to keep a business going. She also knows how hard it can be, even in this day and age, to have people take a woman, especially a young woman, seriously when it comes to her business ventures. Our local CBS station did a segment on her [expo](#) .

Rebekah's Business Facebook page; [Women In Business Facebook](#) page; Women In Business Expo website. Whew! This is one very busy, productive and good sized footprint of a young woman who is making a difference in the world through many avenues and paths.

To sum it up what's needed by SEW NICARAGUA:

Financial donations to fund her mission trip through [Go Fund Me](#) or checks. Donations sent by check can be made as a tax write off by making your check out to Project HOPE and putting Rebekah Batson on the memo line. You mail it to her at:

Rebekah Batson
4 Redbud Cabin Lane
Fair Grove, MO 65648

There is going to be a [Facebook Online Auction Event](#) to help raise funds for her mission trip. It's from Wed. January 29, 2014 starting at 6:00pm and runs until 7:00pm Sunday February 2, 2014. I'll list at the end the auction items that are already listed. In case you get a bit busy, I'll Facebook it, Tweet it and Blog it again the day it starts as more items may have been added. You can also check out my Facebook Page to see these items. If you're not on Facebook, but you'd like to bid on an item, I will be your proxy bidder. Shoot me an email, I'll



get it bid on. Please check out the page and see all the wonderful items being donated to help this talented lady doing extraordinary things.

Also needed are sewing machines, new fabric, thread and hand embroidery projects: Contact [SEW NICARAGUA](#)

There are so many who talk a good game about self sufficiency and getting out of poverty and ask "why don't these women have it or do it or just leave?" It's because that for whatever societal reason, they weren't taught it. Or they owe money to the pimp. And it's so easy to say "go to school and learn something" when we in the first world have a school of some sort every 5 miles or less and bus service or parents to drive. It's not so easy when there's no car and gas money and there **IS NO SCHOOL for 25 miles or more**. Or

the culture thinks that only the boys should go, or the family can only afford to send 1 child, so it's usually the boy who goes, even if the girl is the bright one. And if the girl is in school, when she starts having her periods, the cost of tampons or pads are pretty much not in the family budget and so she stays home. The everyday necessities, amenities and privileges you, I and our neighbors take for granted are a luxury in most parts of the world. We can help Rebekah help them gain many of these necessities.

Helping a woman to sew, gain confidence, leave prostitution and gain self sufficiency to make a living means a whole family is helped and lifted. So I hope you'll consider donating to her mission in whatever way you can, because there but for the Grace of God go you and I or ours.

Auction Items listed for the Rebekah Fuentes Batson SewNicaragua Fundraiser:



2 separate items to spoil your beloved furchildren from Sassy's Goodies: A

Paw Cake (your choice flavor) Retail value \$15.00;

Gift Certificate for 16oz Goody Treats Retail value \$20.00 [Sassy's Goodies](#) [Webstore](#)



\$25.00 Gift Certificate to make items uniquely yours from [My Initials](#)





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Adult tumbler for the kid in you with your choice of fabric and 3 Initials; Retail value \$15 Mrs. B's Accessories [Webstore](#)



Katie Miller Custom Baking: One dozen delicious assorted handmade gourmet truffles; Retail value 15.00 [Katie Miller Custom Baking](#)



The Silver 3x3 Gift Set: 3 Scentalicious Handmade Soaps with matching Herbal Tub Teas in an elegant silver box dressed for Valentines Day; Retail value \$33.00 Botonica Basics [Webstore](#)



This lovely, feminine Bella Esparanza (blank); Bracelet Retail value: \$16.00





Boost your health with a Saba gift certificate for one month supply of ACE or Xtreme5000 Retail value \$24.00



2 nights at the "Almost Famous". A Cute, Clean and Remodeled Vacation House in Jamaica Beach, Texas This is regularly \$160/ nt plus tax and \$80 cleaning fee.

www.vrbo.com/431581



Adorable Thermal Lunch Tote in brightly styled Organic Poppy by Thirty-One Bags 6.5" x 11"W x 5"D; Retail value \$18.00

I will update when more items are added to the auction page. Thanks again for bidding and donating.

Share this:



This entry was posted in E-commerce, Family, Markets and Expos, Social Causes/Outreach on January 27, 2014 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2014/01/27/project-hope-sew-nicaragua/>] by Sandra.

Vintage Cosmetics Ads



Over the years I've collected vintage cosmetic items: ads, labels, books, containers and other items advertising cosmetics and soap. By vintage I mean pre-1940, spanning from about 1875 to 1940, give or take a few years. American, European and Asian ads from old magazines, the old insert trading cards, wall and window posters plus soap and cosmetic labels. There's even a few laundry soaps in my mix. I've got a pretty decent collection and I've taken pictures of them. Plain but intricately detailed black and white drawings for the magazines, stunningly gorgeous imprinted trading cards that came with soaps and cosmetics, soap labels in colors and designs that rival everything out today and some full color lithographs that hung on European and Asian apothecary walls and in my opinion should be in museums (and I haven't a clue how I'm going to take pictures of those to show the full beauty). I also save pictures of vintage cosmetic ads when I run across them on the web. Being 100 years or older pretty much makes them in the public domain as far as just showing them on the internet.

So I'm going to take you on a visual journey, about 10 -12 pictures at a time, by country of origin. Back to the time when companies hired artists to literally create works of art to sell the cosmetic product. With very few exceptions, advertising artwork like this has not been seen since right before WWII. And after WWII the explosive age of automation, along with the rapid pace and turn around of retail advertising (yes Mad Men) did it in.

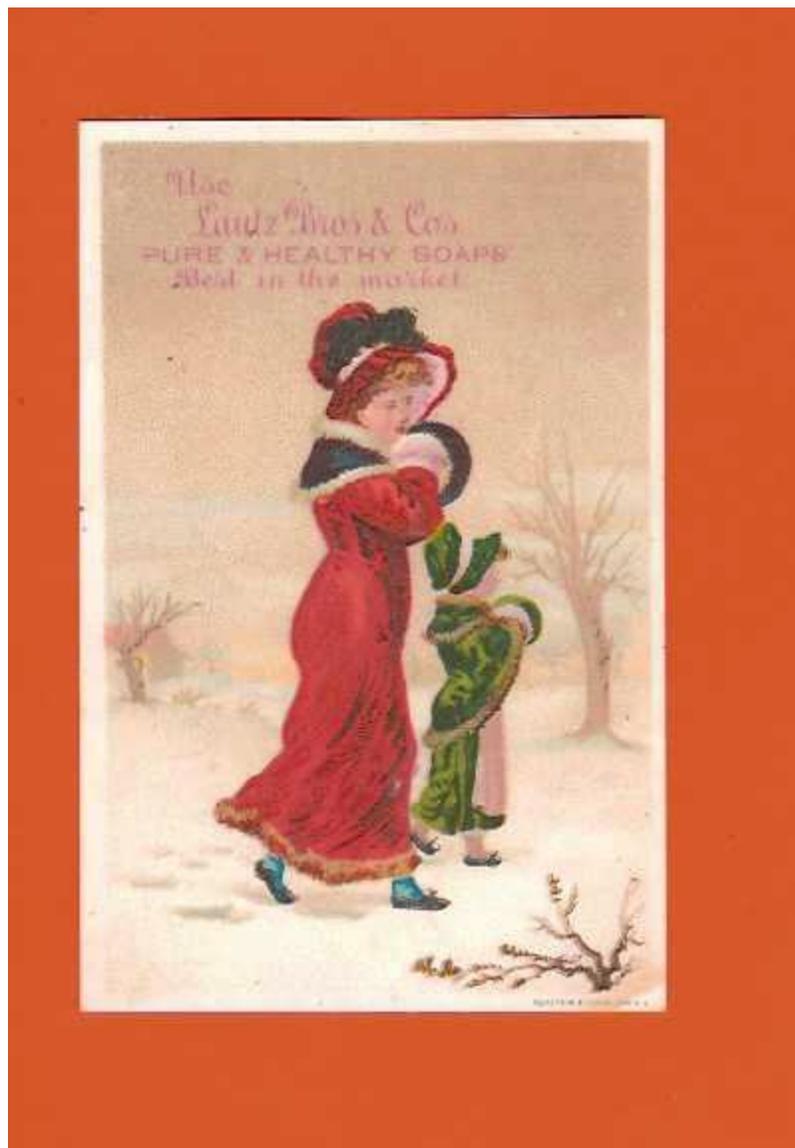
A FOREWARNING: Sometimes ethnic people (read: non-Caucasian) were used to highlight a perceived attribute or were portrayed in a less than flattering to outright derogatory manner for the advertising. I've collected a few of them too and won't shy away from showing them. It wasn't often done, but it was done. *It is what it is and was what it was.* Take them as a lesson **on what not to do**, something a few companies, sadly in this day and age, still haven't quite figured out yet.

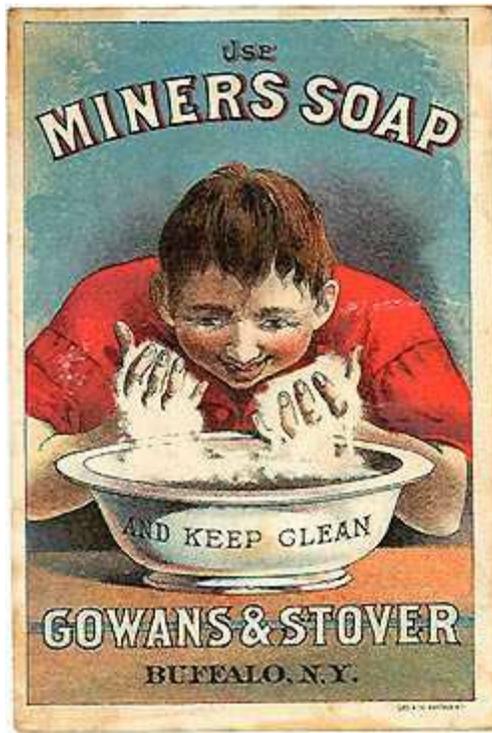
I'll start with:

Victorian Era American Cosmetic Ads and Trade Cards











RESINOL SOAP

for skin and scalp, produces a wealth of hair by the same virtues it produces such marvelous beauty of the skin—by the restoration of perfectly healthy conditions. Resinol Soap is a derivative of the famous Resinol Ointment. It cleanses the pores thoroughly—then corrects all affections, imparting a tonic influence to the roots of the hair, and

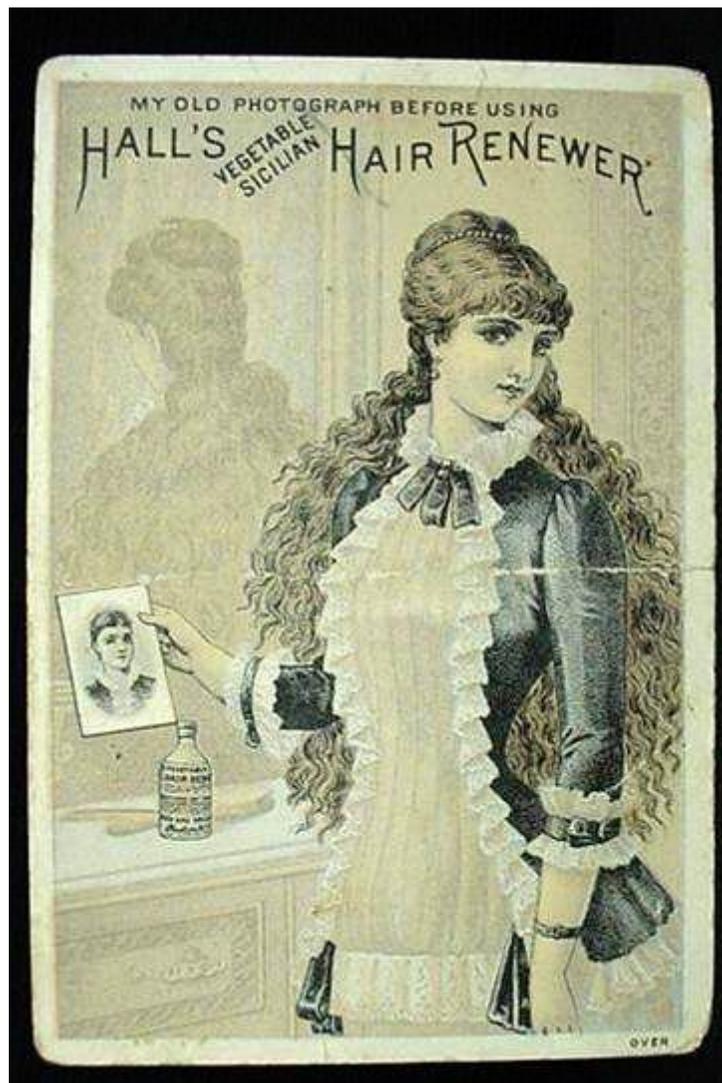
Produces a Wealthy Growth

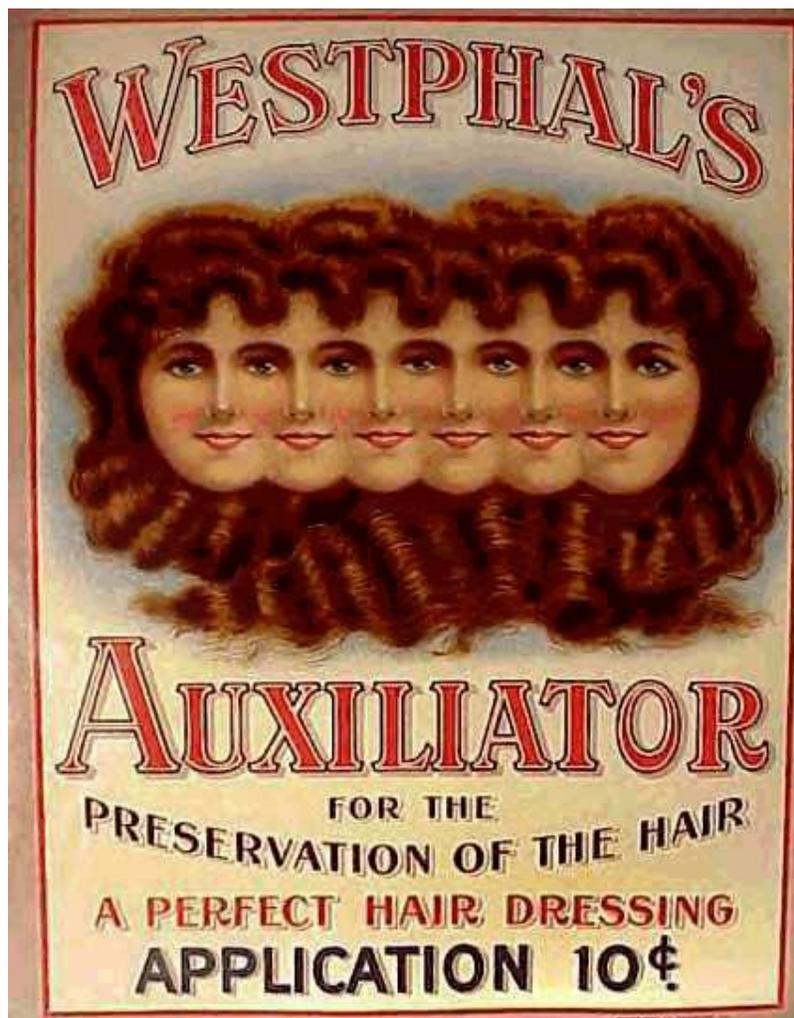
Its efficacy in removing dandruff, tetter, for scald head, itching scalp, falling hair, eczema, etc., has earned the unstinted endorsement of hundreds of prominent physicians. It is delightfully pleasant and beneficial for toilet, nursery, and bath. A safe soap to use. Sold everywhere. Sample sent free.

RESINOL CHEMICAL CO., BALTIMORE, MD., U. S. A.

An advertisement for Resinol Soap. The central image is a woman's face with her hair styled into long, thick, wavy curls that frame her face. The text is arranged around the central image. The main title "RESINOL SOAP" is in large, bold, black letters. Below it, there is a paragraph of text describing the soap's benefits for skin and hair. A sub-heading "Produces a Wealthy Growth" is followed by another paragraph detailing its efficacy in treating various skin conditions. At the bottom, it states "Sold everywhere. Sample sent free." and provides the manufacturer's name and address: "RESINOL CHEMICAL CO., BALTIMORE, MD., U. S. A."







Aren't they just beautiful?

Share this:



This entry was posted in Bath and Body, Sales, Soap on January 10, 2014 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2014/01/10/vintage-cosmetics-ads/>] by Sandra.

☺



Perched On The Rim Of Her Soap Pot

A Handmade Soap And Natural Cosmetic Formulator Who Ponders, Muses And Is Sometimes Amused.

Aromatherapy – What is it and how does it work?

I've been asked many times just what is aromatherapy? Aromatherapy is a modern alternative therapy with a history as old as time itself. It is based upon the healing and relaxing effects that arise from the use of many scents. It is similar to the use of herbal remedies and traditional native culture medicines, with the main difference being the mode of delivery. When essential oils are inhaled, they go straight from your nose to your lungs to the blood stream. Applied to the skin in a carrier oil is a bit slower route but has the same effect and some essential oils might even have some skin care benefits.

The use of scents and scented oils for therapeutic means has been around at least as long as any human records and remains. Such practices are described in the Old Testament of the Bible and the remnants have been unearthed in the ancient burial grounds of many cultures. While many uses and types of scents are popular, including the use of candles, perfume and air fresheners, true aromatherapy uses essential oils. These oils are extracted from various types of plants and plant resins, with the method of extraction depending upon the type of plant in use. Most, but not all, are steam distilled.

The term "aromatherapy" was initially coined by Rene-Maurice Gattefosse, a French chemist from the early 1900's. He described his seemingly miraculous burn cure as "Aroma-therapie" and published his findings about the uses of aromatic extracts for various therapies in 1937. I use the words "seemingly miraculous" because of the way stories get strung out, stretched and exaggerated. For a bit more on that, please read Robert Tisserand's -one of the leading researchers of essential oils- view on [this story](#).

In aromatherapy, essential oils are used in a variety of methods to provide therapeutic results based primarily on smell. While in many European Union countries there are recognized and legitimate medical and pharmacological applications of essential oils, those uses and claims are not recognized by the FDA in the United States, so I'll only discuss Aromatherapy as recognized in the US. While there are a couple of exceptions -which I won't go into- it is very important to know that essential oils must always be diluted before use. An essential oil is a strong concentration of a plant's chemical make-up and can be extremely harmful if used in the wrong manner.

If the scent of the essential oil or oil blend gives you your desired effect, then that might be the oil or blend for you. Lavender is calming. Most Citrus oils like Orange, Lime and Grapefruit can be "Happy" inducing.

Rosemary, Peppermint and Spearmint can be energizing, both through inhalation and application and also pain soothing through applications like in foot soaks and rubs. Rose is calming, cheerful and also a bit of an aphrodisiac. And while very expensive, Rose is so strong it only requires 1 drop to have the scent or desired effect in whatever medium you're using.



Some of the ways these oils can be diluted and used are:

In a body scrub: Mix 2-5 drops of essential oil in a tablespoon of a light carrier oil such as sweet Almond, Safflower or Olive and mix with 1 cup salt or sugar to make a body scrub. Be careful, your tub will be slippery from the oils.

In alcohol or Witch Hazel: Add 2-5 drops of essential oil per ounce to rubbing alcohol or Witch Hazel and spray into the air or dab onto locations of the body. Shake well before each use to blend.

In a sea salt soak: Mix 3-10 drops of the essential oil in a tablespoon of a light carrier oil such as sweet Almond, Safflower or Olive and blend with 1 cup of Epsom salts and 1 cup natural sea salt. Use in bath water as a soak. Be careful, your tub will be slippery from the oils.



In lotion: Add up to 3 drops essential oil per ounce to a natural unscented lotion or body cream. Shake or stir well to blend

In other base oils: Mix 3-5 drops essential oil per ounce with any type of vegetable oil or vegetable butter for a variety of body oils and balms.

Through evaporation: Electric dispersion diffusers (aka a nebulizer) release the essential oil into the air in microscopic drops; Tea light candle and flameless diffusers release the oil through heat evaporation.

Aromatherapy can also be used directly by applying the essential oil onto a cloth and holding it near your nose, but don't place the oil soaked cloth on your skin.

Aromatherapy has a wide variety of ways to be used, including using in personal care products like soaps and lotions, baths soaks or body scrubs*, evaporating into the air through a spray, diffuser or nebulizer. Rubbing the oil onto the body through a therapeutic massage is also one of the most popular methods.



Once again, I need to stress that essential oils MUST be diluted through the use of carrier oils, lotions or creams for these massages. Please do not believe the sales hype from the Direct Marketing Essential Oil companies who say that essential oils can be used undiluted or ingested. They can't. Essential oils are the super strong concentrates of plants and can be extremely harmful if used in the wrong manner. These companies are endangering your health in order to make a sale.

Aromatherapy is an ancient practice with a modern popularity. If used correctly and responsibly, it can encompass nearly every aspect of a person's day, from sleeping to bathing and through scents in the air or on the body. I hope I've taken some of the mystery away and answered your questions.

Just a reminder: Our Annual Winter Break will be from January 3-20, 2014.

*You already know that we have our True Soaps and Herbal Tub Teas readily available, but did you know that we make on request our essential oil -and fragrance oil- blends into Sea Salt Soaks, Milk Bath Powders, Lotions, Creams, Body Oils and Butters?

Share this:



This entry was posted in Bath and Body, Skin Care on January 3, 2014 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2014/01/03/aromatherapy-what-is-it-and-how-does-it-work/>] by Sandra.

Fight The Winter Break Boredoms!

It's that time. Do you remember when you were young and how much you looked forward to winter break? Two weeks off from school, with nothing to do? Well, if you're now a parent, you may not be looking forward to it as much as you used to. You probably now know from experience how un-fun it is to be around bored kids for almost two weeks straight! The kids (and maybe even you) are home for a week -10 days. Teens are pretty self maintenance (*okay, sort of, you still need to keep an eye on them*). But grammar and middle school ages 5 to 13 can be a serious "what to do, what to do, what to do"?

Here are some ideas to keep your kids occupied (and you sane) during their time off:

Handmade Thank You Cards





You can keep your kids busy for an afternoon AND teach them some manners by encouraging them to create handmade thank you cards for the gifts they received over the holiday season. Seriously, a text message or Twitter/Facebook shout out may be how many do it today, but it IS NOT the proper way to say Thank You. This training will come in handy later on in life. That school admission, job referral or hire can come just from taking the time to personally thank that contact with an actual Thank You card they can hold in their hands. It means you took the time to think of *them*.

Play outside



If it isn't too cold, have a family adventure outdoors. You can go sledding, skiing, ice skating, or just enjoy a walk in the brisk air. Nature's Beauty can be found, even in the cold. Speaking of Nature's Beauty: Take a Nature Walk. Many types of birds and small animals can be found in your local woods and parks. Look up in the bare trees to see if you can find the hawks, woodpeckers and others. If you've had a snow, look for tracks in the snow and try to identify them. Take a picture of them and look them up online when you get home.

Have an indoor picnic



Pretend it's summer for a day and throw an indoor picnic. Throw a blanket on the living room floor and serve sandwiches and other picnic foods.(Hint: If the kids are on an over-nighter with friends or family, do this with your spouse or partner. Add some candles and wine...) For an extra dose of fun, turn the heat way up and everybody put on their summer shorts and tank tops!

Field Trip



Take the kids to a museum or gallery during their break for a lesson in art, science, or history. Many have free or reduced admission days. Do they know the history of the area they live in? Does the family's have roots in it? Visit the area Genealogical Society.

Clean House





Home looking a bit dusty or cluttered? They live there, they need to clean there. Parents are not their kids maids and they need to have chores anyway so they know how to do things later on in life. If they received an abundance of holiday gifts, this is also the perfect time to have them clean out their rooms and donate the good condition toys and clothes they've outgrown to charity. If you've got friends or co-workers with children who use the toys, try and organize a swap or exchange. Rotate these out every 2-3 months. Somebody's bound to have something no one's played before. Kids games -especially digital, do not need to be new to be enjoyed. They just need to have never have been played by those kids.

Throw a family slumber party



One night after dinner, have the whole family change into their pj's, throw some blankets on the floor, pop some popcorn, cuddle up and watch movies till you fall asleep.

Play With Them!



Let go and let loose a bit. Good old fashioned running around the house and yard, being silly, playing their games, *using their imagination to play on their level*, play!

Speaking of winter break, Botanica Basics will be taking it's winter break from January 3 – 20, 2014. All orders received during that time will not be filled or shipped out until Tuesday Jan. 21th. We will fill and ship in the order in which they were received.

