

# *Sea of beauty*

La Mer has become the most lusted after skincare brand for celebrities and beauty journalists alike. Nikki Dodds looks at how it made the transition from the sea kelp beds of the Pacific to the bathrooms of the rich and fabulous

No one does beauty like the American state of California. Whether it's the blueness of its ocean, the splendour of its giant redwood trees and lush vineyards or the flawless faces of the Hollywood in crowd, there is no doubt that this is a place where beauty reigns supreme. It is perfectly appropriate, then, that it is only off California's coastline that a form of exquisite giant sea kelp can be found, and even more apt that sea kelp is the key ingredient for luxury beauty brand La Mer's miracle broth™.

It may seem strange that such a luxurious, high-tech brand relies on something natural to create its wonder products, but then again La Mer isn't a run-of-the-mill kind of beauty brand. While its products are now revered by beauty editors and celebrities alike, this is a brand whose success has happened simply via word of mouth, as it has never run a major advertising campaign – practically unheard of in such a competitive industry. It is also a brand that still hand-fills every jar, and the Lime Tea, an infusion of citrus fruit peel and alcohol, which is added to the broth to boost antioxidant activity is still made with hand-peeled limes. And if that wasn't enough to make it stand out from the beauty crowd, then the fact that it was created not by a huge beauty corporation but by Dr Max Huber, a little known NASA aerospace physicist, certainly does.

Huber, after being horrifically injured in the late 1960s when the rocket fuel developed in a routine experiment exploded, inadvertently created La Mer when he started to look for a medication to improve the severe burns to his hands and face.

After 12 years and approximately 6,000 experiments trying to create a lotion to help smooth the skin's appearance, California-based Huber started to become inspired by the rejuvenating powers of the sea and found the final ingredient he was looking for in the kelp that was growing off the state's coastline. 'Sea kelp contains the necessary nutrients for sustaining life and, in many ways, sea plants are considered the ancestors of land plants. All life stems from the sea,' explains Loretta Miraglia, La Mer's senior vice president of product development and innovation. 'The true value of nutrients from the sea are only now being fully realised and are the future for many industries, including ours.'

Huber was one of the first to recognise the power of the ocean and began his experiment by fermenting his kelp with a cocktail of minerals (including calcium, magnesium, potassium and iron), and vitamins combined with eucalyptus, wheat germ, alfalfa and sunflower and thus created a unique product that went on to not only heal his own scars, but help thousands in their quest for smooth and supple skin.

The fermentation process that Huber created is multi-layered and a complicated process of sound therapy known as sonochemistry, where a recording of the actual fermentation process is played almost as a soundtrack to help the next batch to ferment, and a process called 'seeding' where a small sample of the previous batch of miracle broth™ is added to the mix, meaning that every La Mer product is embedded with the original DNA from Huber's original broth. 'Max Huber was way ahead of his time. What he knew 50 years ago, before the science of sonochemistry was discovered, was the importance of how these physical energies effect a chemical reaction', Miraglia explains. 'Light and sound are forms of energy used to enhance the fermentation process and we continue to use them to enhance the processes and reactions that take place during biofermentation. We learnt that without sound and light we do not have the same outcome when it comes to creating the broth, however, when light and sound are pulsed within the fermenting miracle broth™ the activity explodes.'

When Huber first created his La Mer moisturising cream all those years ago little