Oh, and Valentine's Day is will be here **before you know it**. The 2014 Edition of Roses, Wine & Chocolate and Le Chocolat will be available for order for Valentine's Day starting January 22, 2014.

That wraps things up. Enjoy the winter break with your kids. Before you know it, winter break won't be spent with you.



Share this:



This entry was posted in Family, Holidays on December 27, 2013 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2013/12/27/fight-the-winter-break-boredoms/>] by Sandra.

ICED IN! How about you?

There's a layer of ice over the Ozarks right now, being topped off with snow! This icy, snowy weather right at the beginning of Christmas Week makes it potentially very dangerous for holiday travel. For those who are traveling -no matter how short the distance and how well you know the way- please drive a little slower, be more aware and alert.



These pictures are the views from my porch. Pretty to look at, dangerous to be in.



Black Ice will be hidden under the snow and by the time you realize you're on it, it's too late, you're already skidding. Please make sure you have at least a basic "safe travel" kit in your car: blankets, candles, matches/lighter, energy bars, water, flares and a charged cell phone.

For those staying home or iced in I hope your power stays on and strong. If you lose power and have to run a generator for power or use a fueled heat source, make sure you have 2 or 3 windows at middle and opposite ends AWAY from the generator open at least 1 inch to cross ventilate. The NUMBER ONE cause of death in the home during extreme winter weather ISN'T the weather, it's the buildup and inhalation of carbon monoxide. The very young, the elderly and those with fragile health issues are very vulnerable.

Some last minute thoughts for gifts:

This is the perfect time of year to show your thankfulness and gratitude to the important people in your life. For some people, displaying emotions and feelings is difficult. Here are some tips to help you show your



thankfulness or that you care:

- Flowers – A classic showing of appreciation, sending someone a bouquet of flowers is a great way to say “thanks.” A handwritten note is the perfect way to complement this gift. If you can't get out the house to visit to your local florist, call them. If they made it in to work, they can take your order and get it sent out or wired out if the area it's going to isn't under ice like the Ozarks is. Years ago I worked in a floral shop and they delivered normal hours on Christmas Eve. But if it's going to an area having extreme or dangerous weather, don't expect it to be delivered *when you want it delivered*. Dangerous weather is what it is: Dangerous!
- Donate To Charity – Find out the favorite charity of the person you would like to thank and make a donation in their name. Or better yet, volunteer a few hours of your time to the cause and send them a card letting them know.
- Favor Certificates – Kind of like a gift certificate, a favor certificate is a bit more personal and from the heart. For example, a favor certificate could be worth a day of babysitting or a few hours of yard work. Use your imagination and create the perfect one for your friend or loved one. Using your home computer, you can get very creative with these and make them valuable for anything the person you would like to thank might need. And you can cheat if you want and buy pre-made favor certificates too. Just fill in the blanks.
- A Treat That's All Their Own – Show your gratitude by buying your friend or loved one something that they can enjoy all on their own. A busy woman would certainly enjoy a manicure or pedicure. Think about what they'd enjoy, but wouldn't buy for themselves, and treat them. Gift Certificates are a Good Thing.

You're Stuck Inside And Hear The Dreaded Words “Honey, What's For Dinner? ”

Got some leftover meat and want to spice things up a bit?

Curried Meat & Rice (serves 4) with alternate Veggie version

Ingredients:

1 apple, chopped (optional)

1 onion, chopped

3 tablespoons butter (or oil)

1/4 cup flour

1/2 teaspoon salt

2 teaspoons curry powder (or to taste)

1 cup milk (or an unflavored milk substitute)

2 cups cooked meat (turkey, chicken, beef or venison) OR meat substitutes OR 3 cups Thawed or Canned



Mixed Vegetables

4 cups cooked rice

Directions:

Place butter in a frying pan and sauté the apple and onion until the onion is tender. Blend the flour, salt, and curry powder into the milk and then slowly add the milk to the pan. Bring just to a boil while stirring constantly, then reduce heat to low. Cook over low heat, until thickened. Stir in the meat -or thawed/drained veggies- and simmer, stirring occasionally, until hot and bubbly (or veggies are cooked about 10-15 minutes. Serve over rice.

Meat Pot Pie (serves 4-6) with alternate Veggie version

Filling Ingredients:

1 2/3 cup frozen mixed vegetables, thawed

1 cup cooked meat (turkey, chicken, beef, venison) Vegetarian? Double those veggies!

1 (10-oz.) can condensed cream of chicken or celery soup (or vegetarian substitute)

Topping:

1 cup baking mix, such as Bisquick

1/2 cup milk (or unflavored milk substitute)

1 egg

2 cloves garlic, finely chopped (optional)

Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

Preheat Oven to 400 degrees If using garlic, sauté over medium for a few minutes, then add vegetables, meat, soup, salt and pepper. Cook until heated through. Spoon into an ungreased 9" glass pie plate (if using metal pie plate lightly oil the bottom and sides). Stir remaining ingredients until blended, then pour over veggie mixture. Bake about 30 minutes or until golden brown.

By the way if you've got pre-made pie crusts handy (or like to make your own) and love a double crust pie, then skip the Topping and do this: Line the ungreased pie plate with one crust, pour in the filling. Top with second crust, seal and crimp edges. Using a fork, poke crust 5 times (at 12, 3, 6, 9 o'clock and center) and bake until crust is golden brown -about 30-40 minutes depending on your crust's brand or recipe.

Enjoy!



Last night after feeding the critters I thought this was so icy beautiful.



Merry Christmas!



Share this:



This entry was posted in Family, Food, Holidays on December 23, 2013 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2013/12/23/iced-in-how-about-you/>] by .

It's The Most Wonderful Time Of The Year

Merry Christmas. Happy Winter Solstice. Happy Kwanza. Happy Holidays. If I missed some, don't feel slighted. Love Joy and Blessing to you all.

Can you feel the magic in the air? There is just something about the holiday season that makes the ordinary, extraordinary! From the twinkling lights and beautiful decorations to the freshly fallen snow (for those of you who like snow) to the excitement of seeing friends and family at upcoming holiday parties, this IS a special time of year!

Of course, that doesn't mean every day is merry and bright. It's normal to feel stressed out during the month of December, and this issue is full of ideas to help you! There are some ideas for quick, last minute gifts and a delicious cookie recipe! You can even package up some of those cookies to give as a last minute gift! (See, I told you there was some great ideas in this issue!)

I'd also like to take this time to thank you for reading this, being a Botanica Basics customer and I'm wish you a very happy holiday season, whatever you celebrate!

Give A Gift Basket: Creating your own gift basket is easier than you think – and it will look like you spent much more time on it than you actually did! It's good to get the items all at one time. While shopping, gather up several items that are related to each other. For example, for a Food Basket: Gourmet crackers and cheese sets, packaged meats, and small jars of dips. For a Sweets Basket: dessert sauces, chocolates, cookies; A Young Adult Female: Cute head band packs, ponytail holders, blingy barrets and hair bows. Got a wine lover? A good bottle or 2 of their favorite red, white or rose or even all three -some wines come in smaller bottles that's called splits, add some gourmet cheese and crackers, dips and 2 wine glasses. A Crafty or



Hobby person: Items that pertain to their craft or hobby. Go to the Basket or Craft section of the store and find a basket or container large enough to hold it all, plus some shred fill and a clear gift basket bag 3-4 times (height + width) the size of your basket or container and a nice bow. *Pssst: Pull bows can be your friend.* They're definitely mine. Most stores selling baskets and gift containers have all the necessary items to put it together.

When you get home, open and lay out the gift bag wide open and sit the basket/container in the center of the open bag. Add some shreds to the bottom of the basket/container to cushion it and place your items in it. There is a method to the madness: If it's a round or square, work in a circle: Largest items in the middle, mediums around the large and smalls around the medium. This gives 360 degree symmetry. If it's a rectangle, work horizontal: Tall items in back center, mediums on both sides of the tall, smalls in front of them and on the 3 sides. These create 2 dimensional symmetry. For all types place fragile items like wine glasses in the middle, with their base having lots of shreds under them to protect them. Add shreds under and around all the items as needed to hold, secure and prop them up to give a graduated, stair step look. Then carefully pull the top of the bag up and gather in the center just above the top of the tallest item in the basket/container. Twist once or twice tightly and then secure the twist with either clear gift tape and then add your bow. If you got a pull bow, tie it tightly with the tails of it- 2 or 3 times around, that's what the tails are for. Fluff out the puffy top and there's your Gift Basket. Got one planned now? Great!

Wait...What?



You just don't have the time or don't even want to attempt it? Okay, problem solved: email (top of this page) or call me (9am-5pm [phone here](#)) and I'll get back to you quick as I can (usually within 2 hours) and discuss your options. It will be a mix of Bath & Body, with some added comfort goodies like teas, coffees, mugs, chocolates, etc. We'll figure it out. I'll get it made and shipped off for you to your recipient. **The Important Details: To arrive by Christmas Eve, the LAST DAY to order for USPS 3 Day Mainland Delivery is 11:00am Thursday Dec 19, 2013.** And of course if it's going to the 417 area code SHIPPING IS FREE! Everywhere else, Free Shipping on orders over \$65.00.

This Month's Specials:

We have a few of the adorable [Twin Totes](#) left. It comes in our Standard Scents and [Templars Treasure](#).



The

Twin Totes have a full size Soap Bar and a full size matching Herbal Tub Tea packet (contains 2 tub teas). Standard is packaged in an adorable mid-weight plastic frosted bag box that's reusable and Templars Treasure is in a shimmery organza pouch, also reusable.



Last Minute Gift Basket Items or Stocking Stuffers:

[Our Templars Treasure Pouch](#) or [Soap Bar](#) or any of our Herbal Tub Teas or Handmade Soaps.

Our Fall/Holiday Edition Pumpkin Spice Soap Bar which has people doing double takes and after one sniff they're snapping them up mad pumpkin crazy.



If you find yourself low on cash or scrambling for some last minute gift ideas, don't panic. We've all been there before. The following suggestions might help you find something that's just right:

- **Say Cheese:** If you have an awesome photo of the person you are giving the gift to (or a picture of their child, spouse, dog, etc) you can create a personalized gift in seconds. All you need to do is print out the picture on nice photo paper and place it into a unique frame. If you don't have a photo, a really pretty picture frame still makes a great gift. Try your local flower and gift stores for this. They usually have types you won't find in the big box and chain stores. And don't forget your Dollar Stores and "Dollar" Type stores. They sometimes have the most unique frames that were first sold and then later discounted out from fancier upscale stores 15-20 months earlier.
- **Yummy Treats:** Food makes a great holiday gift. Everyone eats, so everyone can use it! If you like to bake, make some cookies or candies and put them in a decorative box or tin (Dollar type stores have cute holiday tins). Make sure you put a label of the ingredients -all of them including sweeteners and colorings- on the package, food sensitivities and allergies are running rampant! Another option is to buy the food already made. Some items, like a cake, will only need a bow.
- If there is a movie fan on your list, put together a gift certificate to a video rental store, a box of microwave popcorn and some candy.
- If you know someone who is always on the go, encourage them to relax with a nice box of tea, a cute mug (there's that Dollar type store item), and a magazine or book based on their interest.
- A few small items packaged together nicely can turn into a great present! Hint: coffee and tea sampler packs wrapped together in a cute mug (Dollar store type items again!)

If you're in the area, my next Holiday Gift Event will be a "Share Your Christmas" event on Dec. 14, 2013 at the Marshfield Community Center, 110 Commercial St. Marshfield, MO. All the vendors donate a great item to be added to the sharing. Donations by visitors are also greatly appreciated. A Gift Wrap table will be there for customers' convenience and food will be available from Smokey J's.

As promised, A Cookie Recipe!



Chocolate Coconut Bars

Makes about 24

4 cups crushed graham crackers

1 cup butter, softened

1/2 cup powdered sugar

2 cups shredded coconut

1 (13-ounce) can evaporated milk

1 ½ teaspoon vanilla extract

12 oz. milk chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350F. Meanwhile, mix together the graham crackers, butter, and powdered sugar. Pat the mixture into the bottom of a 9"x13" pan and bake for 10 minutes. In a separate bowl, mix the coconut, milk, and vanilla; pour the mixture over crust and bake for 10 minutes. Melt the chocolate chips and spread the melted chocolate on top of cookies. Let the cookies cool, and then cut into squares.

Enjoy! Next post will be idea on what to do for kids (and maybe your) winter boredom. Until then, Love Joy and Blessings to you all.

Sandra

Share this:



This entry was posted in Holidays on December 13, 2013 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2013/12/13/its-the-most-wonderful-time-of-the-year/>] by Sandra.

☺



Perched On The Rim Of Her Soap Pot

A Handmade Soap And Natural Cosmetic Formulator Who Ponders, Muses And Is Sometimes Amused.

Cosmetic Ingredients Aren't Tested For Safety, But We Must Stop Animal Testing Of Cosmetic Ingredients!

I had a daydream the other day. It was a good one. It involved 2 related issues. 2 sides of the same coin, the coin being cosmetic ingredients and their testing and safety. Or should I say the much proclaimed lack of safety and the safety testing.

Now before I get to the heart of this daydream, I must state this post's cosmetic ingredient concerns involves the US, Canada, EU and other 1st World Countries with cosmetic companies manufacturing legitimate products, not iffy or backwater, 2nd and 3rd world countries importing dubious cosmetics like the latest mercury skin whitening creams issue. That skin whitening cream problem pops up with an almost regular clockwork frequency (like every 18-20 months) as a "Breaking News" story, complete with a breathless bobble head reporting in a serious "is this a conspiracy?" tone of voice over the shocking things in the impounded cosmetic products, only to add in the very last sentence or 2 that the crap is a one-off that was manufactured and imported – illegally- from Mexico, South Africa, India, China or some other questionable country by a company that can't quite be found.

That said, I know that you know that the FDA knows it will never, ever, ever have enough money or manpower to inspect the cosmetics imported from dubious countries into the US, no matter how much money it tries to fleece, cajole, require, demand, extort or legislate from US based cosmetic manufacturers. And I've yet to actually hear or read that the FDA would require all these fees from foreign companies importing in. And so a lot (okay, most) of the crap will get through.

It's also not my intention to have a discussion about whether animal testing of cosmetic ingredients is right or wrong. Personally, I feel animals don't need to be used to test most cosmetic ingredients for

safety. I use for myself and formulate products with ingredients already known to have a long history of safety, with the majority of them being natural or naturally derived. I don't "invent" new ingredients and to be honest, handcrafters and even most cosmetic companies -whatever their size- don't either. It's usually the Cosmetics or Life Sciences R&D divisions of chemical companies that do the inventing or creating. Think Dow, BASF, Sederma, 3M, etc.

So here's some of what inspired this daydream. I've just finished reading about a UK based independent cosmetic company -the EU's self proclaimed holiest of the holier-than-thous, who along with a couple of somewhat questionable US and international based NGOs (non governmental organizations) starting a petition that is calling for [an all out ban on animal testing](#) for cosmetic ingredients in the US and the banning of sales of cosmetics that have been tested on animals elsewhere in the world. extras: [1] [2] Oh, and contrary to some NGO spins, the EU is running into serious issues as EU companies are having a really bad time trying to meet the [EU 2013 deadline](#) on animal testing.

Now for the last 8-10 years, various other NGOs and "Consumer Safety" groups have been whooping and hollering saying cosmetic ingredients in the US aren't tested for safety. Their mantras have been "Cosmetic companies use dangerous ingredients...they poison your babies...give them asthma...your toddlers breasts...they make you fat...give you cancer...disrupt your hormones", just about anything that might go wrong with your or your loved ones health, they try to blame on cosmetics ingredients because they are an easy target to *try* and blame. They whine and scream "The EU has safer regs...The US needs to be more like the EU (yeah, about that, hows the inovation and business growth in the EU doing these last 25 yrs?)...The EU outlaws almost 6000 chemicals in cosmetics, the US doesn't" -never mind about 5990 were things NEVER used in cosmetics to begin with- ex: jet fuel.

The main whiners who keep trying to write new, bad to no science based legislation and keep the whipped frenzy going: [The Environmental Working Group/Campaign for Safe Cosmetics](#): extras [3] [4]

They never look at the 4 or 5 greasy trans fat fried meals too many people eat a week or the endocrine and nerve disrupting pesticide drenched fruits and vegetables people just have to have -dirt cheap- even though they're totally out of season or growing region and are shipped from Mexico, Central America, China and and other countries with questionable farming practices. Or how about the 6 pack of beer guzzled in 2 days. Maybe the pack or more of cigarettes smoked a day -half at home- just might be why the baby has asthma and later they and them, cancer. Let's look at the over-processed, super starched food shoved in their faces morning, noon and night with iffy artificial sweeteners or fake, tainted components mixed into it. How about the fish from posioned rivers, lakes and seriously polluted sections of oceans, plus the questionable practises of fish farms, foreign and domestic. Don't get me started on the illness potential with "Pink Slime" in ground beef.

Maybe the birth control pills that get pulled like every 5 years just might have something to do with



funky reproductive health and cancers, blood clots and hormonal imbalances. Or even -yes I am so going to go *there*- the pesticide sprayed reefer and the other illegal, designer drugs people took while partying in the 70's, 80s, 90s and even last month, might have something to do with someone's health going to hell in a bucket.

It doesn't seem to matter that US cosmetics have an enviable safety track record, far better than food and drugs, both prescription and OTC. Cosmetics are a convenient target. And yet I just don't recall any cosmetic companies being sued for causing heart attacks, cancer, blood clots, strokes, poisonings or organ failures. Or sued or shut down for having illegal ingredients in them like the melamine debacle. Or called to answer a Congressional subpoena to answer for having the "let's ignore it and keep on cranking out those known salmonella tainted ingredients" attitude. I can, however think of several drug companies, pesticide companies and food companies who have. And so can you, I don't need to list and link to them like I have in other posts.

So on to it. My daydream, my fantasy: I want a live, televised, no holds barred debate, moderated by the King of Pull No Punches, Get to the Dirty Deeds, Call out of Conflict Resolution himself, Jerry Springer. I want the debate to be: **Cosmetic Ingredients Are Not Being Tested For Safety vs. Stop Animal Testing Of Cosmetic Ingredients**. And I want the top 3 or 4 ringleaders of both these issues to be front and center doing the answering. I want to hear it loud and clear, from their mouths to God's ear, as the saying goes.

See the fun in this? One side screams "OMG, YOU'RE BEING POSIONED BECAUSE NOBODY'S TESTING JACK ON COSMETICS!

The other side whines: OMG! WE'VE GOT TO STOP! IT'S CRUEL AND UNNEEDED TO TEST COSMETIC INGREDIENTS ON ANIMALS.

< sigh > "Clowns to the left of me, jokers to the right, here I am, stuck in the middle with you". Lately, I've wondered if either side even knows the other exists. Or if they do know and just consider each other an inconvenient distraction TO THEIR HOLY CRUSADE. Regardless, I am just about fed up with all the posturing, badgering, fear mongering, halo waving, bullying, bad to no science using, name calling, mudslinging and general "let's get some legislation passed and restrict and prevent everybody on everything we don't agree with" attitudes. I am totally fed up with it and today, I call BULLSHIT.

[1] <http://www.cosmeticsdesign.com/Regulation-Safety/Time-to-set-legal-definition-for-cruelty-free-to>



[avoid-consumer-confusion](#)

[2] <http://www.cosmeticsdesign.com/Regulation-Safety/Avon-in-hot-water-again-as-law-firm-files-suit-over-misleading-China-animal-testing-claims>

[3] <http://www.cosmeticsdesign.com/Regulation-Safety/Congress-meeting-on-safety-of-cosmetics-not-equally-represented-says-CSC>

[4] <http://www.cosmeticsandtoiletries.com/regulatory/region/northamerica/142100203.html?page=1>

Share this:



This entry was posted in Pet Peeves, Regulatory on April 30, 2012 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2012/04/30/cosmetic-ingredients-arent-tested-for-safety-but-we-must-stop-animal-testing-of-cosmetic-ingredients/>] by .

Give Mom Some “Me Time”! Mother’s Day 05/13/12

Every mother you and I know is super busy and super giving. Busy giving all of her to everybody. Her job, her kids, her spouse or SO. Taking care of elderly parents or other relatives. Her volunteer activities, helping her church, her kids school, her neighbors and friends. Her time is given to others freely, and many times it’s asked for at the last minute. And she’s always there. But she rarely takes time for herself. Many times she won’t even consider doing or getting a little something for herself.

Change that habit. Let the Moms in your life know it’s okay to relax and take a break. Help Moms to do that. Show you care and appreciate all they do by giving her a warm, soothing bath once or twice a week, with no distractions or interruptions, no kids, no phone calls. Give her the gift of “Me Time”. She truly deserves it.

Our Limited Edition Divinely Fragrant Roses, Wine & Chocolate and Le Chocolat is now available for Mother’s Day. These Divine Fragrances were designed and blended by us and are only available 3 times a

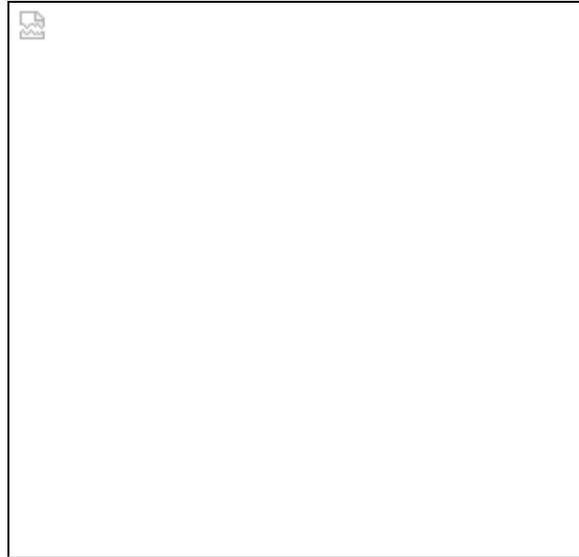


year: Valentine's Day, Mother's Day and Christmas. We offer the choice of individual Bar Soaps, Bath Milk Powders, Sea Salt Bath Soaks and Herbal Tub Teas.

For an extremely delightful gift of these signature fragrances, we've created [Gift Sampler Sets](#): A half bar of soap, one envelope each of Bath Milk Powder and Sea Salt Bath Soak, and one Herbal Tub Tea, all tucked into an adorable, reusable color co-ordinated vinyl envelope bag.

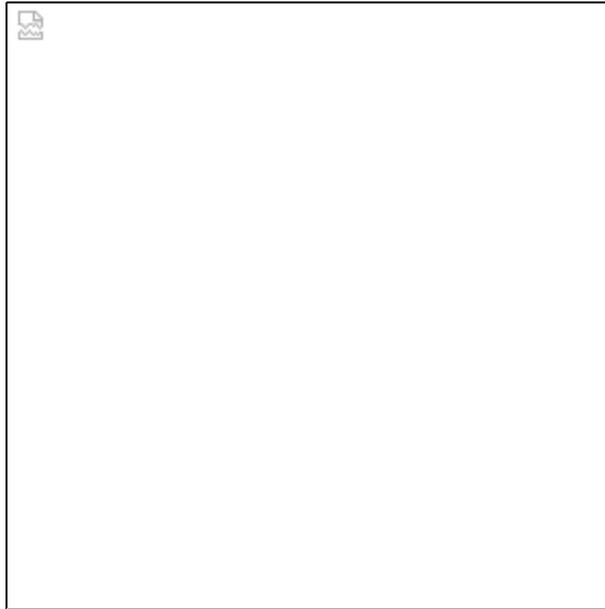


We also have a cute little [4 soap gift box](#). Your choice of 4 of our delightful handmade soaps. They come nestled in a cute reusable Spring Flowers patterned box.



And if you not really sure just which scents to give, we also have our [Mini Bar Soap Sampler Gift Box](#), with your choice of 4 or 6 *half bars* of soap.



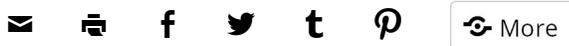


We also have our Spa PhytoBotane Gift Sets for specific skin type needs and our regular soap selections. And as usual, all gift wrapping is FREE!

Due to USPS Processing Center consolidations, rerouting and revised delivery schedules, for your gifts to reach your recipients by Mother's Day, all orders must be placed by Monday, May 7, 2012. We have no control over this.

Canada, Mexico and other International Orders must be placed by Tuesday, May 1, 2012. Again, we have no control over Postal Delivery Services.

Share this:



This entry was posted in Bath and Body, Family, Holidays, Soap on April 18, 2012 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2012/04/18/give-mom-some-me-time-mothers-day-051312/>] by Sandra.

Botanica Basics Markets Schedules



In 6 days the Spring/Summer Outdoor Farmers Market Season starts for Botanica Basics. We're making a few changes this year regarding our markets schedules. These changes are for the integrity and protection of our products and also for our health's sake.

1. If it's raining (more than a gentle mist or drizzle), no matter how warm, we're not coming. And if it's a thunder storm, no one should be out in a field anyway. (Last year I actually had someone tell me I should show up during a T-storm. *REALLY?*)
2. If it's cold (55F or lower), we're not coming. Ongoing health concerns just will not allow for the issues that arise from being outside in the cold for 4 hrs. It's one thing to be in a car, go shopping for an hour and then back in the car. It's another to be standing out in the inclement weather for 4 hours.
3. If it's snowing, we're definitely not coming. See #2.

We've made this decision because over the years, too many of our products became damaged or outright ruined and had to be discarded because of exposure to wet weather. At farmers markets, produce, plants, items in jars and hard crafts (wood, ceramics, metals) do not suffer damage from wet environments. Bath & Body products do. Being under a tent and covering the tables with plastic only mitigates some, not all, of the problems of wet weather. Even covering the tables with plastic sheeting only relieves some of the problems. When rain and wind is blowing and humidity is 100%, the Tub Teas outer packaging get wet and then the tea bags inside get damp and must then be thrown out. For product integrity and safety, they can't be dried and repackaged. When the soap gets wet, this means after the market, we have to come back to the studio and strip off and throw out the wrapping and labels and then place the soap on the curing racks under fans for at least 24 hrs. It means the re-wrapping and re-labeling those soaps. The time and cost constraints of doing this are astronomical and in order to avoid this we've decided to avoid the environments that causes these problems.

So if the weather is stormy, rainy or cold within 1 hour of a market's opening time, there is a serious chance we won't be able to come. For your convenience, our web store is open 24/7 and you can always call us too (417-376-0269). We will also continue to have our local delivery/pickup spot option in the cities of Bolivar and Stockton and our products are always available at Somewhere In Time, Fair Grove and [Local Unique Arts & Antiques in Marshfield](#).

If you know of a store that you'd like to carry our products, put us together. Tell us! sales@botanicabasics.com



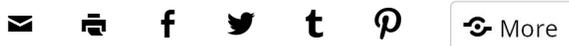
sics.com

Tell them, send them here: <http://www.botanicabasics.com/Wholesale.html> We have a low wholesale minimum for local retailers (50 miles or less). And if your lead works out, after the store takes it's first delivery from us, there's an **extremely** nice soap gift from us to you as a Thank You!

Thank you very much for your understanding and continued support of a local business.

Sandra

Share this:



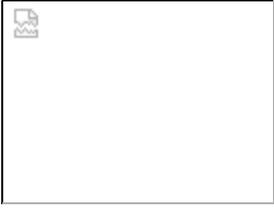
This entry was posted in Markets and Expos on April 12, 2012 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2012/04/12/botanica-basics-markets-schedules/>] by Sandra.

Natural Ingredients In Skin Care: Oils and Waxes

Natural and natural based Bath & Body care uses many different combinations of natural or natural/synthetic blends of oils, herbal extracts and other ingredients derived from fruits, plant or seeds. They work in several ways, such as helping to relieve and soothe dry skin, improving skin's texture, nourishing and replenishing skin's lost natural oils as well as helping to restore the radiance of the skin. Realizing that there are so many different skin needs, we use several types of oils and waxes to formulate our Handcrafted Soaps and Bath & Body products. Here's a brief rundown on some of the most useful and commonly found natural oils and waxes in natural and natural based Bath & Body care. I list the common name first, then the formal latin name that is also used in the universally accepted cosmetic labeling format of the INCI (International Nomenclature for Cosmetic Ingredients). It's my hope this helps you to know what you're using and also what to look for in your skin care needs.

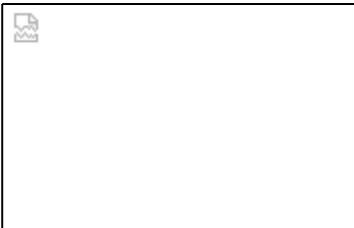
1. Shea Butter (*Butyrospermum Parkii*)





Derived from the fruit kernels of the shea nut tree, it has remarkable healing and softening abilities. Studies show that shea butter has anti inflammatory effects on the skin, so it may help increase wound healing and improve scar appearance. From its physical make up of vitamin E, vitamin A, and cinnamic acid as well as a unique fatty acid profile, this butter can moisturize and help give serious relief to dry skin. Shea can also come in an oil: It's the liquid fraction that's created when the shea nut is pressed for the butter. It's a light but very emollient oil and is used almost as extensively as the butter.

2. Sunflower Oil (*Helianthus Annuus*)



Yes, oil from the same snack seeds we all know and love. An almost imperceptible scent. It's rich in vitamins E and A and very high in fatty acids that aids in restoring skin moisture, natural oils and helps regenerates skin. Vitamin A encourages collagen production and is able to retain moisture. Best for normal skin or dry, mature or over exposed skin or a skin that's a combinations of these traits.

3. Sweet Almond Oil (*Prunus Amygdalus Dulcis*)



From the almond nut, this oil is light and easily absorbed and can provide important nutrients for skin softening and conditioning. An almost imperceptible scent. With a high vitamin A content, it is very suitable to dry, flaky or inflamed skin. Helps the skin to balance its loss and absorption of moisture. Best for normal skin or dry, mature or over exposed skin or a skin that's a combinations of these traits. Those with nut allergies may also wish to do a skin test before using products with Sweet Almond Oil.

4. Jojoba Wax (*Simmondsia Chinensis*)





Yes, that's right, Jojoba is actually a wax. From the seeds of a desert plant, it's chemical composition is very similar to human sebum. An almost imperceptible scent. When used alone, it's light and easily penetrates into the skin and doesn't leave a greasy residue. Jojoba is a very universal skin care ingredient. Dry, mature, over exposed skin is helped by nourishing, moisturizing and softening. Sensitive and easily irritated skin usually responds well to Jojoba also as it's chemical similarity to human sebum means it has very few irritation factors. Oily and breakout prone skin really responds well to jojoba as it is able to penetrate into the pore and help loosen and aid in the dislodging of dead skin matter, bacteria and oil plugs and the comedones (acne) that may follow. It also helps to moisturize oily skin to help counteract the potential over drying that can occur with most acne preparations and medications. Jojoba Wax is also the workhorse of hair care oils. It easily penetrates the hair shaft and helps to condition it and the scalp without adding weight or oiliness. All hair types respond well to Jojoba and chemically treated hair especially gets a noticeable boost in shine and manageability from just a dime size portion applied once a day. Sadly, as of this writing, there is an ongoing (2 yrs) and severe shortage of Jojoba and what's available has been outrageously and obnoxiously priced, priced beyond what many small and micro skin care companies can bare. Many have reformulated or discontinued products because the prices after a certain point just cannot be absorbed.

5. Cocoa Butter (Theobroma Cacao)



From the same seed pods that give us chocolate, this is also what makes "white" chocolate in food. This is a very popular ingredient in hand and body lotions and even foot creams. A bit heavier than Shea Butter, it acts as an emollient helping the skin feel soft and calming down irritation from dryness. It's also used in many products that claim to lessen or prevent stretch marks if applied regularly. Depending on the formulator's needs, the Cocoa Butter used can still have it's natural chocolate scent. Some choose to use deodorized Cocoa Butter so as not to conflict with the scent of any added essential oils or fragrances or if they are making unfragranced products. For some people, Cocoa Butter can be comedogenic (acne causing) and if one has oily skin or is breakout prone, it is probably best to avoid it.

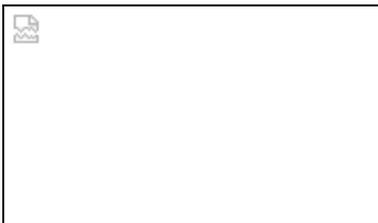
6. Macadamia Oil (Macadamia Ternifolia)





A medium weight nut oil, it's extremely luxurious with high lubrication properties and is easily absorbed. With an almost imperceptible scent, it still does have a slight hint of nuttiness. This oil is high in monounsaturated fatty acids acting as anti oxidants to and may help prevent deterioration and weakening of cell membranes. It is also an emollient with magnesium and thiamine, that soothes and calms. Because of it's chemical nature and weight, it's now being used as a replacement for Mink oil in hair care products. Good for dry, mature and aging skin. Those with nut allergies may also wish to do a skin test before using products with Macadamia Oil.

7. Olive Oil (*Olea Europaea*)



The ver

y same oil you cook with! One of the oldest used oils in recorded history. Comes from the olive flesh itself, not the seed. Very rich in chlorophyll, vitamins and antioxidants, Olive Oil, while light for food use, is a somewhat occlusive oil on skin. It has a scent that, depending on the region grown, the pressing or blend, can vary from being almost imperceptible, to sharp and "green", to a very deep and earthy muskiness. For those same reasons, it's color can also range from a very pale golden greenish to a very deep or dark green. An excellent and indispensable workhorse in handmade soaps, it's use in other body care is limited because of the aforementioned scent and color issues and skin feel. When used in non-soap products, it's usually not in amounts greater than 25%, unless the formulator actually wants Olive Oil's occlusive nature in the product. It can also be a bit comedogenic to those prone to acne.

8. Rice Bran Oil (*Oriza Sativa*)



Rice Bran oil is from the bran, the outer covering of the rice between the hull and white kernel. (When sold intact, it's brown rice). The bran, which is obtained in the milling process is the part of the rice that is richest in fat. This natural oil, which is expeller pressed, has the presence of natural antio



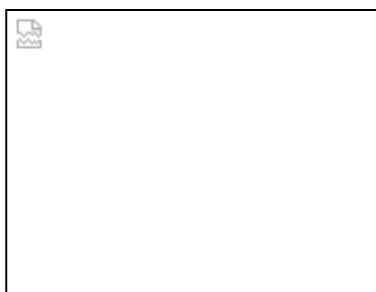
idants which makes it an excellent ingredient for food grade products. Beside the oil, there is also wax fraction, which is sometimes removed for cosmetic grade oil. Rice Bran oil is full of antioxidants, such as Vitamin E (highest of all the liquid vegetable oils), linolic acid, oleic acid, palmitic acid and oryzanol. It also contains ferulic and phytic acids, which helps to give skin a bit of a gentle exfoliation and also helps to balance melanin production. In cosmetics the oil acts as both a carrier and emollient and the wax is used as a substitute for beeswax in many vegetarian and vegan cosmetics. A wonderful addition to skin care, it has a long, stable shelf life. Best for dry hair and scalps, normal skin or dry, mature or over exposed skin or a skin that's a combinations of these traits. It can be a bit problematic for skin prone to breakouts, but the de-waxed or winterized Rice Bran Oil has a much lower comedogenic factor.

9. Beeswax (Cera Alba)



Beeswax is the natural secretion of female honeybees. It is one of the oldest known natural waxes and has been used since antiquity. When taken from the hive, it's color will vary from a warm, golden yellow all the way to a brown color and will retain the strong, sweet scent (and taste) of honey. The color and scent can remain with gentle cleaning and processing, but many times beeswax is even further processed so that it's bleached white and deodorized, retaining none of the natural goodness it started out with. A wonderful main component of lip balms, lip glosses and lipsticks, it adds emolliency, conditioning and body firmness those products. It adds a deeper conditioning and heavier moisterization factor to creams and body butters, scrubs and balms. This can be a very good thing during the drier skin season of winter, but with the exception of lip care, beeswax can be a bit too heavy for general skincare needs during warmer weather. Beeswax can be also mixed with other liquid oils to create natural versions of a jelly that is very similar in feel and weight to petroleum jelly aka Vaseline.

10. Fractionated Coconut Oil (Caprylic/Capric Triglycerides)



An odorless, very light, non-greasy and non-staining oil that helps carry therapeutic oils under the skin. It contains the medium-chain triglycerides from regular coconut oil and is a good choice for facial care and also body care that needs a lighter oil. Caprylic/Capric Triglycerides is what many



handcrafters and main stream manufacturers use when making natural “oil free” cosmetics. Sensitive skin rarely has issues with this light and therapeutic coconut oil derivative. Dry and mature skin thrives with it without having to deal with heavier oils “weighed down feeling” issues. It’s also wonderful in products for oily and breakout prone skin as it has a very low comedogenic factor. Fractionated Coconut Oil has a very stable and long shelf life. While there are some “natural” retailers or natural product certifiers who do not consider Fractionated Coconut Oil to be natural or that it’s too far removed to be considered naturally derived, it’s produced by the [hydrolysis of coconut oil](#). It is fractionated by steam distillation to isolate the triglycerides. If they accept true soaps, they should accept Fractionated Coconut Oil.

There you have it. Read ingredient labels. Different products have different ingredients that serve different purposes. It’s important that you know what’s in the products that you’re buying, to avoid allergies or ingredients you may want to avoid. Choose a product labeled for your skin type and needs. If you need help deciding, never hesitate to ask whomever is selling the products. If they can’t give you clear answers, think about whether you want to spend your hard earned money with them. Once you pick and start using the products, pay attention to the changes to your skin. Results will never be instantaneous, but over the course of 2-6 weeks of continued use according to the directions, you should see results. Note these changes and if you like the results, then continue using it.

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This entry was posted in Bath and Body, Skin Care on April 9, 2012 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2012/04/09/natural-ingredients-in-skin-care-oils-and-waxes/>] by Sandra.

☺



Perched On The Rim Of Her Soap Pot

A Handmade Soap And Natural Cosmetic Formulator Who Ponders, Muses And Is Sometimes Amused.

Cosmetic Ingredients Aren't Tested For Safety, But We Must Stop Animal Testing Of Cosmetic Ingredients!

I had a daydream the other day. It was a good one. It involved 2 related issues. 2 sides of the same coin, the coin being cosmetic ingredients and their testing and safety. Or should I say the much proclaimed lack of safety and the safety testing.

Now before I get to the heart of this daydream, I must state this post's cosmetic ingredient concerns involves the US, Canada, EU and other 1st World Countries with cosmetic companies manufacturing legitimate products, not iffy or backwater, 2nd and 3rd world countries importing dubious cosmetics like the latest mercury skin whitening creams issue. That skin whitening cream problem pops up with an almost regular clockwork frequency (like every 18-20 months) as a "Breaking News" story, complete with a breathless bobble head reporting in a serious "is this a conspiracy?" tone of voice over the shocking things in the impounded cosmetic products, only to add in the very last sentence or 2 that the crap is a one-off that was manufactured and imported – illegally- from Mexico, South Africa, India, China or some other questionable country by a company that can't quite be found.

That said, I know that you know that the FDA knows it will never, ever, ever have enough money or manpower to inspect the cosmetics imported from dubious countries into the US, no matter how much money it tries to fleece, cajole, require, demand, extort or legislate from US based cosmetic manufacturers. And I've yet to actually hear or read that the FDA would require all these fees from foreign companies importing in. And so a lot (okay, most) of the crap will get through.

It's also not my intention to have a discussion about whether animal testing of cosmetic ingredients is right or wrong. Personally, I feel animals don't need to be used to test most cosmetic ingredients for

safety. I use for myself and formulate products with ingredients already known to have a long history of safety, with the majority of them being natural or naturally derived. I don't "invent" new ingredients and to be honest, handcrafters and even most cosmetic companies -whatever their size- don't either. It's usually the Cosmetics or Life Sciences R&D divisions of chemical companies that do the inventing or creating. Think Dow, BASF, Sederma, 3M, etc.

So here's some of what inspired this daydream. I've just finished reading about a UK based independent cosmetic company -the EU's self proclaimed holiest of the holier-than-thous, who along with a couple of somewhat questionable US and international based NGOs (non governmental organizations) starting a petition that is calling for [an all out ban on animal testing](#) for cosmetic ingredients in the US and the banning of sales of cosmetics that have been tested on animals elsewhere in the world. extras: [1] [2] Oh, and contrary to some NGO spins, the EU is running into serious issues as EU companies are having a really bad time trying to meet the [EU 2013 deadline](#) on animal testing.

Now for the last 8-10 years, various other NGOs and "Consumer Safety" groups have been whooping and hollering saying cosmetic ingredients in the US aren't tested for safety. Their mantras have been "Cosmetic companies use dangerous ingredients...they poison your babies...give them asthma...your toddlers breasts...they make you fat...give you cancer...disrupt your hormones", just about anything that might go wrong with your or your loved ones health, they try to blame on cosmetics ingredients because they are an easy target to *try* and blame. They whine and scream "The EU has safer regs...The US needs to be more like the EU (yeah, about that, hows the inovation and business growth in the EU doing these last 25 yrs?)...The EU outlaws almost 6000 chemicals in cosmetics, the US doesn't" -never mind about 5990 were things NEVER used in cosmetics to begin with- ex: jet fuel.

The main whiners who keep trying to write new, bad to no science based legislation and keep the whipped frenzy going: [The Environmental Working Group/Campaign for Safe Cosmetics](#): extras [3] [4]

They never look at the 4 or 5 greasy trans fat fried meals too many people eat a week or the endocrine and nerve disrupting pesticide drenched fruits and vegetables people just have to have -dirt cheap- even though they're totally out of season or growing region and are shipped from Mexico, Central America, China and and other countries with questionable farming practices. Or how about the 6 pack of beer guzzled in 2 days. Maybe the pack or more of cigarettes smoked a day -half at home- just might be why the baby has asthma and later they and them, cancer. Let's look at the over-processed, super starched food shoved in their faces morning, noon and night with iffy artificial sweeteners or fake, tainted components mixed into it. How about the fish from posioned rivers, lakes and seriously polluted sections of oceans, plus the questionable practises of fish farms, foreign and domestic. Don't get me started on the illness potential with "Pink Slime" in ground beef.

Maybe the birth control pills that get pulled like every 5 years just might have something to do with



funky reproductive health and cancers, blood clots and hormonal imbalances. Or even -yes I am so going to go *there*- the pesticide sprayed reefer and the other illegal, designer drugs people took while partying in the 70's, 80s, 90s and even last month, might have something to do with someone's health going to hell in a bucket.

It doesn't seem to matter that US cosmetics have an enviable safety track record, far better than food and drugs, both prescription and OTC. Cosmetics are a convenient target. And yet I just don't recall any cosmetic companies being sued for causing heart attacks, cancer, blood clots, strokes, poisonings or organ failures. Or sued or shut down for having illegal ingredients in them like the melamine debacle. Or called to answer a Congressional subpoena to answer for having the "let's ignore it and keep on cranking out those known salmonella tainted ingredients" attitude. I can, however think of several drug companies, pesticide companies and food companies who have. And so can you, I don't need to list and link to them like I have in other posts.

So on to it. My daydream, my fantasy: I want a live, televised, no holds barred debate, moderated by the King of Pull No Punches, Get to the Dirty Deeds, Call out of Conflict Resolution himself, Jerry Springer. I want the debate to be: **Cosmetic Ingredients Are Not Being Tested For Safety vs. Stop Animal Testing Of Cosmetic Ingredients**. And I want the top 3 or 4 ringleaders of both these issues to be front and center doing the answering. I want to hear it loud and clear, from their mouths to God's ear, as the saying goes.

See the fun in this? One side screams "OMG, YOU'RE BEING POSIONED BECAUSE NOBODY'S TESTING JACK ON COSMETICS!

The other side whines: OMG! WE'VE GOT TO STOP! IT'S CRUEL AND UNNEEDED TO TEST COSMETIC INGREDIENTS ON ANIMALS.

< sigh > "Clowns to the left of me, jokers to the right, here I am, stuck in the middle with you". Lately, I've wondered if either side even knows the other exists. Or if they do know and just consider each other an inconvenient distraction TO THEIR HOLY CRUSADE. Regardless, I am just about fed up with all the posturing, badgering, fear mongering, halo waving, bullying, bad to no science using, name calling, mudslinging and general "let's get some legislation passed and restrict and prevent everybody on everything we don't agree with" attitudes. I am totally fed up with it and today, I call BULLSHIT.

[1] <http://www.cosmeticsdesign.com/Regulation-Safety/Time-to-set-legal-definition-for-cruelty-free-to>



[avoid-consumer-confusion](#)

[2] <http://www.cosmeticsdesign.com/Regulation-Safety/Avon-in-hot-water-again-as-law-firm-files-suit-over-misleading-China-animal-testing-claims>

[3] <http://www.cosmeticsdesign.com/Regulation-Safety/Congress-meeting-on-safety-of-cosmetics-not-equally-represented-says-CSC>

[4] <http://www.cosmeticsandtoiletries.com/regulatory/region/northamerica/142100203.html?page=1>

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This entry was posted in Pet Peeves, Regulatory on April 30, 2012 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2012/04/30/cosmetic-ingredients-arent-tested-for-safety-but-we-must-stop-animal-testing-of-cosmetic-ingredients/>] by .

Give Mom Some “Me Time”! Mother’s Day 05/13/12

Every mother you and I know is super busy and super giving. Busy giving all of her to everybody. Her job, her kids, her spouse or SO. Taking care of elderly parents or other relatives. Her volunteer activities, helping her church, her kids school, her neighbors and friends. Her time is given to others freely, and many times it’s asked for at the last minute. And she’s always there. But she rarely takes time for herself. Many times she won’t even consider doing or getting a little something for herself.

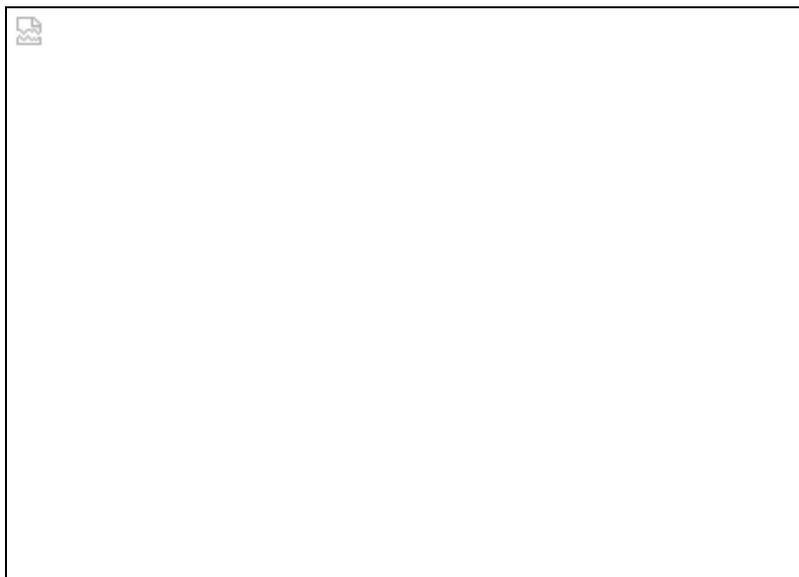
Change that habit. Let the Moms in your life know it’s okay to relax and take a break. Help Moms to do that. Show you care and appreciate all they do by giving her a warm, soothing bath once or twice a week, with no distractions or interruptions, no kids, no phone calls. Give her the gift of “Me Time”. She truly deserves it.

Our Limited Edition Divinely Fragrant Roses, Wine & Chocolate and Le Chocolat is now available for Mother’s Day. These Divine Fragrances were designed and blended by us and are only available 3 times a

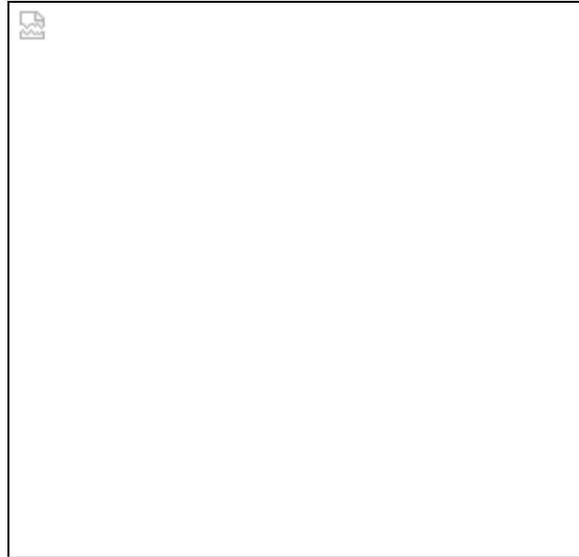


year: Valentine's Day, Mother's Day and Christmas. We offer the choice of individual Bar Soaps, Bath Milk Powders, Sea Salt Bath Soaks and Herbal Tub Teas.

For an extremely delightful gift of these signature fragrances, we've created [Gift Sampler Sets](#): A half bar of soap, one envelope each of Bath Milk Powder and Sea Salt Bath Soak, and one Herbal Tub Tea, all tucked into an adorable, reusable color co-ordinated vinyl envelope bag.

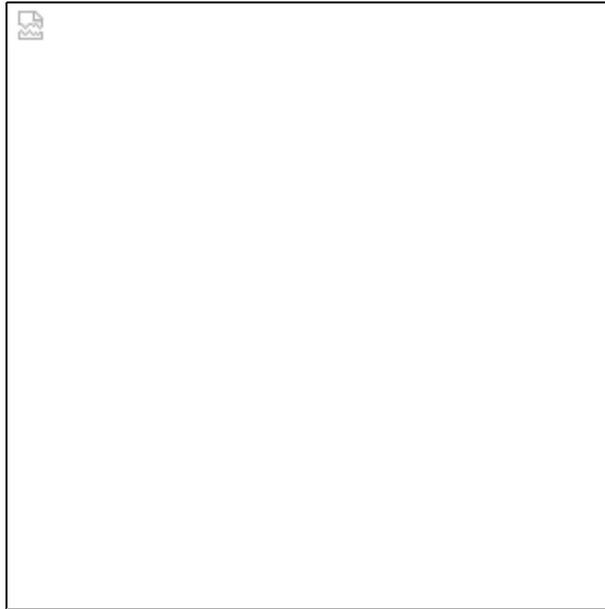


We also have a cute little [4 soap gift box](#). Your choice of 4 of our delightful handmade soaps. They come nestled in a cute reusable Spring Flowers patterned box.



And if you not really sure just which scents to give, we also have our [Mini Bar Soap Sampler Gift Box](#), with your choice of 4 or 6 *half bars* of soap.





We also have our Spa PhytoBotane Gift Sets for specific skin type needs and our regular soap selections. And as usual, all gift wrapping is FREE!

Due to USPS Processing Center consolidations, rerouting and revised delivery schedules, for your gifts to reach your recipients by Mother's Day, all orders must be placed by Monday, May 7, 2012. We have no control over this.

Canada, Mexico and other International Orders must be placed by Tuesday, May 1, 2012. Again, we have no control over Postal Delivery Services.

Share this:



This entry was posted in Bath and Body, Family, Holidays, Soap on April 18, 2012 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2012/04/18/give-mom-some-me-time-mothers-day-051312/>] by Sandra.

Botanica Basics Markets Schedules



In 6 days the Spring/Summer Outdoor Farmers Market Season starts for Botanica Basics. We're making a few changes this year regarding our markets schedules. These changes are for the integrity and protection of our products and also for our health's sake.

1. If it's raining (more than a gentle mist or drizzle), no matter how warm, we're not coming. And if it's a thunder storm, no one should be out in a field anyway. (Last year I actually had someone tell me I should show up during a T-storm. *REALLY?*)
2. If it's cold (55F or lower), we're not coming. Ongoing health concerns just will not allow for the issues that arise from being outside in the cold for 4 hrs. It's one thing to be in a car, go shopping for an hour and then back in the car. It's another to be standing out in the inclement weather for 4 hours.
3. If it's snowing, we're definitely not coming. See #2.

We've made this decision because over the years, too many of our products became damaged or outright ruined and had to be discarded because of exposure to wet weather. At farmers markets, produce, plants, items in jars and hard crafts (wood, ceramics, metals) do not suffer damage from wet environments. Bath & Body products do. Being under a tent and covering the tables with plastic only mitigates some, not all, of the problems of wet weather. Even covering the tables with plastic sheeting only relieves some of the problems. When rain and wind is blowing and humidity is 100%, the Tub Teas outer packaging get wet and then the tea bags inside get damp and must then be thrown out. For product integrity and safety, they can't be dried and repackaged. When the soap gets wet, this means after the market, we have to come back to the studio and strip off and throw out the wrapping and labels and then place the soap on the curing racks under fans for at least 24 hrs. It means the re-wrapping and re-labeling those soaps. The time and cost constraints of doing this are astronomical and in order to avoid this we've decided to avoid the environments that causes these problems.

So if the weather is stormy, rainy or cold within 1 hour of a market's opening time, there is a serious chance we won't be able to come. For your convenience, our web store is open 24/7 and you can always call us too (417-376-0269). We will also continue to have our local delivery/pickup spot option in the cities of Bolivar and Stockton and our products are always available at Somewhere In Time, Fair Grove and [Local Unique Arts & Antiques in Marshfield](#).

If you know of a store that you'd like to carry our products, put us together. Tell us! sales@botanicabasics.com



sics.com

Tell them, send them here: <http://www.botanicabasics.com/Wholesale.html> We have a low wholesale minimum for local retailers (50 miles or less). And if your lead works out, after the store takes it's first delivery from us, there's an **extremely** nice soap gift from us to you as a Thank You!

Thank you very much for your understanding and continued support of a local business.

Sandra

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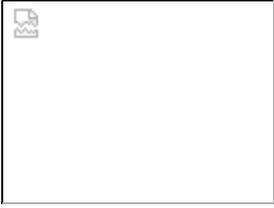
This entry was posted in Markets and Expos on April 12, 2012 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2012/04/12/botanica-basics-markets-schedules/>] by Sandra.

Natural Ingredients In Skin Care: Oils and Waxes

Natural and natural based Bath & Body care uses many different combinations of natural or natural/synthetic blends of oils, herbal extracts and other ingredients derived from fruits, plant or seeds. They work in several ways, such as helping to relieve and soothe dry skin, improving skin's texture, nourishing and replenishing skin's lost natural oils as well as helping to restore the radiance of the skin. Realizing that there are so many different skin needs, we use several types of oils and waxes to formulate our Handcrafted Soaps and Bath & Body products. Here's a brief rundown on some of the most useful and commonly found natural oils and waxes in natural and natural based Bath & Body care. I list the common name first, then the formal latin name that is also used in the universally accepted cosmetic labeling format of the INCI (International Nomenclature for Cosmetic Ingredients). It's my hope this helps you to know what you're using and also what to look for in your skin care needs.

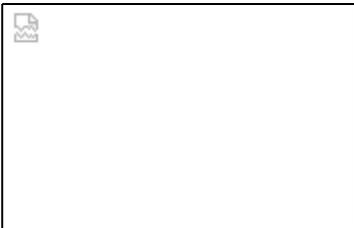
1. Shea Butter (*Butyrospermum Parkii*)





Derived from the fruit kernels of the shea nut tree, it has remarkable healing and softening abilities. Studies show that shea butter has anti inflammatory effects on the skin, so it may help increase wound healing and improve scar appearance. From its physical make up of vitamin E, vitamin A, and cinnamic acid as well as a unique fatty acid profile, this butter can moisturize and help give serious relief to dry skin. Shea can also come in an oil: It's the liquid fraction that's created when the shea nut is pressed for the butter. It's a light but very emollient oil and is used almost as extensively as the butter.

2. Sunflower Oil (*Helianthus Annuus*)



Yes, oil from the same snack seeds we all know and love. An almost imperceptible scent. It's rich in vitamins E and A and very high in fatty acids that aids in restoring skin moisture, natural oils and helps regenerates skin. Vitamin A encourages collagen production and is able to retain moisture. Best for normal skin or dry, mature or over exposed skin or a skin that's a combinations of these traits.

3. Sweet Almond Oil (*Prunus Amygdalus Dulcis*)



From the almond nut, this oil is light and easily absorbed and can provide important nutrients for skin softening and conditioning. An almost imperceptible scent. With a high vitamin A content, it is very suitable to dry, flaky or inflamed skin. Helps the skin to balance its loss and absorption of moisture. Best for normal skin or dry, mature or over exposed skin or a skin that's a combinations of these traits. Those with nut allergies may also wish to do a skin test before using products with Sweet Almond Oil.

4. Jojoba Wax (*Simmondsia Chinensis*)





Yes, that's right, Jojoba is actually a wax. From the seeds of a desert plant, it's chemical composition is very similar to human sebum. An almost imperceptible scent. When used alone, it's light and easily penetrates into the skin and doesn't leave a greasy residue. Jojoba is a very universal skin care ingredient. Dry, mature, over exposed skin is helped by nourishing, moisturizing and softening. Sensitive and easily irritated skin usually responds well to Jojoba also as it's chemical similarity to human sebum means it has very few irritation factors. Oily and breakout prone skin really responds well to jojoba as it is able to penetrate into the pore and help loosen and aid in the dislodging of dead skin matter, bacteria and oil plugs and the comedones (acne) that may follow. It also helps to moisturize oily skin to help counteract the potential over-drying that can occur with most acne preparations and medications. Jojoba Wax is also the workhorse of hair care oils. It easily penetrates the hair shaft and helps to condition it and the scalp without adding weight or oiliness. All hair types respond well to Jojoba and chemically treated hair especially gets a noticeable boost in shine and manageability from just a dime size portion applied once a day. Sadly, as of this writing, there is an ongoing (2 yrs) and severe shortage of Jojoba and what's available has been outrageously and obnoxiously priced, priced beyond what many small and micro skin care companies can bare. Many have reformulated or discontinued products because the prices after a certain point just cannot be absorbed.

5. Cocoa Butter (Theobroma Cacao)



From the same seed pods that give us chocolate, this is also what makes "white" chocolate in food. This is a very popular ingredient in hand and body lotions and even foot creams. A bit heavier than Shea Butter, it acts as an emollient helping the skin feel soft and calming down irritation from dryness. It's also used in many products that claim to lessen or prevent stretch marks if applied regularly. Depending on the formulator's needs, the Cocoa Butter used can still have it's natural chocolate scent. Some choose to use deodorized Cocoa Butter so as not to conflict with the scent of any added essential oils or fragrances or if they are making unfragranced products. For some people, Cocoa Butter can be comedogenic (acne causing) and if one has oily skin or is breakout prone, it is probably best to avoid it.

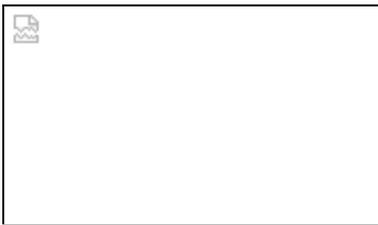
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The ver

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Rice Bran oil is from the bran, the outer covering of the rice between the hull and white kernel. (When sold intact, it's brown rice). The bran, which is obtained in the milling process is the part of the rice that is richest in fat. This natural oil, which is expeller pressed, has the presence of natural antio



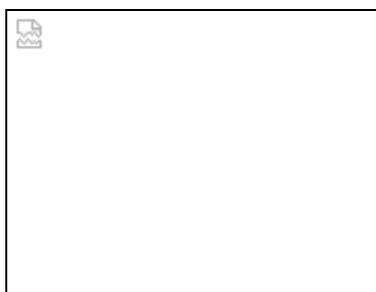
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10. Fractionated Coconut Oil (Caprylic/Capric Triglycerides)



An odorless, very light, non-greasy and non-staining oil that helps carry therapeutic oils under the skin. It contains the medium-chain triglycerides from regular coconut oil and is a good choice for facial care and also body care that needs a lighter oil. Caprylic/Capric Triglycerides is what many



handcrafters and main stream manufacturers use when making natural “oil free” cosmetics. Sensitive skin rarely has issues with this light and therapeutic coconut oil derivative. Dry and mature skin thrives with it without having to deal with heavier oils “weighed down feeling” issues. It’s also wonderful in products for oily and breakout prone skin as it has a very low comedogenic factor. Fractionated Coconut Oil has a very stable and long shelf life. While there are some “natural” retailers or natural product certifiers who do not consider Fractionated Coconut Oil to be natural or that it’s too far removed to be considered naturally derived, it’s produced by the [hydrolysis of coconut oil](#). It is fractionated by steam distillation to isolate the triglycerides. If they accept true soaps, they should accept Fractionated Coconut Oil.

There you have it. Read ingredient labels. Different products have different ingredients that serve different purposes. It’s important that you know what’s in the products that you’re buying, to avoid allergies or ingredients you may want to avoid. Choose a product labeled for your skin type and needs. If you need help deciding, never hesitate to ask whomever is selling the products. If they can’t give you clear answers, think about whether you want to spend your hard earned money with them. Once you pick and start using the products, pay attention to the changes to your skin. Results will never be instantaneous, but over the course of 2-6 weeks of continued use according to the directions, you should see results. Note these changes and if you like the results, then continue using it.

Share this:



This entry was posted in Bath and Body, Skin Care on April 9, 2012 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2012/04/09/natural-ingredients-in-skin-care-oils-and-waxes/>] by Sandra.

☺



Perched On The Rim Of Her Soap Pot

A Handmade Soap And Natural Cosmetic Formulator Who Ponders, Muses And Is Sometimes Amused.

Want Your Business To Look Legitimite? Rent A White Guy!

Yes, you read that right. But before you pull out your virtual pitchforks, buckets of tar and feathers and “Unfriend”, “Unlike” or “Unfollow” me, please read on and hear me out. And then you can pitch your forks at those who really deserves it.

Most people who spend any time online know the gist of what I like to call getting “link mazed”. You get an email with a link to a website or read an online article and see another link that catches your interest. After reading that article, you see another link that catches your interest, and another; You go deeper into the maze and then there’s another link and so on. That’s how I ended up with these 2 links:

[Confessions of a fake businessman from Beijing](#)

[Chinese companies ‘rent’ white foreigners](#)

Like you, I did not believe what I had just read. My jaw hit the keyboard and my head was swimming. I got some fresh tea, came back and re-read them. I had found the first article via link mazing and was so shocked, I did some searches and found more. I’ve just listed 2 from the most upfront and credible news outlets, Google is your friend. Now of all the things I suspected Chinese companies of doing and of all the things that have been exposed that Chinese companies do, this was just not ever on my radar. I expect shady deals, undercover associates from underworld elements, bribes, corrupt officials and everything else that could happen in the worlds of emerging (and existing) economies and business. I have struggled with and re-written this post 3 times in order to make it acceptable for your work places, the children on your lap and other sensitive souls. It was hard to censor myself; It still is. So I’ll just let those 2 articles -and your research- stand on their own and let you say and talk

amongst yourselves what I've been thinking, but won't write. Most people who know me know I have a cynical, no bs, call it like it is view of the world. I rarely sugar coat and don't wear rose colored contacts. But the fake Western face front never pinged on my radar. But I know why. In the western world, we don't need to hire a fake face. Regardless of the shade, WE are the face.

Reading these articles, is it any surprise now that every time you turn around, something product from China is getting warned about or recalled? [The prescription drugs](#), [whole series of article here](#), [pet food and human food additives](#), and personal care products like [toothpaste](#) and [bath fizzies](#), the latter of which has had 2 recalls. And let us not forget the issue that is going to plague way too many of us for a long time: [The drywall debacle](#). All these everyday needed products and this is only what we hear about.

What I really want to know why is this NOT being discussed? Why is this not being screamed about from the top of Capitol Hill? This isn't a republican/democrat issue as this "rent a white guy" scam has evidently been going on for many, many years through several administrations. And with as much world news and business news as I read, why did I find this out through back channels and old links buried in deeper ends of news outlets? Why aren't US, Canadian and EU companies screaming at the top of their lungs about this? It's bad enough with the recalls and the potential worry of not knowing if something is safe. Now it's come into the light *-barely-* that many Chinese companies only have "Western" faces as window dressing partnerships and may not even be on the up and up. The faces we see in the business sections or industry trade papers on so-called China and US/Canada/Europe manufacturing companies partnerships may be totally bogus. I call this western face window dressing the absolute epitome of UNFAIR TRADE PRACTICES and FRAUD!

The cherry on top of this? At this current political phase in the US, yet another set or 2 of so called consumer cosmetic safety regs are being proposed to the FDA by alarmist, reactionist and hidden agenda NGOs to be implemented on US cosmetics manufacturers. And the FDA is also asking Congress to approve a budget that allows for them to require all manufacturers to pay a yearly fee to the FDA, supposedly to step up and expand enforcement of US cosmetic regulations cosmetic manufacturing companies. An industry that has a enviable safety track record. More so than I could say for US food, prescription or OTC drugs manufacturers. And what does this have to do with China hiring western faces to front for them? Glad you ask. You see, I have yet to hear or read of any of the new proposed cosmetic legislation or fees being used to enforce the standards, regulations and laws upon importing personal care companies, especially Chinese or other questionable importing entities. Okay, there's the [mercury in the imported skin lightening creams](#) that got busted earlier this month. But I swear every year this same story is released. Enough times to make me wonder...

I know and you know that the FDA knows it doesn't have and never will have enough bodies **-no mat-**



ter how many they hire, or enough money –**no matter how much they bleed** from US manufacturers to enforce the standards, regulations and laws already in place for US manufacturers, on the importers. I [wrote of this in 2010](#). Just change the year to 2012 and it's the same the legislative b.s re-worded. My views on it and the proposed legislation haven't changed. US manufacturers, especially the micro and true small business need to demand their elected officials, from the bottom up to the head man in charge in DC to stop placing unfair burdens on us and demand proof and true accountability from the importing companies, especially Chinese companies. Make it as easy for us to engage in legal, productive commerce as it is for the Chinese to engage in their "Western face" subterfuges.

I think from now on, I'll allow myself to get a little bit snooty when someone whips out their bit to me about my products are overpriced and XZY company (who's products are mass produced in China) is only charging \$x.xx. I'll give them a copy of those articles.

From now on, when I'm talking to a store that's carrying some so called "exclusive" import boutique brands with european label names (that are actually made in China) about carrying my products and they start with the "need lower wholesale price point, blah, blah", I'll give them those articles.

Oh, and from now on, when I ask people do they know how and where their body products are made, I'll also ask them if it's even made by a legitimate company.

I'm just sayin'

Share this:



This entry was posted in I'm Just Saying..., Pet Peeves, Regulatory on March 20, 2012 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2012/03/20/want-your-business-to-look-legitimite-rent-a-white-guy/>] by Sandra.

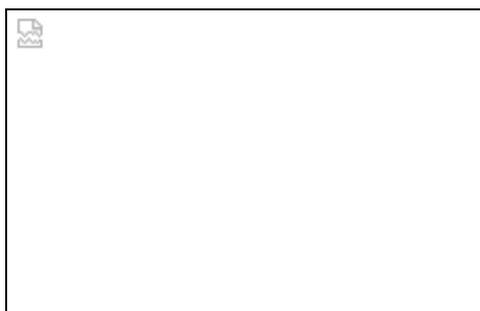


Want to guarantee your organization stagnates then dies off?

Over the last 10 years, I've noticed a disturbing trend in businesses and organizations. I've also noticed a concurrent uptick in their employee's or members's complaints and general feelings of dissatisfaction. Oh yes, the internet is my friend. People email, skype, text, forum, twitter and Facebook often and emphatically. And what are they talking about? The ignoring in-house ideas and talents.

It happens every day, in every type of environment. You say you want to grow and/or reach out further within the community. You say you want to establish that your business or organization is THE "Go To" place for whatever it is you've focused on. You've even acknowledged that you can't do it alone and need fresh ideas and some help doing it. And then after you've said all that, what do you turn around and do? You discount or be dismissive of other peoples ideas, knowledge or talents within your business or organization. You do know that the ones at the top set the tone for the rest of the rank and file, don't you? When you treat your employees or members like that and then allow others to treat them that way also, you are seriously risking the health and stability of your organization.

Just because you and many others within that organization don't have their talents, skill set or don't or even know of the latest technologies doesn't give you licence to be dismissive of those who do. If you're a business, what did you hire them for if not their talents and potential and the potential they can bring to your business? If you're a non-business organization and collects dues and fees, why be dismissive to your paying members? Whether it's a business, a social club, a not for profit, a sports club, a charitable organization, etc, there are many members who may want to help things flow, run well and thrive. They have many talents and skills and would gladly contribute if given the chance, but too many times their ideas and knowledge are tossed away like yesterday's trash.



After a while, many just won't even attempt to contribute or will stop trying to because they see themselves



or others constantly shot down, their ideas and suggestions dismissed. This can happen because the technologies they know and the skills they have are usually much newer things compared to what many others within your organization may be used to. The environment or makeup of your organization can play a large part in this problem. Many times it can be attributed to an age difference. The older members feel the younger ones should keep quiet and just sit there and "learn". Which in today's highly technological world is just not going to happen, as many younger ones are far more advanced than the older ones in just too many things. And many times, the older members will not actually be the ones with seniority within the organization, they will be newer members. Another reason may be that some members were just never exposed to the idea of the need to adapt and evolve. The old "It's always been done this way" mentality. So they may feel threatened by or a bit afraid of new technologies and methods of operation. If they don't know of it or know of it but don't how to use it, they don't feel a need to connect with it, even for the benefit of the organization they belong to. And that organization will suffer for it.

Then there is the problem of the non-utilized members suggestions and ideas dismissed or outright ignored, only to have a few weeks or months later someone else make the same suggestions and it's treated like the NEWEST AND BEST IDEA EVER! Or even worse, they see you hire consultants who charge well and often for their advice and services and they tell your organization many of the same things you were getting for free. Maybe it's a classic example of the old adage "familiarity breeds contempt". Sometimes it's very hard for people to hear about or how to do something new from people they work or associate with on a footing they may perceive as either being equal to or possibly even lesser. This explains why many businesses go to a different division or branch or even outside the company when they need to hire mid to senior level management.

I have news for you lumbering dinosaurs and quasi-luddite: GET OVER YOURSELF & GET OVER IT! Treating or allowing your employees or members to be treated like this will mean that eventually you will lose good, vibrant, energetic people and the ideas that can help your organization grow. No one in their right mind is going to hang around and let others smoother the life out of them. It also means eventually the word will get out about this problem and then you'll get little to no new blood and will become even more stagnant. Just like a living body, stagnant blood means limb death. And if there is very little pulse in your organization, those discounted members will in all likelihood amputate the affected limb. In other words, cut you off. An organization that doesn't adapt, learn and use the talents of it's members will not evolve. It will die off. It can happen to large multi-national companies, to small business, it happens to charities and churches, not for profits and social organizations. It's in the business news everyday, companies that have become complacent, have a lack of innovation...Loss of creativity...Lost focus of it's mission. No entity is immune from dying off from lack of evolution.

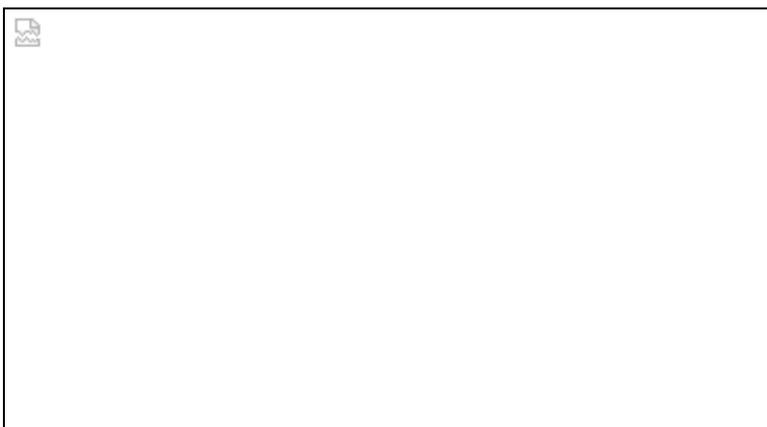
When you look at small business and organizations that are just starting out or even those that have been around a while, if they seem to have a good community acceptance and appear to be doing well, look at who's running it and how. What are their dynamics? How are they reaching their customers, clients and the community? What and whom are they utilizing to do this? What talents from within the organization are they tapping into? What technologies are they using? And how many within that organization are using those same technologies on their own privately and by branching out from there use them within and for the bene-



fit of the organization?

In the last 5 years, when I'm out and about visiting or vending at festivals, fairs, community events and other farmers markets, I make it a point to look at and compare the businesses, organizations and markets that seem to have a booming flow at their market, booth or stand and those that don't. The difference is readily apparent. The high volume ones are very interactive. They are all staffed with members -young, middle and old- looking bright and at attention, whether they're standing or sitting. They have interactive mediums for their visitors. They make it easy to interact with them right then using the current technologies for payments, donations and information, then make it easier for later interaction, via social media, websites, blogs and even good old fashioned paper handouts. The ones that have little to no action: Manned by half alert folks who when asked questions about the organization, can barely mumble out an answer. They'll give an "I don't know...That's not my department...You'll have to ask...". Never a "I don't know but give me 5 minutes or your email, or your phone number and I can find out for you and get back to you. Never have a web or email address for information handy. Later they'll be kevetching about low turnout, lack of customers and visitors (and by the way, what are THEY doing to help change that?). What kind of way is that to run anything that they're supposed to be a part of? If they're in it, they should know about it and be able to converse about it. Not just about what they do, but the majority of the whole.

And here's the big, swift kick in the butt that will hopefully spark the bulb in your head: The rank and file who allow to discount or act dismissive to the ideas that may advance your organization are usually the very ones who will also do ABSOLUTELY NOTHING to help out to advance your organization. And you allow this by not demanding they contribute too. Contributing is more than a warm body showing up. So if your organization isn't learning, adapting, evolving and using the talents available and demanding the same from others, expect to wither in the dust and die off.



I'm just sayin'



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This entry was posted in I'm Just Saying..., Pet Peeves on March 8, 2012 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2012/03/08/want-to-guarantee-your-organization-stagnates-then-dies-off/>] by Sandra.

Aloe vera: An amazing ingredient for skin care

Do you know about one of the most amazing and practical skin care ingredients? Many are not familiar with the benefits and importance of Aloe Vera even though it's an ancient plant and it's uses in skin (and health) care has been around for a very long time. The Aloes are succulent perennial plants that are mainly found in the warmer, drier regions of Africa, Asia, Europe, the Americas and in the last 30 years or so, Australia. It can also tolerate humid, tropical climates if it's root's aren't drowned in water or standing in wet mud. Because of its many therapeutic uses, the Aloe most commonly grown for commercial use in skin care is *Barbadensis* Miller. While it looks very cactus like, Aloe actually belongs to the liliaceae (lily) family, which also includes tulips, garlic, onions and leeks and many other rhizome and bulb plants.

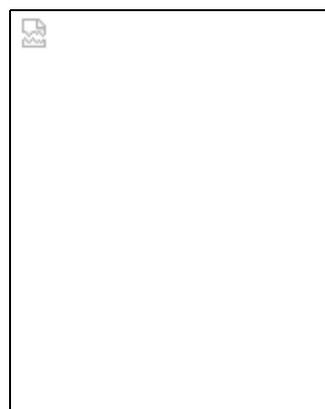
For millennia, Aloe vera has been used as a wound healer and skin emollient. Aloe vera has many of the very important properties needed to help moisturize your skin and makes it soft. The Aloe vera juice and sap is about 97% water, the rest comprised of numerous beneficial elements in it's extensive composition: enzymes, polysaccharides, amino acids, saponins, aloin, emodin, B-sitosterol, cinnamonic acid, phenols, sulfur, urea nitrogen and lupeol. It also contains trace amounts of chromium, copper, magnesium, manganese, several B vitamins, folic acid and zinc. Aloe vera also contains salicylic acid which may account for what many believe to be Aloe's pain-killing potential. It may help to calm, re-hydrate and condition skin that has been over exposed to the elements, especially excess sun and wind. Salicylic acid may also play a role in Aloe's perceived detoxifying and rejuvenation -i.e. cell turn over (exfoliation) capacity. Many use the gel on tanned and sunburned skin. The legions of after sun products containing Aloe vera are testament to that perception. Besides the historical anecdotal uses, there have been studies of the capacity of Aloe vera to stimulate the skin's immune and healing system. It can also be used with water and oil herbal extractions and herbal alcohol tinctures to make a soothing gel, lotion or balm for relief of minor skin irritations and aches and pains from muscle strain or sprains.

Aloe vera does not actually come out in a "gel" form like what one buys in the store. It's a runny pale yellow



liquid and sap that is squeezed out the plant's flesh and skin, then processed to remove impurities. After processing, it can be left in it's liquid state or natural gellants like xanthan gum or synthetic gellants like Carbomers are used to give it the gel body and thick consistency desired. Also, the liquid Aloe can be freeze dried to later be reconstituted with water. There is even an Aloe vera oil, where the dried aloe is macerated and soaked in a light weight oil to make an extraction of many of the beneficial constituents.

Aloe vera is extremely gentle on sensitive, mature or over exposed skin. It can help moisturize, condition and tone without irritating or aggravating the skin (unless one has an allergy to Aloe vera). On oily or breakout prone skin, Aloe vera can be used as a mild astringent without the stripping issues of toners that contain alcohol. On all skin it can help soften and moisturize without adding a comedogenic (pore clogging) factor. In the last 20 years, Aloe vera has become well known as the go-to ingredient in skin care lotions and body products. It's widely used in moisturizers and anti-ageing skin care, though sadly, many use it only for label appeal and window dressing. Many products have Aloe vera in too low a percentage for it to have any type of therapeutic effect. We use generous, therapeutic amounts of all 4 forms of Aloe vera in many of our products. With the exception of the aloe powder and aloe oil, the majority of our Aloe vera juice percentage falls in the upper 1/4 of our ingredient deck. Besides it's superior skin care abilities, depending on how much is used, Aloe vera gel can impart a light, fluffy, mousse like quality to creams, add more body to a thin lotion, lighten up an oil heavy lotion to a gelee and give a creamier, richer feel to a blended body butter. Aloe vera juice also imparts a smooth and silky creaminess to bar, liquid and cream soaps. In dry products such as our Spa PhytoBotane Herbal Face Masques or Tub Teas, freeze dried Aloe vera gives the benefits of aloe vera when the product is reconstituted. As a formulator or a product user, one cannot ask for a more useful and versatile ingredient.



My Potted Aloe Sisters

By the way, did you know that with minimal care, you can grow your own Aloe Vera plant quite successfully as a household plant? Loose, sandy soil, bright, indirect light and minimal water. It can't get any easier and low maintenance than that. Why have one? Many people, myself included, swear by fresh Aloe vera from the plant on a skin burn from cooking and keep a plant in or near the kitchen. In Fall 2010, I purchased an Aloe vera plant from John Lower, a fellow Farmers Market vendor. It was a root bound double plant and had some pups (baby aloes) around them and a flower stalk growing out. 4 weeks later I had the joy of seeing it



bloom. Nothing spectacular, just a long flower spike, but it was nice as I'd never seen a blooming Aloe vera plant other than in pictures. Afterward the bloom, I transplanted the 2 sisters together in a larger pot, the pups to smaller pots and moved them outside that May. They came back inside in early October. I now have several Aloe vera plants wintering over in my sunny office. Why not my kitchen? The kitchen's off limits as sadly the cats want to eat the Aloe veras when they're inside. Kitties just love to munch on succulent plants. A no-no, in more ways than one. The most **important** one: The saponins (natural detergents) in many can cause gastric distress and can injure or outright kill cats. Oddly, they don't touch my plants when outside. Go figure.

Share this:



This entry was posted in Bath and Body, Skin Care, Soap on March 4, 2012 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2012/03/04/aloe-vera-an-amazing-ingredient-for-skin-care/>] by Sandra.

My Skin Is So Dry And Itchy, It's Driving Me Crazy! Pt 2

In my previous post I told you of a customer who had been unemployed for a bit and thought she could stretch her money a bit by purchasing "bargain" soaps, bath & body care. Only to have her skin start acting weird, irritated and become dry and itchy. Why she ended up spending 3 times the money using what she had been. After I got the rundown on what she'd been using, I invited her to have a cup of coffee with me at the grocery store's coffee bar and I explained to her why she was having problems and gave her my advice on what to do and why.

What Do Synthetic Detergents Do?

Synthetics have their place. However with many people, it's not on their skin. Sodium or Ammonium Laurel Sulfate, Sodium Laureth Sulfate and many other synthetic detergents are great cleaners. They can strip the dirt, oil and gunk off a car engine in no time flat. That squeaky clean you love on your hand washed dishes? That's how it gets that way. And that's the problem. They also do that to your skin. STIP IT BARE. And when you strip your skin of too much of it's oil, you dry it out. If it can't replace it fast enough, you create more



problems. If you have a normal skin type with only a few dry patches to begin with, you're making an annoying issue a worse problem. If you have a dry, mature or over exposed skin, or a sensitive, easily irritated skin type, you're increasing the irritation factor dramatically. And oily or breakout prone skin? Well, contrary to the current craze of commercials that hype "Deep down, pore clean", the last thing oily skin needs is to be stripped of all its oil. If you strip all the oil off of oily skin, you dry it out and then the real fun starts. The skin becomes irritated, it's dry and tight, it flakes, which in turn means the pores may clog more easily. And the final insult: Your skin will then turn around and make twice, yes 2x times the oil than what it would normally make. Then you scrub more, you strip the skin more, and the nasty cycle usually becomes worse.

Most true bar soaps and liquid soaps and many of the natural based liquid washes are much more gentle to the skin. They're non stripping if used correctly. They made of natural oils like olive, sunflower, shea butter, coco butter, etc, and natural thickeners like xanthan or guar gum in them. Some brands don't even thicken them up, they tell you on the label why it's a bit thinner than the massed produced washes. In many instances, less is more.

Why Use Natural Oils In Body Care?

Lotions, Creams and Body Butters are water, oils and butters, emulsifiers, stabilizers and thickeners blended together. Many body butters are actually just super thick cremes. Others body butters are only a blend of oils and butters. It's a matter of personal preference as to which one is used. For skin care, it's my opinion that natural oils are far better for your skin than synthetics. Your skin recognizes natural oils as having attributes and molecules it can use. Oils that your skin makes and natural oils that you place on your skin help keep your skin moisturized, soft and supple. The synthetics literally just sit on top of your skin. When using skin products that have silicones in them, the silicones really should be quite a bit down the ingredient list, preferably not in the first third. They should add a little "slip" to the product's glide, not be the glide. Silicones can also help the natural oils or butters with moisture retention by their laying on top of the skin helping sustain a light barrier. This is why many body care moisturizing products contain some form of silicone. What sets some apart from others is how much is used. Too much and you're not adding to your skins healthful moisture retention, you're smothering it. It's my opinion that is what petrolatums and mineral oils do-smoother the skin. Sadly, too many main stream products load up on silicones or petrolatum. Synthetics do have their place. Just not as the first line of defense and not the majority of the product.

Why Do Handmade Soaps and Natural Based Personal Care Cost More?



Even with the cost of petroleum climbing higher and higher, the synthetics derived from them are still less expensive to use compared to natural oils. Using synthetics almost guarantees a continuous supply of the raw materials needed to maintain or increase production of their products. Synthetics allow for maximum product output with minimum ingredient cost. Yes, Natural and Natural Based products do cost more. It cost more to make them. It cost more to grow the crops, process and refine the base materials that come from them. They grow in nature and Nature is fickle. For this very reason there's been a world wide jojoba shortage for 18 months. The processes to make the finished products can also be more elaborate and time consuming that when using synthetics. They must be handled and stored differently. Many must be preserved differently.

Using natural based personal care may cost a bit more in the initial purchases. But in the long run, you end up using less because your skin isn't freaking out, drying out, irritated. Using handmade soaps and bath & body care tells you that the product isn't massed produced in a giant factory on the other side of the world. Yes, handmade soap makers can crank out some serious bar amounts per day, but most of us don't do thousands of bars a day. And we're not making them in 500 gallon vats run at the push of a button. Handmade soap makers are also locally based. We're your neighbors, your fellow church members, your local businesses. You can find us at the local farmers markets, your local gift shops and drug stores, you can call us and sometimes even stop by our studios and say "Hi". Trust me when I tell you we like being found. It means we get to know our customers.

Anything Else I Can Do To Help My Skin?

In addition to the type of skin care you're using, how you're using it may make a difference. Bathing: No long hot baths or showers. I know how they feel, soothing the aches and cares of the day away. However, the hot water will also strip away your skin's oil. So don't make it a habit. Say once a week take that long hot soak. The rest of the time, just normal warm water. A good, gentle, natural bar or liquid soap or natural based body wash.

Twice a week gently exfoliate your skin. Operative word: Gently. You're not scrubbing a floor. In your shower or bath, wash first, then use a creamy sugar scrub, a loofah, a scrub mitt or even your wash cloth to help remove the old tired skin. Start at your neck and work down, in sections. Left arm, right arm. Chest, tummy. Back and butt. Then each leg. (Feet should be done while sitting down and are another post for another day.) After exfoliating, rinse off and then gently towel yourself dry, but don't dry yourself totally off. You want your skin slightly damp. Take your favorite natural lotion, cream or body butter and section at a time, rub in a gen



erous amount.

Sun: Stop with the constant tanning, whether natural or salon, and be on guard to avoid sunburns. A warm glow from being out is nice and natural Vit. D from the sun is needed by everybody. However, even 1 sunburn a year will cause irreparable damage your skin, dry it out, wrinkle, spot and age it and all the exfoliators, moisturizers, butters in the world will not repair it.

By the way, diet can affect your skin. A bad diet, eating unhealthy foods, over processed foods and diets lacking fresh fruits, vegetables and proteins that provide essential amino and fatty acids can also give you dry, itchy skin. And even more importantly, certain health issues can present themselves with skin symptoms. If you think your skin issues might be health related, or already have health issues and are now having skin problems, please go see your health care professionals as soon as possible.

Share this:



This entry was posted in Bath and Body on February 20, 2012 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2012/02/20/my-skin-is-so-dry-and-itchy-its-driving-me-crazy-pt-2/>] by Sandra.

☺



Perched On The Rim Of Her Soap Pot

A Handmade Soap And Natural Cosmetic Formulator Who Ponders, Muses And Is Sometimes Amused.

Want Your Business To Look Legitimize? Rent A White Guy!

Yes, you read that right. But before you pull out your virtual pitchforks, buckets of tar and feathers and “Unfriend”, “Unlike” or “Unfollow” me, please read on and hear me out. And then you can pitch your forks at those who really deserves it.

Most people who spend any time online know the gist of what I like to call getting “link mazed”. You get an email with a link to a website or read an online article and see another link that catches your interest. After reading that article, you see another link that catches your interest, and another; You go deeper into the maze and then there’s another link and so on. That’s how I ended up with these 2 links:

[Confessions of a fake businessman from Beijing](#)

[Chinese companies ‘rent’ white foreigners](#)

Like you, I did not believe what I had just read. My jaw hit the keyboard and my head was swimming. I got some fresh tea, came back and re-read them. I had found the first article via link mazing and was so shocked, I did some searches and found more. I’ve just listed 2 from the most upfront and credible news outlets, Google is your friend. Now of all the things I suspected Chinese companies of doing and of all the things that have been exposed that Chinese companies do, this was just not ever on my radar. I expect shady deals, undercover associates from underworld elements, bribes, corrupt officials and everything else that could happen in the worlds of emerging (and existing) economies and business. I have struggled with and re-written this post 3 times in order to make it acceptable for your work places, the children on your lap and other sensitive souls. It was hard to censor myself; It still is. So I’ll just let those 2 articles -and your research- stand on their own and let you say and talk

amongst yourselves what I've been thinking, but won't write. Most people who know me know I have a cynical, no bs, call it like it is view of the world. I rarely sugar coat and don't wear rose colored contacts. But the fake Western face front never pinged on my radar. But I know why. In the western world, we don't need to hire a fake face. Regardless of the shade, WE are the face.

Reading these articles, is it any surprise now that every time you turn around, something product from China is getting warned about or recalled? [The prescription drugs](#), [whole series of article here](#), [pet food and human food additives](#), and personal care products like [toothpaste](#) and [bath fizzies](#), the latter of which has had 2 recalls. And let us not forget the issue that is going to plague way too many of us for a long time: [The drywall debacle](#). All these everyday needed products and this is only what we hear about.

What I really want to know why is this NOT being discussed? Why is this not being screamed about from the top of Capitol Hill? This isn't a republican/democrat issue as this "rent a white guy" scam has evidently been going on for many, many years through several administrations. And with as much world news and business news as I read, why did I find this out through back channels and old links buried in deeper ends of news outlets? Why aren't US, Canadian and EU companies screaming at the top of their lungs about this? It's bad enough with the recalls and the potential worry of not knowing if something is safe. Now it's come into the light *-barely-* that many Chinese companies only have "Western" faces as window dressing partnerships and may not even be on the up and up. The faces we see in the business sections or industry trade papers on so-called China and US/Canada/Europe manufacturing companies partnerships may be totally bogus. I call this western face window dressing the absolute epitome of UNFAIR TRADE PRACTICES and FRAUD!

The cherry on top of this? At this current political phase in the US, yet another set or 2 of so called consumer cosmetic safety regs are being proposed to the FDA by alarmist, reactionist and hidden agenda NGOs to be implemented on US cosmetics manufacturers. And the FDA is also asking Congress to approve a budget that allows for them to require all manufacturers to pay a yearly fee to the FDA, supposedly to step up and expand enforcement of US cosmetic regulations cosmetic manufacturing companies. An industry that has a enviable safety track record. More so than I could say for US food, prescription or OTC drugs manufacturers. And what does this have to do with China hiring western faces to front for them? Glad you ask. You see, I have yet to hear or read of any of the new proposed cosmetic legislation or fees being used to enforce the standards, regulations and laws upon importing personal care companies, especially Chinese or other questionable importing entities. Okay, there's the [mercury in the imported skin lightening creams](#) that got busted earlier this month. But I swear every year this same story is released. Enough times to make me wonder...

I know and you know that the FDA knows it doesn't have and never will have enough bodies **-no mat-**



ter how many they hire, or enough money –**no matter how much they bleed** from US manufacturers to enforce the standards, regulations and laws already in place for US manufacturers, on the importers. I [wrote of this in 2010](#). Just change the year to 2012 and it's the same the legislative b.s re-worded. My views on it and the proposed legislation haven't changed. US manufacturers, especially the micro and true small business need to demand their elected officials, from the bottom up to the head man in charge in DC to stop placing unfair burdens on us and demand proof and true accountability from the importing companies, especially Chinese companies. Make it as easy for us to engage in legal, productive commerce as it is for the Chinese to engage in their "Western face" subterfuges.

I think from now on, I'll allow myself to get a little bit snooty when someone whips out their bit to me about my products are overpriced and XZY company (who's products are mass produced in China) is only charging \$x.xx. I'll give them a copy of those articles.

From now on, when I'm talking to a store that's carrying some so called "exclusive" import boutique brands with european label names (that are actually made in China) about carrying my products and they start with the "need lower wholesale price point, blah, blah", I'll give them those articles.

Oh, and from now on, when I ask people do they know how and where their body products are made, I'll also ask them if it's even made by a legitimate company.

I'm just sayin'

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This entry was posted in I'm Just Saying..., Pet Peeves, Regulatory on March 20, 2012 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2012/03/20/want-your-business-to-look-legitimite-rent-a-white-guy/>] by Sandra.

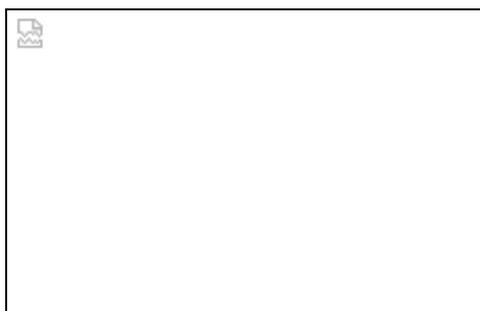


Want to guarantee your organization stagnates then dies off?

Over the last 10 years, I've noticed a disturbing trend in businesses and organizations. I've also noticed a concurrent uptick in their employee's or members's complaints and general feelings of dissatisfaction. Oh yes, the internet is my friend. People email, skype, text, forum, twitter and Facebook often and emphatically. And what are they talking about? The ignoring in-house ideas and talents.

It happens every day, in every type of environment. You say you want to grow and/or reach out further within the community. You say you want to establish that your business or organization is THE "Go To" place for whatever it is you've focused on. You've even acknowledged that you can't do it alone and need fresh ideas and some help doing it. And then after you've said all that, what do you turn around and do? You discount or be dismissive of other peoples ideas, knowledge or talents within your business or organization. You do know that the ones at the top set the tone for the rest of the rank and file, don't you? When you treat your employees or members like that and then allow others to treat them that way also, you are seriously risking the health and stability of your organization.

Just because you and many others within that organization don't have their talents, skill set or don't or even know of the latest technologies doesn't give you licence to be dismissive of those who do. If you're a business, what did you hire them for if not their talents and potential and the potential they can bring to your business? If you're a non-business organization and collects dues and fees, why be dismissive to your paying members? Whether it's a business, a social club, a not for profit, a sports club, a charitable organization, etc, there are many members who may want to help things flow, run well and thrive. They have many talents and skills and would gladly contribute if given the chance, but too many times their ideas and knowledge are tossed away like yesterday's trash.



After a while, many just won't even attempt to contribute or will stop trying to because they see themselves



or others constantly shot down, their ideas and suggestions dismissed. This can happen because the technologies they know and the skills they have are usually much newer things compared to what many others within your organization may be used to. The environment or makeup of your organization can play a large part in this problem. Many times it can be attributed to an age difference. The older members feel the younger ones should keep quiet and just sit there and "learn". Which in today's highly technological world is just not going to happen, as many younger ones are far more advanced than the older ones in just too many things. And many times, the older members will not actually be the ones with seniority within the organization, they will be newer members. Another reason may be that some members were just never exposed to the idea of the need to adapt and evolve. The old "It's always been done this way" mentality. So they may feel threatened by or a bit afraid of new technologies and methods of operation. If they don't know of it or know of it but don't how to use it, they don't feel a need to connect with it, even for the benefit of the organization they belong to. And that organization will suffer for it.

Then there is the problem of the non-utilized members suggestions and ideas dismissed or outright ignored, only to have a few weeks or months later someone else make the same suggestions and it's treated like the NEWEST AND BEST IDEA EVER! Or even worse, they see you hire consultants who charge well and often for their advice and services and they tell your organization many of the same things you were getting for free. Maybe it's a classic example of the old adage "familiarity breeds contempt". Sometimes it's very hard for people to hear about or how to do something new from people they work or associate with on a footing they may perceive as either being equal to or possibly even lesser. This explains why many businesses go to a different division or branch or even outside the company when they need to hire mid to senior level management.

I have news for you lumbering dinosaurs and quasi-luddite: GET OVER YOURSELF & GET OVER IT! Treating or allowing your employees or members to be treated like this will mean that eventually you will lose good, vibrant, energetic people and the ideas that can help your organization grow. No one in their right mind is going to hang around and let others smoother the life out of them. It also means eventually the word will get out about this problem and then you'll get little to no new blood and will become even more stagnant. Just like a living body, stagnant blood means limb death. And if there is very little pulse in your organization, those discounted members will in all likelihood amputate the affected limb. In other words, cut you off. An organization that doesn't adapt, learn and use the talents of it's members will not evolve. It will die off. It can happen to large multi-national companies, to small business, it happens to charities and churches, not for profits and social organizations. It's in the business news everyday, companies that have become complacent, have a lack of innovation...Loss of creativity...Lost focus of it's mission. No entity is immune from dying off from lack of evolution.

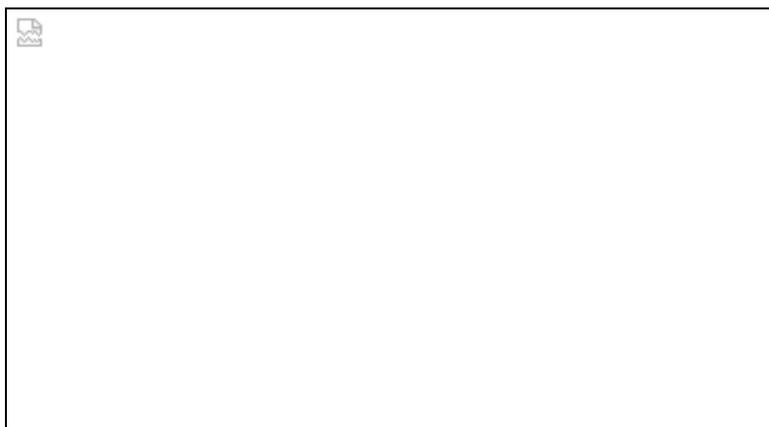
When you look at small business and organizations that are just starting out or even those that have been around a while, if they seem to have a good community acceptance and appear to be doing well, look at who's running it and how. What are their dynamics? How are they reaching their customers, clients and the community? What and whom are they utilizing to do this? What talents from within the organization are they tapping into? What technologies are they using? And how many within that organization are using those same technologies on their own privately and by branching out from there use them within and for the bene-



fit of the organization?

In the last 5 years, when I'm out and about visiting or vending at festivals, fairs, community events and other farmers markets, I make it a point to look at and compare the businesses, organizations and markets that seem to have a booming flow at their market, booth or stand and those that don't. The difference is readily apparent. The high volume ones are very interactive. They are all staffed with members -young, middle and old- looking bright and at attention, whether they're standing or sitting. They have interactive mediums for their visitors. They make it easy to interact with them right then using the current technologies for payments, donations and information, then make it easier for later interaction, via social media, websites, blogs and even good old fashioned paper handouts. The ones that have little to no action: Manned by half alert folks who when asked questions about the organization, can barely mumble out an answer. They'll give an "I don't know...That's not my department...You'll have to ask...". Never a "I don't know but give me 5 minutes or your email, or your phone number and I can find out for you and get back to you. Never have a web or email address for information handy. Later they'll be kevetching about low turnout, lack of customers and visitors (and by the way, what are THEY doing to help change that?). What kind of way is that to run anything that they're supposed to be a part of? If they're in it, they should know about it and be able to converse about it. Not just about what they do, but the majority of the whole.

And here's the big, swift kick in the butt that will hopefully spark the bulb in your head: The rank and file who allow to discount or act dismissive to the ideas that may advance your organization are usually the very ones who will also do ABSOLUTELY NOTHING to help out to advance your organization. And you allow this by not demanding they contribute too. Contributing is more than a warm body showing up. So if your organization isn't learning, adapting, evolving and using the talents available and demanding the same from others, expect to wither in the dust and die off.



I'm just sayin'



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This entry was posted in I'm Just Saying..., Pet Peeves on March 8, 2012 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2012/03/08/want-to-guarantee-your-organization-stagnates-then-dies-off/>] by Sandra.

Aloe vera: An amazing ingredient for skin care

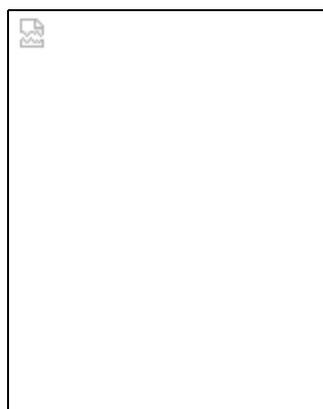
Do you know about one of the most amazing and practical skin care ingredients? Many are not familiar with the benefits and importance of Aloe Vera even though it's an ancient plant and it's uses in skin (and health) care has been around for a very long time. The Aloes are succulent perennial plants that are mainly found in the warmer, drier regions of Africa, Asia, Europe, the Americas and in the last 30 years or so, Australia. It can also tolerate humid, tropical climates if it's root's aren't drowned in water or standing in wet mud. Because of its many therapeutic uses, the Aloe most commonly grown for commercial use in skin care is *Barbadensis* Miller. While it looks very cactus like, Aloe actually belongs to the liliaceae (lily) family, which also includes tulips, garlic, onions and leeks and many other rhizome and bulb plants.

For millennia, Aloe vera has been used as a wound healer and skin emollient. Aloe vera has many of the very important properties needed to help moisturize your skin and makes it soft. The Aloe vera juice and sap is about 97% water, the rest comprised of numerous beneficial elements in it's extensive composition: enzymes, polysaccharides, amino acids, saponins, aloin, emodin, B-sitosterol, cinnamonic acid, phenols, sulfur, urea nitrogen and lupeol. It also contains trace amounts of chromium, copper, magnesium, manganese, several B vitamins, folic acid and zinc. Aloe vera also contains salicylic acid which may account for what many believe to be Aloe's pain-killing potential. It may help to calm, re-hydrate and condition skin that has been over exposed to the elements, especially excess sun and wind. Salicylic acid may also play a role in Aloe's perceived detoxifying and rejuvenation -i.e. cell turn over (exfoliation) capacity. Many use the gel on tanned and sunburned skin. The legions of after sun products containing Aloe vera are testament to that perception. Besides the historical anecdotal uses, there have been studies of the capacity of Aloe vera to stimulate the skin's immune and healing system. It can also be used with water and oil herbal extractions and herbal alcohol tinctures to make a soothing gel, lotion or balm for relief of minor skin irritations and aches and pains from muscle strain or sprains.

Aloe vera does not actually come out in a "gel" form like what one buys in the store. It's a runny pale yellow 

liquid and sap that is squeezed out the plant's flesh and skin, then processed to remove impurities. After processing, it can be left in it's liquid state or natural gellants like xanthan gum or synthetic gellants like Carbomers are used to give it the gel body and thick consistency desired. Also, the liquid Aloe can be freeze dried to later be reconstituted with water. There is even an Aloe vera oil, where the dried aloe is macerated and soaked in a light weight oil to make an extraction of many of the beneficial constituents.

Aloe vera is extremely gentle on sensitive, mature or over exposed skin. It can help moisturize, condition and tone without irritating or aggravating the skin (unless one has an allergy to Aloe vera). On oily or breakout prone skin, Aloe vera can be used as a mild astringent without the stripping issues of toners that contain alcohol. On all skin it can help soften and moisturize without adding a comedogenic (pore clogging) factor. In the last 20 years, Aloe vera has become well known as the go-to ingredient in skin care lotions and body products. It's widely used in moisturizers and anti-ageing skin care, though sadly, many use it only for label appeal and window dressing. Many products have Aloe vera in too low a percentage for it to have any type of therapeutic effect. We use generous, therapeutic amounts of all 4 forms of Aloe vera in many of our products. With the exception of the aloe powder and aloe oil, the majority of our Aloe vera juice percentage falls in the upper 1/4 of our ingredient deck. Besides it's superior skin care abilities, depending on how much is used, Aloe vera gel can impart a light, fluffy, mousse like quality to creams, add more body to a thin lotion, lighten up an oil heavy lotion to a gelee and give a creamier, richer feel to a blended body butter. Aloe vera juice also imparts a smooth and silky creaminess to bar, liquid and cream soaps. In dry products such as our Spa PhytoBotane Herbal Face Masques or Tub Teas, freeze dried Aloe vera gives the benefits of aloe vera when the product is reconstituted. As a formulator or a product user, one cannot ask for a more useful and versatile ingredient.



My Potted Aloe Sisters

By the way, did you know that with minimal care, you can grown your own Aloe Vera plant quite successfully as a household plant? Loose, sandy soil, bright, indirect light and minimal water. It can't get any easier and low maintenance than that. Why have one? Many people, myself included, swear by fresh Aloe vera from the plant on a skin burn from cooking and keep a plant in or near the kitchen. In Fall 2010, I purchased an Aloe vera plant from John Lower, a fellow Farmers Market vendor. It was a root bound double plant and had some pups (baby aloes) around them and a flower stalk growing out. 4 weeks later I had the joy of seeing it



bloom. Nothing spectacular, just a long flower spike, but it was nice as I'd never seen a blooming Aloe vera plant other than in pictures. Afterward the bloom, I transplanted the 2 sisters together in a larger pot, the pups to smaller pots and moved them outside that May. They came back inside in early October. I now have several Aloe vera plants wintering over in my sunny office. Why not my kitchen? The kitchen's off limits as sadly the cats want to eat the Aloe veras when they're inside. Kitties just love to munch on succulent plants. A no-no, in more ways than one. The most **important** one: The saponins (natural detergents) in many can cause gastric distress and can injure or outright kill cats. Oddly, they don't touch my plants when outside. Go figure.

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This entry was posted in Bath and Body, Skin Care, Soap on March 4, 2012 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2012/03/04/aloe-vera-an-amazing-ingredient-for-skin-care/>] by Sandra.

My Skin Is So Dry And Itchy, It's Driving Me Crazy! Pt 2

In my previous post I told you of a customer who had been unemployed for a bit and thought she could stretch her money a bit by purchasing "bargain" soaps, bath & body care. Only to have her skin start acting weird, irritated and become dry and itchy. Why she ended up spending 3 times the money using what she had been. After I got the rundown on what she'd been using, I invited her to have a cup of coffee with me at the grocery store's coffee bar and I explained to her why she was having problems and gave her my advice on what to do and why.

What Do Synthetic Detergents Do?

Synthetics have their place. However with many people, it's not on their skin. Sodium or Ammonium Laurel Sulfate, Sodium Laureth Sulfate and many other synthetic detergents are great cleaners. They can strip the dirt, oil and gunk off a car engine in no time flat. That squeaky clean you love on your hand washed dishes? That's how it gets that way. And that's the problem. They also do that to your skin. STIP IT BARE. And when you strip your skin of too much of it's oil, you dry it out. If it can't replace it fast enough, you create more



problems. If you have a normal skin type with only a few dry patches to begin with, you're making an annoying issue a worse problem. If you have a dry, mature or over exposed skin, or a sensitive, easily irritated skin type, you're increasing the irritation factor dramatically. And oily or breakout prone skin? Well, contrary to the current craze of commercials that hype "Deep down, pore clean", the last thing oily skin needs is to be stripped of all its oil. If you strip all the oil off of oily skin, you dry it out and then the real fun starts. The skin becomes irritated, it's dry and tight, it flakes, which in turn means the pores may clog more easily. And the final insult: Your skin will then turn around and make twice, yes 2x times the oil than what it would normally make. Then you scrub more, you strip the skin more, and the nasty cycle usually becomes worse.

Most true bar soaps and liquid soaps and many of the natural based liquid washes are much more gentle to the skin. They're non stripping if used correctly. They made of natural oils like olive, sunflower, shea butter, coco butter, etc, and natural thickeners like xanthan or guar gum in them. Some brands don't even thicken them up, they tell you on the label why it's a bit thinner than the massed produced washes. In many instances, less is more.

Why Use Natural Oils In Body Care?

Lotions, Creams and Body Butters are water, oils and butters, emulsifiers, stabilizers and thickeners blended together. Many body butters are actually just super thick cremes. Others body butters are only a blend of oils and butters. It's a matter of personal preference as to which one is used. For skin care, it's my opinion that natural oils are far better for your skin than synthetics. Your skin recognizes natural oils as having attributes and molecules it can use. Oils that your skin makes and natural oils that you place on your skin help keep your skin moisturized, soft and supple. The synthetics literally just sit on top of your skin. When using skin products that have silicones in them, the silicones really should be quite a bit down the ingredient list, preferably not in the first third. They should add a little "slip" to the product's glide, not be the glide. Silicones can also help the natural oils or butters with moisture retention by their laying on top of the skin helping sustain a light barrier. This is why many body care moisturizing products contain some form of silicone. What sets some apart from others is how much is used. Too much and you're not adding to your skins healthful moisture retention, you're smothering it. It's my opinion that is what petrolatums and mineral oils do-smoother the skin. Sadly, too many main stream products load up on silicones or petrolatum. Synthetics do have their place. Just not as the first line of defense and not the majority of the product.

Why Do Handmade Soaps and Natural Based Personal Care Cost More?



Even with the cost of petroleum climbing higher and higher, the synthetics derived from them are still less expensive to use compared to natural oils. Using synthetics almost guarantees a continuous supply of the raw materials needed to maintain or increase production of their products. Synthetics allow for maximum product output with minimum ingredient cost. Yes, Natural and Natural Based products do cost more. It cost more to make them. It cost more to grow the crops, process and refine the base materials that come from them. They grow in nature and Nature is fickle. For this very reason there's been a world wide jojoba shortage for 18 months. The processes to make the finished products can also be more elaborate and time consuming that when using synthetics. They must be handled and stored differently. Many must be preserved differently.

Using natural based personal care may cost a bit more in the initial purchases. But in the long run, you end up using less because your skin isn't freaking out, drying out, irritated. Using handmade soaps and bath & body care tells you that the product isn't massed produced in a giant factory on the other side of the world. Yes, handmade soap makers can crank out some serious bar amounts per day, but most of us don't do thousands of bars a day. And we're not making them in 500 gallon vats run at the push of a button. Handmade soap makers are also locally based. We're your neighbors, your fellow church members, your local businesses. You can find us at the local farmers markets, your local gift shops and drug stores, you can call us and sometimes even stop by our studios and say "Hi". Trust me when I tell you we like being found. It means we get to know our customers.

Anything Else I Can Do To Help My Skin?

In addition to the type of skin care you're using, how you're using it may make a difference. Bathing: No long hot baths or showers. I know how they feel, soothing the aches and cares of the day away. However, the hot water will also strip away your skin's oil. So don't make it a habit. Say once a week take that long hot soak. The rest of the time, just normal warm water. A good, gentle, natural bar or liquid soap or natural based body wash.

Twice a week gently exfoliate your skin. Operative word: Gently. You're not scrubbing a floor. In your shower or bath, wash first, then use a creamy sugar scrub, a loofah, a scrub mitt or even your wash cloth to help remove the old tired skin. Start at your neck and work down, in sections. Left arm, right arm. Chest, tummy. Back and butt. Then each leg. (Feet should be done while sitting down and are another post for another day.) After exfoliating, rinse off and then gently towel yourself dry, but don't dry yourself totally off. You want your skin slightly damp. Take your favorite natural lotion, cream or body butter and section at a time, rub in a gen



erous amount.

Sun: Stop with the constant tanning, whether natural or salon, and be on guard to avoid sunburns. A warm glow from being out is nice and natural Vit. D from the sun is needed by everybody. However, even 1 sunburn a year will cause irreparable damage your skin, dry it out, wrinkle, spot and age it and all the exfoliators, moisturizers, butters in the world will not repair it.

By the way, diet can affect your skin. A bad diet, eating unhealthy foods, over processed foods and diets lacking fresh fruits, vegetables and proteins that provide essential amino and fatty acids can also give you dry, itchy skin. And even more importantly, certain health issues can present themselves with skin symptoms. If you think your skin issues might be health related, or already have health issues and are now having skin problems, please go see your health care professionals as soon as possible.

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This entry was posted in Bath and Body on February 20, 2012 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2012/02/20/my-skin-is-so-dry-and-itchy-its-driving-me-crazy-pt-2/>] by Sandra.

☺



Perched On The Rim Of Her Soap Pot

A Handmade Soap And Natural Cosmetic Formulator Who Ponders, Muses And Is Sometimes Amused.

My Skin Is So Dry And Itchy, It's Driving Me Crazy!

Does that sound familiar to you? Something you say about 20-30 minutes after your bath or shower? And then about 2 hrs later, after you've already slathered yourself with the big box or discount body butter or lotion, you're still saying it?

My Skin Is So Dry And Itchy, It's Driving Me Crazy! That's the plea I got the other day when I ran into a customer I hadn't seen in several months. She apologized to me for not having stopped by the market and getting soap from me in a long while, explaining she had been laid off since September. I totally understood – been there, done that. She said her skin was always feeling tight and flaky the last few months and she was going through jars of body butters like crazy, but they really weren't helping. I asked her what she'd been using, since she hadn't been purchased soap or any of my other products in a while. She gave me the names. Oy! They were mass produced name brand beauty bars -some couldn't even legally be called soap. Most were made everywhere but the USA. The supposed to be oh-so-gentle-and-moisturizing bars, usually selling for about \$5.00 to \$6.00 for a 3 -6 bar pack depending on the grocery store, the big box store or the local discount semi-dollar store you're at. Also in the shower, a bottle of name brand body wash that sells for around \$3.50 - \$4.00 for 8-10 oz.. And the cherry on top: A semi-name brand Body Butter going for \$5.50 or so for 6-8oz. While I would just love to add a picture of the brand labels, I don't wish to tangle with the brand owners. They might get a bit pissy when called out about their product's ingredients.

Cosmetic ingredients are to be listed in decending order -highest to lowest. In cosmetic formulating, the first 3 -5 ingredients are what make up the bulk, a good 65-90%, of your formula. It depends on what's being made as to how that final number plays out. At the bottom of a formula, Fragrance shouldn't really be more than 3%, Preservatives are usually .50-1.50% tops and color comes in at usually less than .50% (other than for makeup). The bar soaps were sodium tallowate and sodium lardate based (which is a legal way to say a basic tallow or lard soap mixture), probably less than half since they were calling themselves a bath bar, mixed with synthetic detergents of Sodium Laurel Sulfate or Sodium Laureth Sulfate. Mixed in with that was Petrolatum (cosmetic grade petroleum jelly, a cheap synthetic moisturizer), a token amount of glycerin and some bar hardeners and stabilizers (which is

why some bars can sit in water and almost **never** melt, so imagine what that does to your skin). Harsh detergents, hardeners and ingredient stabilizers were stripping and hardening her skin.

The body wash's first 5 ingredients were Water, Sodium Laureth Sulfate, Cocamidopropyl Betaine, Cocamide MEA, Fragrance. After water, you have a synthetic detergent, a synthetic surfactant, a viscosity builder and foam stabilizer and then fragrance. Okay then. A dilutant to mix with the detergent/surfactant blend and a thickener and stabilizer, with a high amount of fragrance to round it out. Oh, they tossed the word "*Natural*" in their label name too, yet the natural ingredients in it are so far down the list, I bet they don't make up more than 5% total of the formula. So in a nut shell, synthetic detergents, foam builders and artificial stabilizers are cleaning her skin. Make that stripping her skin.

These ingredients all have their uses, but for many people, skin care isn't and shouldn't be one of them.

The body butter. Called itself a Shea Body Butter. Made a BIG to do on the label about it being certified organic shea butter too. Remember what I said about the first 3-5 ingredients? Well the first 5 ingredients here are Water, Cyclopentasiloxane, Cyclohexasiloxane, Glycerin, Shea Butter. So we have a dilutant, 2 silicon lubricants/slip agents (gives the "glide" factor), a humectant (if used correctly, pulls moisture out the air into your skin) then the shea butter. After that we have the another natural oil, a 4 part emulsifier blend, 2 token natural extracts, a thickener, a stabilizer, the fragrance, the preservatives, a chelator and coloring. Well that means the natural oils and butter, which are really what helps keep your skin moisturized, supple and soft are only going to be about 10% tops of the formula. In a nut-shell, everything she was using was predominantly synthetic. And while there are some very good and effective synthetics out there for skin care, none of these, in the manner and amounts used, are them.

It was no wonder she and others have skin problems. Every item she was using was loaded with a high amount of synthetics and/or detergents that were just not doing her skin any good. It's my job to know what cosmetic ingredients are, their origin and how to use them. I'm a Soap Maker and a Natural/Natural Based Cosmetic Formulator. However, I am not a "All Naturals are GOOD and Synthetics are BAD, NASTY AND EVIL" type of formulator. Synthetics and detergents have many great and good uses, even in skin care. But if your skin is giving you fits when using them, maybe it's time to go back to what you were using and didn't cause you all the grief you're now having.

My next post will be what one can do about dry itchy skin and why discount, massed produced synthetic soaps and skin care are probably harming, not helping your skin.

Share this:



This entry was posted in Skin Care on February 15, 2012 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2012/02/15/my-skin-is-so-dry-and-itchy-its-driving-me-crazy/>] by Sandra.

Toxic Baby Alert!

I've been swamped with catching up, making and packaging products to get ready for the coming-up-fast Fall Festival Craft Shows Season and the coming-in-faster-than-anticipated Holiday Open Housees and Gift Season. And someday, my health refuses to cooperate with me and my to-do list. I've even had to take a couple of weeks off from my Farmers Markets. Not wanting to leave anyone hanging though, I've reached out to esteemed industry persons get help to further inform and educate my readers on the threats and perils facing the Handcrafted/Handmade Cosmetics Industry. We are under threat from spurious over regulation and reporting that will do absolutely nothing to make cosmetics safer -Cosmetics, which by the way have a near perfect safety record. We are under attack from reckless scare mongers with hidden agendas who use junk science, no science and outright fear mongering to help draft badly written proposed legislations. The latest threat is known as The Safe Cosmetics Acts of 2010, HR 5786.

I give you today's guest repost from Robert Tisserand, an internationally recognised pioneer in essential oils and aromatherapy since the late 1960's. His wisdom and sacastic wit so accurately hits many nails dead on. There will be more from him, I promise. And how cool is this: When I started my blog a year and a half ago, I named one of my catagories -for my sarcstic side- "I'm Just Saying..." When Mr. Tisserand started his blog last January, guess what he named it? I knew instantly why and what he meant.

This article post is reprinted with the kind permission of Robert Tisserand 2010.

Toxic Baby Alert!

Concern: Inhalation of toxic gases

Target of alert: Pregnant mothers

Introduction

One of the greatest health threats to an unborn child may come from a totally unexpected source. A CFSC (Campaign for Scaring Consumers) directive is currently being formulated to advise pregnant women not to change the diapers of their babies, or even be in the same room when a baby discharges body wastes.

After an extensive literature review, the CFSC is advising that there is a high risk of fetal toxicity following the mother's inhalation of the chemicals occurring in feces and gastrointestinal tract gases, since these contain



significant quantities of hydrogen sulfide, carbon dioxide, methane and ammonia. Once in the bloodstream, these gases pass with ease from the maternal blood circulation to that of the fetus. Their adverse effects have been documented as follows:

Hydrogen sulfide

An insidious, unforgiving and highly toxic gas that is heavier than air. At low concentrations it smells like rotten eggs, but at higher concentrations it deadens the sense of smell so that no odor can be detected, and it may cause dizziness, unconsciousness and death. It is both an irritant and asphyxiant. Locally, it irritates the mucous membranes of the eyes and respiratory tract.

Systemically, it affects the central nervous system and may inhibit the brain's respiratory center, which is generally fatal. There is little experimental or human health data on long-term exposure to low concentrations of hydrogen sulfide (Beauchamp et al 1984). All reported human cases of acute hydrogen sulfide poisoning have arisen from inhalation exposure (Smith & Gosselin 1979).

Carbon dioxide

A completely odorless and tasteless (and therefore even more insidious) gas that is heavier than air. It displaces the oxygen supply in the bloodstream, and can thus cause unconsciousness and death.

Methane

A capricious, unpopular and highly-strung gas that can create an explosive atmosphere. It also displaces oxygen.

Ammonia

A pernicious and unashamedly aggressive gas that is lighter than air. It has a pungent smell that is toxic in very high concentrations (Appelman et al 1982) and can irritate the eyes and respiratory tract (Petrova et al 2008). Ammonia also displaces oxygen in the bloodstream.

Toxic synergy

A combination of hydrogen sulfide and carbon dioxide (neurotic, bordering on psychopathic...) has been known to cause death from asphyxiation. Chronic exposure is associated with increased neurotoxicity and respiratory disease (Hansell & Oppenheimer 2004).

Discussion

Gases like hydrogen sulfide, carbon dioxide and methane are made by the breaking down of undigested food



in the large intestine. Thus created in the deepest confines of the digestive tubery, these gases have to escape somehow. Most people release 1 to 3 pints a day, in an average of 14 "episodes". Between 30% and 62% of healthy people produce methane. Most foods that contain carbohydrates (starches and sugars) can cause gas (Shahakian et al 2010). Feeding a baby with any form of milk is unwise, since it contains sugars, and is therefore likely to cause the baby to produce gases that may affect its unborn sibling.

Conclusion

The CFSCs expert advisers are acutely concerned over this problem, and urgently invite your comments before formulating appropriate legislation. In the meantime, pregnant mothers are advised to avoid exercise, naked flames and carbohydrate-containing foods, and/or to live apart from babies, young children or, as a precautionary measure, anyone else at all. Further information can be found in the CFSC's Fetal Advisory Regulation Team Fatal Feco-Fetal Effluent Affliction Report (FARTFFFEAR).

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Post-script

Some possibly tasteless light relief in the midst of heavy wrangling about the safety or otherwise of cosmetics (see my previous blog). Let me add that I am very concerned to hear that all kinds of nasty toxic chemicals have been found in the cord blood of babies by the Environmental Working Group. Let me also add that, with the exception of lead (naturally present in the iron oxides used to make lipstick red) and synthetic musk compounds, none of the 15 chemicals listed by the EWG is likely to be either found in or derived from cosmetics.

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This entry was posted in I'm Just Saying... on September 6, 2010 [http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2010/09/06/toxic-baby-alert/] by Sandra.

Totally Not Soap & Cosmetics Related

OMG! This is one of the funniest facebook themed send ups I've ever seen.

[OMG WWII on FACEBOOK !](#)

As I told others, it's pretty dead on, in a *warped*, social networking kind of way. This is some funny stuff. And lord knows we've all needed some humor these few months.

Enjoy

Share this:



This entry was posted in I'm Just Saying... on August 20, 2010 [http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2010/08/20/totally-not-soap-cosmetics-related/] by .

What's The Real Agenda And Who Benefits From It? Pt 2

OR Who are the Keyser Sözes of The Safe Cosmetics Act of 2010?

“...The EFFECT of this legislation is not to put you out of business. The PURPOSE of this legislation is to put you out of business.”

I was floored by this. I was just stunned. I had not seen it that way. And it made me jam on my brakes to a screeching, treadmarks of burned rubber halt. And I thought about what my BFF said. And I thought some



more. I've been thinking about what they said and this fra'k'd up from the floor, wrong on so many levels piece of potential legislation for about 2 weeks now. It made me ask myself "Okay, who will benefit from this? Who are the usual suspects?" That thought then flashed in my mind one of my favorite movies: [The Usual Suspects](#) . If you've seen the movie, you know what I'm talking about. If you haven't seen it or have forgotten it's plot (it came out in 1995), it's about a criminal getting revenge while playing a game of cat and mouse and hiding in plain sight. And the scene that literally flashed in my mind was when Kevin Spacey's character Verbal Kint talks about his boss, Keyser Söze.

"...Nobody ever believed he was real. Nobody ever knew him or saw him or anybody who ever worked directly for him. But to hear Kobayashi tell it, anybody could have worked for Söze. You never knew. That was his power. The greatest trick the Devil ever pulled was convincing the world he didn't exist".

To truly understand where I'm coming from, you really should see that whole [scene](#). And then the [ending](#) scene of the movie. (I've linked, not embedded, because the scenes goes into some NC17 violence and might make some uncomfortable. You've been warned). The first scene describes how Keyser Söze came to be who he is. And the second, how he disappears, with most none the wiser. While the story's characters are gangsters, thugs, bad cops and murderers, the idea is the same. These scenes are telling and perfectly describe what I think is going on with this potential legislation. Watching them again and thinking about what my BFF said made me realize there is DEFINITELY something else going on behind the scenes of this proposed legislation. I think it's a plan to go out, reek havoc, decimate and destroy the competition. Like Keyser Söze. Create shields and walls and blinds around you and always have them wondering if you actually do exist. Make them think it someone or something else. Never deny, never admit, stay off the main grid, don't protest too much, but cower enough to make them think you're scared too. Get others -others who may not even know you or your agenda exist- to do your dirty work.

So who are the usual suspects? I started to think about all the previously mentioned infighting, bi#ching, moaning and lawsuits that has been going on back and forth over the last 10 years between the USDA Certified Organic Cosmetics players, the Natural Cosmetics and Natural Based Cosmetics players (there's a difference) and also the fakers who put the word natural or organic on every label they possibly can with almost nothing "natural" in it. Then I added in a few of the small, medium and larger sized Natural/Natural Based players who have been bought out or by the Big Time Multi-national players and said same players who are now starting to formulate more natural based products on their own. Then I factored in who in each group is really buddy buddy and are big supporters and contributors to The Environmental Working Group (EWG) and The Campaign for Safe Cosmetics (CFSC) (web links purposely not included for these thugs). That was a hard one as the EWG [money trail](#) is slim pickings. I've been saying for 5 years "follow the money".

Then I factored in the EU companies who fit into all my listed categories as SCA 2010, in it's current draft legally also affects them with the same requirements. Then I added the importers from the rest of the world, ditto the same requirements. These last players, sadly also include the countries who have histories of having confiscated products, knock off/counterfeited products and deadly tainted products that run the gamut from prescription drugs, OTC drugs, cosmetics, food and even drywall. It gave me a huge headache. Thank



fully, mainstream media reports on many of these things. And the Cosmetics Industry trade papers are a wonderful source of all cosmetic information, good, bad and ugly. Both the North American and EU versions also have sections which are devoted to developing markets in what's called BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India And China). The FTC and FDA notifications are also quite a read some days. Yes, the internet is my friend.

Next I started thinking about just who all would benefit from the extreme diminishment of the Handcrafted Cosmetics Industry. Actually, who all would benefit the most from it's almost complete demise? First, let's list who WONT benefit from SCA 2010:

Besides the US Handcrafters, not my Canadian or other foreign Handcrafter Brethren who have US sales. They're not selling hundreds or thousand of bars or jars at a pop to US importers/distributors. (And if they have hundreds of stores world wide, they're not handcrafters, I don't care what they say. You know who I'm talking about, rhymes with slush. And while they'd have to follow the law too, they can afford to hire lots of bodies to keep up with this proposed idiocy). The average foreign Handcrafters are more or less in the same leaky and listing boat as US Handcrafters right now.

So just who would benefit from SCA 2010?

Let's start with foreign cosmetic manufacturers that already are or will be selling hundreds or thousands of bars or jars at a pop to US importers and distributors. Then there's that coming tidal wave of cheap, badly formulated, made with illegal ingredients crap that will come pouring in even more from Mexico, Asia, Africa and the middle east. THOSE will be the ones we have to worry about. The FDA will not be able to keep up with the SCA 2010 paper and computer generated work to accurately keep track of the importers and their ingredients declarations. How will they be able to keep track of all the foreign importers? Will they create a monthly or quarterly "Allowed" list? And if they do, who will enforce this list and more importantly where and how will it be enforced? Yep, another blog post for another day. So who enforces SCA 2010 on the import side? The FDA is stretched extremely thin and needs to step up it's game and keep track of, keep ahead of and catch the tainted food and drugs, both domestic and imported. And with regard to the imports, by it's [own admission](#) the FDA cannot and will never have enough people to inspect every shipment at every port of entry, land, air or sea. From their lips to God's ear. So I'm hazarding a guess the FDA will probably give the importers more leeway than they'll give the US cosmetic companies. That also includes Handcrafters. I also think the FDA will just "trust" the importers to properly, promptly and accurately fill out the required forms and declarations on ingredients. Yeah, okay, *riiiiight*.

Can we say [heparin](#), [wheat gluten](#) and [toothpaste](#)? Oh my! 3 products that go INTO your body. And that's just 3 bad imports that we know about. Or were told about. And on the US side don't get me started on the uber scary, mind boggling peanut products [recall](#). The FDA can't keep up and no matter how much money is tossed at it, the world is now a fast moving, *gotta get it now* importing and exporting global economy and there aren't enough and never will be enough Inspectors, Agents or lab techs to check the imported and domestic food and drugs quickly. Operative word there is *quickly*. Now there are those who want to add cosmetics to an already over loaded ship? The Cosmetic Industry is not making products to harm their cus-



tomers! Oh, and we all know any “fees” collected from cosmetic companies will be spread out amongst the whole agency, not just on the cosmetics arm.

So who on the US side would benefit from SCA 2010, our demise and taking away the customer’s right of product choice?

Now before I continue, I must disclose that while I applaud many of the goals set by the below listed NGOs (non governmental organizations) regarding “Naturals” and “Organic” Certification, I am also suspect of these same organizations. Why? Sigh. It’s just a *feeling* I have:

1. Most of the certification standards were set by a compilation of well known cosmetic companies that got together to make the standards and it’s in essence having your competition “okay” you.
2. The cost of certifying is very high per sku (stock keeping unit). A company has to, no needs to have a certain level of income in order to afford them. So if you don’t qualify on the money end, you aren’t big or selling enough yet and won’t be able to join/get certified if you are not able to afford their fees. You usually have to be seriously cranking out lots of product and selling them or have investors or some type of financing sitting in the bank to afford the cost of the certifications. So once again, as for the certification, most indies, micros and small cosmetics companies don’t even think about putting their horse in that race. But looking at most of the founding members of these certification orgs. and even their current members companies, I think this list may be a very telling feature.
3. I truly believe who your parent company is (if there is one) should be factored in before getting a Natural or Certified Organic certification.

So, in order of vocalization and media attention regarding cosmetic “Natural” or “Organic” standards, whom all we haven’t heard from regarding the SCA 2010?

Leadership from these Certifying Agencies:

[The Natural Products Association](#)

While I did read in a trade news [article](#) a quote from one of their members on how they thought SCA 2010 was throwing the baby out with the bathwater, as of this posting I have not found any official statement anywhere on the NPA’s official site where they say either yea or nay on the proposed SCA 2010.

[The Oasis Standard](#)

As of this post I have not found any official statement anywhere on their website as to a yea or nea on SCA 2010.



[NSF International](#) , The Public Health and Safety Company

While they are truly a neutral certification organization, since they have set standards for certification, they should state their position. As of this post I have not found any official statement anywhere on their website as to a yea or nea on SCA 2010.

And many of their members and the certified companies. Most of whom started out just like me. As Handcrafted Soap and Cosmetics Makers. Many of these certified companies will go bye-bye if SCA 2010 passes. They will have even [heavier](#) mountains of regulations, requirements and information gathering and submitting to carry than the load they already are.

Now if I am wrong about any of them, someone please politely (*and if it's not polite it won't be published and the addy will be banned- I don't tolerate trolls!*) correct me and point me to the links were they have publicly posted their official views. I would like to be wrong. I really, really would.

So who else would benefit from our demise and the taking away the customer's right of buying choice?

Oh yes, last but not least, some private companies who have the USDA "Certified Organic" seal (who shall remain nameless as they have deeper pockets than me and who ironically get a bit pissy when *they* get criticized). Some whom I would call bullies. While I applaud them on reaching for and attaining what some consider the holy grail of goals, they really do need to stop being such mean, nasty, arrogant bullies in the Cosmetic Industry. Thinking of one in particular, I think their daddy would roll in his grave if he knew how his heirs were behaving. He built his company with a quality product and by love of mankind, not by bullying. To them and others I say yes, some companies are not to **your** standards or even mine, and others **do** green-wash and "natural" the hell out of their products without it being in any significant quantities or any at all. But ultimately, the consumer will decide their fates. The petty mean spirited actions, holier-than-thou attitudes, the constant bully pulpits and continual lawsuits do not endear any of you to the industry as a whole and it might actually be causing you to lose current and potential customers. I know, because they are buying from Handcrafters.

For every bar of soap, jar of body scrub, tube of foot balm or bottle of lotion I'm selling, that means someone **IS NOT BUYING YOURS** . Multiply that the thousands of micro and small Handcrafted Soap and Cosmetic Makers and companies in the US. See us at the Farmers Markets, the local Fairs and Festivals. Their own retail stores, their ability to get into Natural Food stores large and small in their region. Look us up on [esty](#), [artfire](#) , [indiepublic](#) and all the other handcrafted marketplaces on the web. Look us up on our industry networks. [The Handcrafted SoapMakers Guild](#) has 4631 as of this post. [The IndieBeauty Network](#) has 6000+ members. We created our niche. We've created [our jobs](#) . We make what the public wants to buy, and we make it honestly and ethically. Are we cutting into your profits? Maybe. Are we sorry if we are? **NO**. There are thousands of Handcrafted Cosmetic Manufacturers, hundreds of their Suppliers and millions of a buying public. 308 million in the USA -and rising. 7 billion people on the planet -and rising. No few entities can sell to them all, no matter how hard they try. Though I guess a few of you can give it a really good try if you get ri



of most of the small, localvore and internet competition.

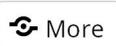
Well, I've listed all the players and I can't pierce the veil. It's really thick and I think the answer is in this list of suspects. It's in there, *somewhere*. But I haven't found it...yet. But perhaps with combined efforts my fellow Handcrafters, our suppliers and industry advocates can, armed with the knowledge that our potential demise is not an **incidental** or **accidental** casualty of war. It is a deliberate attack on our segment of the industry.

"...The EFFECT of this legislation is not to put you out of business. The PURPOSE of this legislation is to put you out of business."

So all this really just boils down to just one question:

Who all is the Keyser Söze of The Safe Cosmetics Act 2010?

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This entry was posted in I'm Just Saying..., Regulatory on August 11, 2010 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2010/08/11/whats-the-real-agenda-and-who-benefits-from-it-pt-2/>] by Sandra.

☺



Perched On The Rim Of Her Soap Pot

A Handmade Soap And Natural Cosmetic Formulator Who Ponders, Muses And Is Sometimes Amused.

What's The Real Agenda And Who Benefits From It? Pt 1

In the midst of this urgent issue of knocking back the Safe Cosmetics Act of 2010 (for brevity, I'll just refer to it as the SCA 2010), I've found that many don't realize this idiocy will not do one thing to make cosmetics "safer" for consumers. The Cosmetic Industry is not making products to harm their customers. Any who did that would go broke in under a year. What the SCA seems to be attempting is to be a combined American form or mirror of the EU's [Cosmetic Directive](#) and [REACH](#) (Registration, Evaluation, Authorization and Restriction of Chemical substances). Try reading those and keep your head from hurting. We should not subscribe to the EU governmental body's view of "[The Precautionary Principle](#)" regarding cosmetics. These materials have been tested. So much so that there is another whole social justice arm demanding that the raw materials and the finished cosmetics **stop** being tested on animals. So either they are tested or they aren't tested. Will the various protesting, ranting and chanting masses *please* make up your minds? And how many even know the EU banned animal testing?

So now the EU has the Precautionary principle. And there are those who want to shove that down America's throat. And to repeat myself, the US Cosmetic Industry is not making products to harm their customers. The EU governance, with it's massive complexity of many different nations with many different cultures and languages has nightmareish mazes of bureaucratic legislations, which in turn have severely stifled small business creation and much innovation in many industries and have nanny stated out much original thought and creativity. Why bother to create when it's already legislatively set, cut and dry as to what you need, don't need, can have or even told what you want, whether you want it or not. That may be a bit harsh, but it's how I and others view it. Americans don't want EU style laws and regulations. We want American inovations. We need to get back to that and fast. But I digress.

The SCA 2010 was written with what seems to be some major help from The Campaign for Safe Cosmetics (CFSC), a quasi-to-bad-to-non-science backed, vocal, guerilla, scare tactic arm of The Environmental Working Group (EWG) (web links purposely not included for these thugs). The EWG/CFSC sponsors and their lobbyists claim it will make cosmetics "safer". What many of them refuse to acknowledge or maybe don't want to admit and many others don't seem to realize is that it's the small companies and micro indie Handcrafted Soap & Cosmetic Makers and our suppliers -we who may be legislated out of exsistance- are ALREADY making safe cosmetics. We and our suppliers were always at the forefront. The larger natural and organic concerns

around now all started back in the day then just like the current crop of Handcrafters are doing now. We already use natural oils, natural based emulsifiers and thickeners, the highest quality natural fragrances -and synthetics fragrances too as *customers want what they want*- and mild but effective preservatives. We are small, yet that smallness means we can and do pay attention to the tiniest details.

We can customize a product on short notice for our customers. I did so just the other day. A regular soap buyer needed something, a special request. She told me her skin issues and asked if I would do a special request. Oh, I only had 5 days notice, but hey, I'm an indie, I knew what I had on hand, what I could do and knew that I could do it. **It's. What. I. Do.** I formulated, blended, bottled and delivered. She's happy, I was happy. I've got a happy customer who also knows she's valued.

But all that is in jeopardy with the SCA 2010. If the SCA 2010 passes, I don't know if I'd be able to formulate a special lotion for her or anything else for anyone else at the drop of a hat what with **just 1** of the the many proposed new regulations I'd have to add into the mix: The new ingredients/formula change reporting I'd have to do every time I make a change for a special request. Let me elaborate: That's new ingredients reporting **on top** of the already **legally required labeling** I already happily do (I'm proud of what I make). Per FDA regs, I already list my ingredients in INCI format in descending order of predominance. And I do it in English **AND** Latin as I also have EU and Canada customers. I have software that can dupe my labels and I fill in the spots that needs changing, click and print and stick it on the container. I keep batch records of my products and batch records of every special request I make. What I and most other Handcrafted Cosmetics Makers do not have are the resources to hire 1, 2 or 3 bodies to just fill out paperwork every damn day and send it into the proposed FDA database (and/or **any other** state's or local governments too) every time we make something special for a customer, like even a lip balm in a special request flavor. I have core products and don't deviate too much, other than fragrances. But for my regulars I do special requests quite often. As do most Handcrafters. **It's. What. We. Do.**

We don't have cookie cutter, one size fits all formulas. We innovate, we create, we improve -constantly- on the main stream retail and natural cosmetic products. It's why I and many, if not most of us, started doing this. We or our families needed something better than what was out there, even from the natural and organic products. They are almost all the same with very few alterations for the various needs. Their concerns are almost the same as the main stream retail cosmetics: mainly on the sales bottom line: get it quickly made, get it in the most stores coast to coast and get it sold. Most Handcrafters do not churn it out that way. We're making it BY HAND. We have comparable equipment for the small scale, we can and do produce. But we try not to spread ourselves too thin so that the production, quality and price suffer. We don't waste time or energy trying to compete with the known brands. We're not publicly bi#ching, fighting, pissing and moaning about or suing other quasi-naturals, natural or organic cosmetic companies (there's been a lot of that in the last few years). Most of us don't want to put our horse in that race.

And all of that leads me to this: The other day I had a brief conversation with my BFF, someone very close to me, someone who's opinion I highly respect and value. I know they won't bull\$hit me. They also don't want me to fail and when things become a rough ride -to use another horse metaphor- if I fall off the horse, they



give me advise and thoroughly expect me to pick myself up and climb back on. My BFF also has an extensive professional work experience as a practising attorney in business, employment, financial and federal governmental law. They also have a unique yet similar to my way of looking at things to clear the fog and see under the surface. I call it "A view from the street". Our views are not always a completely jaded view of things when there is adversity on the horizon, like when someone gets busted for really breaking bad or just an out right showing of utter, complete stupidity. But when *whatever* comes to light, gets exposed and it all starts hitting the fan, we are usually not surprised. What does surprise us is when we are wrong. Which I'm sad to say, isn't very often.

That said, my BFF said something extremely telling to me when I was having a mini rant on how the effects of the SCA 2010 requirements might put me and the rest of the handcrafted cosmetics industry out of business. They said:

Wait for it...

"...your letter says it all, but I think you have to really get a handle on what is behind this. The EFFECT of this legislation is not to put you out of business. The PURPOSE of this legislation is to put you out of business. See the difference? As an independent local producer, you have control over a business, earning power and some independence, and the ability to hide income. Its not a business that requires huge start up costs or a PhD in some area or anything of a substantial investment, and by that I mean over one million. See what I'm talking about? And you are 1000 % correct, about the imports. The Chinese are not going to test anything, but their s#it will be in the stores, killing us all."

I'm going to let you all think about this for a bit and then I'll continue this either later today or tomorrow. But read this again, fellow micro and small indie Handcrafted Soap & Cosmetic Makers, Suppliers, Business Advocates and our wonderful and supportive customers:

"...The EFFECT of this legislation is not to put you out of business. The PURPOSE of this legislation is to put you out of business."

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This entry was posted in Regulatory on August 10, 2010 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2010/08/10/whats-the-real-agenda-and-who-benefits-from-it-pt-1/>] by Sandra.



No, I can't. I don't think anyone can.

Not even the BIG PLAYERS could keep up with this chaotic and idiotic Savings Clause.

Gawd, I admire Donna Maria. Attorney, Wife, Mother, Small Business [Advisor](#) and [Advocate](#) and Former Soap and Cosmetic Maker. Bonus Points for being a concise, to the point rebuttal expert.

I'll let her tell it to you:

While you're watching this, I'm off to go look up ALL of the who's who in the Legislative Land of MO and while I'm at it, the folks who run AgMissouri and the Missouri Farmers Market Bureau.

Sandra

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This entry was posted in Pet Peeves, Regulatory on August 5, 2010 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2010/08/05/no-i-cant-i-dont-think-anyone-can/>] by Sandra.

A Great Critique On the Infantile "The Story of Cos-



metics”

Those who know me know I have issues with Google and their lack of respect for privacy regarding web usage. I'm also a tad pissed they caved in to some of PandaLand's internet demands. So you know I'm totally pissed about something when I end up subscribing to *something else* that normally pisses me off in order to help out and get the word out. I broke down and subscribed to Google/YouTube so as to post this entry. And to facilitate other possible or future needs that may entail YouTube. Seems no matter the issue, if you want to be heard around the world, put a clip about it on YouTube.

Why did I break down and subscribe? Because of this:

The Campaign For Safe Cosmetics released a bs video the same day the Safe Cosmetics Act 2010 was announced. Their timing was on purpose as most in my industry know the CFSC and their parent org. The Environmental Working Group are the big pushers, sponsors and lobbyists behind this idiocy called Safe Cosmetics Act 2010.

Going around the indie, handcrafted cosmetics internets, interwebs, forums and groups is a wonderful rebuttal video of this infantile dribble put out by CFSC and Annie Lenard. The gentleman rebutting isn't a cosmetic formulator, but he is someone who is tired of small business being overregulated to death. And evidently he has done a little bit of cosmetic ingredient research or had someone sitting next to him who gave him quite a bit of information on the subject in question. He blogs for [Competitive Enterprise Institute](#).

While I have never run into any one institution, organization or ideology that fits all, most or even half of my views, thoughts and beliefs on life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, when I read someone or something that wants to or is going to bat for small business, I pay attention to it. I can sift through a lot of the flotsam and jetsam. No one anything has ever been able to speak for all. This organization is no different.

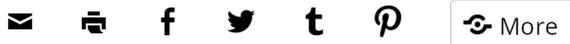


In the same vein, without going into a rant, the more I read on potential SCOTUS Judge Elena Kagan, the more uncomfortable I feel about her. I bumped into [this little titbit](#) on the same site. And many more articles on regulations and over burdensome legislation that attacks and penalizes small business for being small and having the ingenuity to exist within their niche. This country was built with and exist because small businesses. Many grow large, many grow gigantic and when they do, they should not throw their weight around and buy influence to push out small inovative businesses that may be competition to them. (That post is coming later). All businesses started with 1 or 2 small products or ideas, in someone's kitchen, gargage or basement and 1 or 2 people selling it.

Lately, my eyebrow has been staying in a permanant state of Mr .Spock.

Until next time.

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This entry was posted in Regulatory on July 29, 2010 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2010/07/29/a-great-critique-on-the-infantile-the-story-of-cosmetics/>] by Sandra.

Opposition to The Safe Cosmetics Act of 2010 (H.R. 5786)

My Gentle, Wonderful Customers and Blog Readers, I have not posted in ages- Since the Farmers Market season began. I apologize to you, but I have been extremely busy. I've had no time for blogging, just making and selling soap and the upkeep of that end of the business. It takes time to compose, write and write coherently. I didn't and still don't have the time. I refuse to post crap post, guest posts (you still have to proof, review and edit), filler posts about nothing or badly written posts just to fill some web space. But I have to take time to bring this very important issue to your attention.

In a nutshell, if you want me and other handcrafted/handmade cosmetic manufacturers to keep making our quality and good for you products, take a look at this: [Opposition to The Safe Cosmetics Act of 2010 \(H.R. 5786\)](#). If you agree with it, please sign it. Yes, these petitions do matter and help. We have defeated this issue twice before, but it has raised it's ugly, medusa like head yet again. The petition is sponsored by the head of [The Indie Beauty Network](#), an Independent Business Network I associate with. [Donna Maria](#), along with others like [The Handcrafted Soapmakers Guild](#) advocate on our be-



half . Please pass along this information and petition to anyone and everyone you know who buys handmade/handcrafted soap, bath & body and cosmetics.

<http://www.thepetitionsite.com/1/oppose-hr-5786-safe-cosmetics-act-of-2010/>

The Safe Cosmetics Act of 2010 (H.R. 5786) is more or less a repeat of the bull\$hit that Colorado tried to ram down peoples throat a few months ago and the FDA tried to ram down people and cosmetic manufacturers throats in 2008/2009. Contrary to extremely misguided belief, the Cosmetics Industry **IS** regulated. We are regulated by the FDA. There are fear mongers and misinformation specialists aplenty. And they are backing this bill. They are very vocal in all medias -print, internet and television. They are very good at lobbying. And they are very, very good at bad science. They are attempting to stifle *something*. We still don't know what all the agendas are, it's all very murky and even the money trail keeps blinking on and off the radar. But whatever the agenda is, it isn't anything for the good of the cosmetic consumer. This bill, as written is not based on credible or established scientific principles. And many parts of the proposed regulatory issues for cosmetics has would far exceed those of the other FDA regulated products: food or drugs. It's as though consumers are being told "Your pain killer may give you a heart attack, your blood thinner may be contaminated, your food might poison you, but we'll make sure your soaps, lotions and makeup is in better condition than all of those combined." I'm just saying.

What will The Safe Cosmetics Act of 2010 (H.R. 5786) do?

Before I answer that question, let me tell you what it will not do: **It will not make cosmetics safer for the consumer.**

What it will do is force me and others like me out of business. Small and micro US cosmetic manufacturers like me **ALREADY use** the safest ingredients that have **ALREADY been safety tested** by the raw material manufacturers and even distributors. We are actually a small threat to the larger concerns because we are locally made, USA manufactured; 90% of us are locally sold and we are an actual person with an actual face and name to go with it. We have true accountability. You can find us. We are you neighbors, your friends, your family members. You talk to us and we **LISTEN**. We make for you, we answer to you.

What it will do is make me spend **HOURS on paperwork and not on making good, safe products.**

What it will do is make me **spend THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS** I do not have testing for trace elements that exist **EVERYWHERE in EVERYTHING and CANNOT be avoided no matter what one does**. The only way to avoid them is to stop breathing air, drinking water and eating food. In other words, stop



being alive!

What it will do is have me create labels for my products that are going to be **longer than a standard piece of notebook paper**. Cosmetic manufacturers already have to disclose more on our labels than what food manufacturers have to. Yes, that's right, what you eat has **LESS** ingredient disclosure. Go figure.

What it will do is put me and almost all others like me -small, micro and independent cosmetic manufacturers- **OUT OF BUSINESS**. By the way, that means all the small or micro independent brands you like that are **made here in the USA**. It means your locally made mineral makeup will no longer be available. It means your handmade/handcrafted soap and bath & body care will no longer be available- including those small indie brands that are starting becoming well known. Including those indie brands you're buying at your local Gift Stores, the etsy and artfire shops, the local Soap and Candle shop, your Natural Foods Stores. Even those sold at your local Whole Foods Stores- they carry many local and regional brands that meet their ingredient criteria and specifications. It also means your cosmetologists, estheticians, hairdressers and the day spas you love so much will only be able to buy and use for you and can only sell to you what's being cranked out by the big players. It also means **MORE imports** of inferior and unchecked products because sadly, the FDA will never have the resources or means to test the imports- regardless of how much money is thrown at them. They don't have the resources and never will- they can't keep the food imports and drug imports in check. For every 1 bad imported cosmetic brand they *might* catch, 25 most likely get through. Just look at the drug and food recalls and illnesses in the last 3 years alone. The US cosmetics industry has a long history of safety.

What The Safe Cosmetics Act of 2010 (H.R. 5786) will do is take away your right of choice! It means you will only have the choice of the mainstream large and mega large brands that use mainly synthetics and the large well known "natural" brands, some of who are actually owned by the aforementioned mainstream companies. If it's sold in your big box retailer or chain grocery store, if you can find it **EVERYWHERE**, in every city and town, rural and urban, in every mall's Bath & Body boutique, every natural food store and everyday drug store, **THOSE** will be your only choice. The big guys. They can afford to do what is required on this bill as written. They can afford to hire staff to just sit and fill out paper forms and computer forms on- line and research the newest legislative/FDA *whatever* that gets tossed on another list of more things to do or be aware of. They can afford to hire staff -more faceless people- to do what these burdensome new regulations will require, as written.

There was a reason **you chose** to buy from handmade/handcrafted cosmetics manufacturers. There is a reason people are buying, using and flocking in droves to small, handcrafted artisanal soap and cosmetic manufacturers. The reason is because of what we stand for: Safe and good products, open about our businesses, we are a locally manufactured product and we are an actual person with an actual face and name to go with it. We don't whitewash, green wash or hogwash our customers. Seeing us face to face guarantees that.



My sincerest thanks for your advocacy and continued business support,

Sandra

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This entry was posted in Pet Peeves, Regulatory on July 28, 2010 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2010/07/28/opposition-to-the-safe-cosmetics-act-of-2010-h-r-5786/>] by Sandra.

☺



Perched On The Rim Of Her Soap Pot

A Handmade Soap And Natural Cosmetic Formulator Who Ponders, Muses And Is Sometimes Amused.

My Skin Is So Dry And Itchy, It's Driving Me Crazy!

Does that sound familiar to you? Something you say about 20-30 minutes after your bath or shower? And then about 2 hrs later, after you've already slathered yourself with the big box or discount body butter or lotion, you're still saying it?

My Skin Is So Dry And Itchy, It's Driving Me Crazy! That's the plea I got the other day when I ran into a customer I hadn't seen in several months. She apologized to me for not having stopped by the market and getting soap from me in a long while, explaining she had been laid off since September. I totally understood – been there, done that. She said her skin was always feeling tight and flaky the last few months and she was going through jars of body butters like crazy, but they really weren't helping. I asked her what she'd been using, since she hadn't been purchased soap or any of my other products in a while. She gave me the names. Oy! They were mass produced name brand beauty bars -some couldn't even legally be called soap. Most were made everywhere but the USA. The supposed to be oh-so-gentle-and-moisturizing bars, usually selling for about \$5.00 to \$6.00 for a 3 -6 bar pack depending on the grocery store, the big box store or the local discount semi-dollar store you're at. Also in the shower, a bottle of name brand body wash that sells for around \$3.50 - \$4.00 for 8-10 oz.. And the cherry on top: A semi-name brand Body Butter going for \$5.50 or so for 6-8oz. While I would just love to add a picture of the brand labels, I don't wish to tangle with the brand owners. They might get a bit pissy when called out about their product's ingredients.

Cosmetic ingredients are to be listed in decending order -highest to lowest. In cosmetic formulating, the first 3 -5 ingredients are what make up the bulk, a good 65-90%, of your formula. It depends on what's being made as to how that final number plays out. At the bottom of a formula, Fragrance shouldn't really be more than 3%, Preservatives are usually .50-1.50% tops and color comes in at usually less than .50% (other than for makeup). The bar soaps were sodium tallowate and sodium lardate based (which is a legal way to say a basic tallow or lard soap mixture), probably less than half since they were calling themselves a bath bar, mixed with synthetic detergents of Sodium Laurel Sulfate or Sodium Laureth Sulfate. Mixed in with that was Petrolatum (cosmetic grade petroleum jelly, a cheap synthetic moisturizer), a token amount of glycerin and some bar hardeners and stabilizers (which is

why some bars can sit in water and almost **never** melt, so imagine what that does to your skin). Harsh detergents, hardeners and ingredient stabilizers were stripping and hardening her skin.

The body wash's first 5 ingredients were Water, Sodium Laureth Sulfate, Cocamidopropyl Betaine, Cocamide MEA, Fragrance. After water, you have a synthetic detergent, a synthetic surfactant, a viscosity builder and foam stabilizer and then fragrance. Okay then. A dilutant to mix with the detergent/surfactant blend and a thickener and stabilizer, with a high amount of fragrance to round it out. Oh, they tossed the word "*Natural*" in their label name too, yet the natural ingredients in it are so far down the list, I bet they don't make up more than 5% total of the formula. So in a nut shell, synthetic detergents, foam builders and artificial stabilizers are cleaning her skin. Make that stripping her skin.

These ingredients all have their uses, but for many people, skin care isn't and shouldn't be one of them.

The body butter. Called itself a Shea Body Butter. Made a BIG to do on the label about it being certified organic shea butter too. Remember what I said about the first 3-5 ingredients? Well the first 5 ingredients here are Water, Cyclopentasiloxane, Cyclohexasiloxane, Glycerin, Shea Butter. So we have a dilutant, 2 silicon lubricants/slip agents (gives the "glide" factor), a humectant (if used correctly, pulls moisture out the air into your skin) then the shea butter. After that we have the another natural oil, a 4 part emulsifier blend, 2 token natural extracts, a thickener, a stabilizer, the fragrance, the preservatives, a chelator and coloring. Well that means the natural oils and butter, which are really what helps keep your skin moisturized, supple and soft are only going to be about 10% tops of the formula. In a nut-shell, everything she was using was predominantly synthetic. And while there are some very good and effective synthetics out there for skin care, none of these, in the manner and amounts used, are them.

It was no wonder she and others have skin problems. Every item she was using was loaded with a high amount of synthetics and/or detergents that were just not doing her skin any good. It's my job to know what cosmetic ingredients are, their origin and how to use them. I'm a Soap Maker and a Natural/Natural Based Cosmetic Formulator. However, I am not a "All Naturals are GOOD and Synthetics are BAD, NASTY AND EVIL" type of formulator. Synthetics and detergents have many great and good uses, even in skin care. But if your skin is giving you fits when using them, maybe it's time to go back to what you were using and didn't cause you all the grief you're now having.

My next post will be what one can do about dry itchy skin and why discount, massed produced synthetic soaps and skin care are probably harming, not helping your skin.

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This entry was posted in Skin Care on February 15, 2012 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2012/02/15/my-skin-is-so-dry-and-itchy-its-driving-me-crazy/>] by Sandra.

Toxic Baby Alert!

I've been swamped with catching up, making and packaging products to get ready for the coming-up-fast Fall Festival Craft Shows Season and the coming-in-faster-than-anticipated Holiday Open Housees and Gift Season. And someday, my health refuses to cooperate with me and my to-do list. I've even had to take a couple of weeks off from my Farmers Markets. Not wanting to leave anyone hanging though, I've reached out to esteemed industry persons get help to further inform and educate my readers on the threats and perils facing the Handcrafted/Handmade Cosmetics Industry. We are under threat from spurious over regulation and reporting that will do absolutely nothing to make cosmetics safer -Cosmetics, which by the way have a near perfect safety record. We are under attack from reckless scare mongers with hidden agendas who use junk science, no science and outright fear mongering to help draft badly written proposed legislations. The latest threat is known as The Safe Cosmetics Acts of 2010, HR 5786.

I give you today's guest repost from Robert Tisserand, an internationally recognised pioneer in essential oils and aromatherapy since the late 1960's. His wisdom and sacastic wit so accurately hits many nails dead on. There will be more from him, I promise. And how cool is this: When I started my blog a year and a half ago, I named one of my catagories -for my sarcstic side- "I'm Just Saying..." When Mr. Tisserand started his blog last January, guess what he named it? I knew instantly why and what he meant.

This article post is reprinted with the kind permission of Robert Tisserand 2010.

Toxic Baby Alert!

Concern: Inhalation of toxic gases

Target of alert: Pregnant mothers

Introduction

One of the greatest health threats to an unborn child may come from a totally unexpected source. A CFSC (Campaign for Scaring Consumers) directive is currently being formulated to advise pregnant women not to change the diapers of their babies, or even be in the same room when a baby discharges body wastes.

After an extensive literature review, the CFSC is advising that there is a high risk of fetal toxicity following the mother's inhalation of the chemicals occurring in feces and gastrointestinal tract gases, since these contain



significant quantities of hydrogen sulfide, carbon dioxide, methane and ammonia. Once in the bloodstream, these gases pass with ease from the maternal blood circulation to that of the fetus. Their adverse effects have been documented as follows:

Hydrogen sulfide

An insidious, unforgiving and highly toxic gas that is heavier than air. At low concentrations it smells like rotten eggs, but at higher concentrations it deadens the sense of smell so that no odor can be detected, and it may cause dizziness, unconsciousness and death. It is both an irritant and asphyxiant. Locally, it irritates the mucous membranes of the eyes and respiratory tract.

Systemically, it affects the central nervous system and may inhibit the brain's respiratory center, which is generally fatal. There is little experimental or human health data on long-term exposure to low concentrations of hydrogen sulfide (Beauchamp et al 1984). All reported human cases of acute hydrogen sulfide poisoning have arisen from inhalation exposure (Smith & Gosselin 1979).

Carbon dioxide

A completely odorless and tasteless (and therefore even more insidious) gas that is heavier than air. It displaces the oxygen supply in the bloodstream, and can thus cause unconsciousness and death.

Methane

A capricious, unpopular and highly-strung gas that can create an explosive atmosphere. It also displaces oxygen.

Ammonia

A pernicious and unashamedly aggressive gas that is lighter than air. It has a pungent smell that is toxic in very high concentrations (Appelman et al 1982) and can irritate the eyes and respiratory tract (Petrova et al 2008). Ammonia also displaces oxygen in the bloodstream.

Toxic synergy

A combination of hydrogen sulfide and carbon dioxide (neurotic, bordering on psychopathic...) has been known to cause death from asphyxiation. Chronic exposure is associated with increased neurotoxicity and respiratory disease (Hansell & Oppenheimer 2004).

Discussion

Gases like hydrogen sulfide, carbon dioxide and methane are made by the breaking down of undigested food



in the large intestine. Thus created in the deepest confines of the digestive tubery, these gases have to escape somehow. Most people release 1 to 3 pints a day, in an average of 14 "episodes". Between 30% and 62% of healthy people produce methane. Most foods that contain carbohydrates (starches and sugars) can cause gas (Shahakian et al 2010). Feeding a baby with any form of milk is unwise, since it contains sugars, and is therefore likely to cause the baby to produce gases that may affect its unborn sibling.

Conclusion

The CFSCs expert advisers are acutely concerned over this problem, and urgently invite your comments before formulating appropriate legislation. In the meantime, pregnant mothers are advised to avoid exercise, naked flames and carbohydrate-containing foods, and/or to live apart from babies, young children or, as a precautionary measure, anyone else at all. Further information can be found in the CFSC's Fetal Advisory Regulation Team Fatal Feco-Fetal Effluent Affliction Report (FARTFFFEAR).

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Post-script

Some possibly tasteless light relief in the midst of heavy wrangling about the safety or otherwise of cosmetics (see my previous blog). Let me add that I am very concerned to hear that all kinds of nasty toxic chemicals have been found in the cord blood of babies by the Environmental Working Group. Let me also add that, with the exception of lead (naturally present in the iron oxides used to make lipstick red) and synthetic musk compounds, none of the 15 chemicals listed by the EWG is likely to be either found in or derived from cosmetics.

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This entry was posted in I'm Just Saying... on September 6, 2010 [http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2010/09/06/toxic-baby-alert/] by Sandra.

Totally Not Soap & Cosmetics Related

OMG! This is one of the funniest facebook themed send ups I've ever seen.

[OMG WWII on FACEBOOK !](#)

As I told others, it's pretty dead on, in a *warped*, social networking kind of way. This is some funny stuff. And lord knows we've all needed some humor these few months.

Enjoy

Share this:



This entry was posted in I'm Just Saying... on August 20, 2010 [http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2010/08/20/totally-not-soap-cosmetics-related/] by .

What's The Real Agenda And Who Benefits From It? Pt 2

OR Who are the Keyser Sözes of The Safe Cosmetics Act of 2010?

“...The **EFFECT** of this legislation is not to put you out of business. The **PURPOSE** of this legislation is to put you out of business.”

I was floored by this. I was just stunned. I had not seen it that way. And it made me jam on my brakes to a screeching, trademarks of burned rubber halt. And I thought about what my BFF said. And I thought some



more. I've been thinking about what they said and this fra'k'd up from the floor, wrong on so many levels piece of potential legislation for about 2 weeks now. It made me ask myself "Okay, who will benefit from this? Who are the usual suspects?" That thought then flashed in my mind one of my favorite movies: [The Usual Suspects](#) . If you've seen the movie, you know what I'm talking about. If you haven't seen it or have forgotten it's plot (it came out in 1995), it's about a criminal getting revenge while playing a game of cat and mouse and hiding in plain sight. And the scene that literally flashed in my mind was when Kevin Spacey's character Verbal Kint talks about his boss, Keyser Söze.

"...Nobody ever believed he was real. Nobody ever knew him or saw him or anybody who ever worked directly for him. But to hear Kobayashi tell it, anybody could have worked for Söze. You never knew. That was his power. The greatest trick the Devil ever pulled was convincing the world he didn't exist".

To truly understand where I'm coming from, you really should see that whole [scene](#). And then the [ending](#) scene of the movie. (I've linked, not embedded, because the scenes goes into some NC17 violence and might make some uncomfortable. You've been warned). The first scene describes how Keyser Söze came to be who he is. And the second, how he disappears, with most none the wiser. While the story's characters are gangsters, thugs, bad cops and murderers, the idea is the same. These scenes are telling and perfectly describe what I think is going on with this potential legislation. Watching them again and thinking about what my BFF said made me realize there is DEFINITELY something else going on behind the scenes of this proposed legislation. I think it's a plan to go out, reek havoc, decimate and destroy the competition. Like Keyser Söze. Create shields and walls and blinds around you and always have them wondering if you actually do exist. Make them think it someone or something else. Never deny, never admit, stay off the main grid, don't protest too much, but cower enough to make them think you're scared too. Get others -others who may not even know you or your agenda exist- to do your dirty work.

So who are the usual suspects? I started to think about all the previously mentioned infighting, bi#ching, moaning and lawsuits that has been going on back and forth over the last 10 years between the USDA Certified Organic Cosmetics players, the Natural Cosmetics and Natural Based Cosmetics players (there's a difference) and also the fakers who put the word natural or organic on every label they possibly can with almost nothing "natural" in it. Then I added in a few of the small, medium and larger sized Natural/Natural Based players who have been bought out or by the Big Time Multi-national players and said same players who are now starting to formulate more natural based products on their own. Then I factored in who in each group is really buddy buddy and are big supporters and contributors to The Environmental Working Group (EWG) and The Campaign for Safe Cosmetics (CFSC) (web links purposely not included for these thugs). That was a hard one as the EWG [money trail](#) is slim pickings. I've been saying for 5 years "follow the money".

Then I factored in the EU companies who fit into all my listed categories as SCA 2010, in it's current draft legally also affects them with the same requirements. Then I added the importers from the rest of the world, ditto the same requirements. These last players, sadly also include the countries who have histories of having confiscated products, knock off/counterfeited products and deadly tainted products that run the gamut from prescription drugs, OTC drugs, cosmetics, food and even drywall. It gave me a huge headache. Thank



fully, mainstream media reports on many of these things. And the Cosmetics Industry trade papers are a wonderful source of all cosmetic information, good, bad and ugly. Both the North American and EU versions also have sections which are devoted to developing markets in what's called BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India And China). The FTC and FDA notifications are also quite a read some days. Yes, the internet is my friend.

Next I started thinking about just who all would benefit from the extreme diminishment of the Handcrafted Cosmetics Industry. Actually, who all would benefit the most from it's almost complete demise? First, let's list who WONT benefit from SCA 2010:

Besides the US Handcrafters, not my Canadian or other foreign Handcrafter Brethren who have US sales. They're not selling hundreds or thousand of bars or jars at a pop to US importers/distributors. (And if they have hundreds of stores world wide, they're not handcrafters, I don't care what they say. You know who I'm talking about, rhymes with slush. And while they'd have to follow the law too, they can afford to hire lots of bodies to keep up with this proposed idiocy). The average foreign Handcrafters are more or less in the same leaky and listing boat as US Handcrafters right now.

So just who would benefit from SCA 2010?

Let's start with foreign cosmetic manufacturers that already are or will be selling hundreds or thousands of bars or jars at a pop to US importers and distributors. Then there's that coming tidal wave of cheap, badly formulated, made with illegal ingredients crap that will come pouring in even more from Mexico, Asia, Africa and the middle east. THOSE will be the ones we have to worry about. The FDA will not be able to keep up with the SCA 2010 paper and computer generated work to accurately keep track of the importers and their ingredients declarations. How will they be able to keep track of all the foreign importers? Will they create a monthly or quarterly "Allowed" list? And if they do, who will enforce this list and more importantly where and how will it be enforced? Yep, another blog post for another day. So who enforces SCA 2010 on the import side? The FDA is stretched extremely thin and needs to step up it's game and keep track of, keep ahead of and catch the tainted food and drugs, both domestic and imported. And with regard to the imports, by it's [own admission](#) the FDA cannot and will never have enough people to inspect every shipment at every port of entry, land, air or sea. From their lips to God's ear. So I'm hazarding a guess the FDA will probably give the importers more leeway than they'll give the US cosmetic companies. That also includes Handcrafters. I also think the FDA will just "trust" the importers to properly, promptly and accurately fill out the required forms and declarations on ingredients. Yeah, okay, *riiiiight*.

Can we say [heparin](#), [wheat gluten](#) and [toothpaste](#)? Oh my! 3 products that go INTO your body. And that's just 3 bad imports that we know about. Or were told about. And on the US side don't get me started on the uber scary, mind boggling peanut products [recall](#) . The FDA can't keep up and no matter how much money is tossed at it, the world is now a fast moving, *gotta get it now* importing and exporting global economy and there aren't enough and never will be enough Inspectors, Agents or lab techs to check the imported and domestic food and drugs quickly. Operative word there is *quickly*. Now there are those who want to add cosmetics to an already over loaded ship? The Cosmetic Industry is not making products to harm their cus-



tomers! Oh, and we all know any “fees” collected from cosmetic companies will be spread out amongst the whole agency, not just on the cosmetics arm.

So who on the US side would benefit from SCA 2010, our demise and taking away the customer’s right of product choice?

Now before I continue, I must disclose that while I applaud many of the goals set by the below listed NGOs (non governmental organizations) regarding “Naturals” and “Organic” Certification, I am also suspect of these same organizations. Why? Sigh. It’s just a *feeling* I have:

1. Most of the certification standards were set by a compilation of well known cosmetic companies that got together to make the standards and it’s in essence having your competition “okay” you.
2. The cost of certifying is very high per sku (stock keeping unit). A company has to, no needs to have a certain level of income in order to afford them. So if you don’t qualify on the money end, you aren’t big or selling enough yet and won’t be able to join/get certified if you are not able to afford their fees. You usually have to be seriously cranking out lots of product and selling them or have investors or some type of financing sitting in the bank to afford the cost of the certifications. So once again, as for the certification, most indies, micros and small cosmetics companies don’t even think about putting their horse in that race. But looking at most of the founding members of these certification orgs. and even their current members companies, I think this list may be a very telling feature.
3. I truly believe who your parent company is (if there is one) should be factored in before getting a Natural or Certified Organic certification.

So, in order of vocalization and media attention regarding cosmetic “Natural” or “Organic” standards, whom all we haven’t heard from regarding the SCA 2010?

Leadership from these Certifying Agencies:

[The Natural Products Association](#)

While I did read in a trade news [article](#) a quote from one of their members on how they thought SCA 2010 was throwing the baby out with the bathwater, as of this posting I have not found any official statement anywhere on the NPA’s official site where they say either yea or nay on the proposed SCA 2010.

[The Oasis Standard](#)

As of this post I have not found any official statement anywhere on their website as to a yea or nea on SCA 2010.



[NSF International](#) , The Public Health and Safety Company

While they are truly a neutral certification organization, since they have set standards for certification, they should state their position. As of this post I have not found any official statement anywhere on their website as to a yea or nea on SCA 2010.

And many of their members and the certified companies. Most of whom started out just like me. As Handcrafted Soap and Cosmetics Makers. Many of these certified companies will go bye-bye if SCA 2010 passes. They will have even [heavier](#) mountains of regulations, requirements and information gathering and submitting to carry than the load they already are.

Now if I am wrong about any of them, someone please politely (*and if it's not polite it won't be published and the addy will be banned- I don't tolerate trolls!*) correct me and point me to the links were they have publicly posted their official views. I would like to be wrong. I really, really would.

So who else would benefit from our demise and the taking away the customer's right of buying choice?

Oh yes, last but not least, some private companies who have the USDA "Certified Organic" seal (who shall remain nameless as they have deeper pockets than me and who ironically get a bit pissy when *they* get criticized). Some whom I would call bullies. While I applaud them on reaching for and attaining what some consider the holy grail of goals, they really do need to stop being such mean, nasty, arrogant bullies in the Cosmetic Industry. Thinking of one in particular, I think their daddy would roll in his grave if he knew how his heirs were behaving. He built his company with a quality product and by love of mankind, not by bullying. To them and others I say yes, some companies are not to **your** standards or even mine, and others **do** green-wash and "natural" the hell out of their products without it being in any significant quantities or any at all. But ultimately, the consumer will decide their fates. The petty mean spirited actions, holier-than-thou attitudes, the constant bully pulpits and continual lawsuits do not endear any of you to the industry as a whole and it might actually be causing you to lose current and potential customers. I know, because they are buying from Handcrafters.

For every bar of soap, jar of body scrub, tube of foot balm or bottle of lotion I'm selling, that means someone **IS NOT BUYING YOURS** . Multiply that the thousands of micro and small Handcrafted Soap and Cosmetic Makers and companies in the US. See us at the Farmers Markets, the local Fairs and Festivals. Their own retail stores, their ability to get into Natural Food stores large and small in their region. Look us up on [esty](#), [artfire](#) , [indiepublic](#) and all the other handcrafted marketplaces on the web. Look us up on our industry networks. [The Handcrafted SoapMakers Guild](#) has 4631 as of this post. [The IndieBeauty Network](#) has 6000+ members. We created our niche. We've created [our jobs](#) . We make what the public wants to buy, and we make it honestly and ethically. Are we cutting into your profits? Maybe. Are we sorry if we are? **NO**. There are thousands of Handcrafted Cosmetic Manufacturers, hundreds of their Suppliers and millions of a buying public. 308 million in the USA -and rising. 7 billion people on the planet -and rising. No few entities can sell to them all, no matter how hard they try. Though I guess a few of you can give it a really good try if you get ri



of most of the small, localvore and internet competition.

Well, I've listed all the players and I can't pierce the veil. It's really thick and I think the answer is in this list of suspects. It's in there, *somewhere*. But I haven't found it...yet. But perhaps with combined efforts my fellow Handcrafters, our suppliers and industry advocates can, armed with the knowledge that our potential demise is not an **incidental** or **accidental** casualty of war. It is a deliberate attack on our segment of the industry.

"...The EFFECT of this legislation is not to put you out of business. The PURPOSE of this legislation is to put you out of business."

So all this really just boils down to just one question:

Who all is the Keyser Söze of The Safe Cosmetics Act 2010?

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This entry was posted in I'm Just Saying..., Regulatory on August 11, 2010 [<http://blog.botanicabasics.com/2010/08/11/whats-the-real-agenda-and-who-benefits-from-it-pt-2/>] by Sandra.

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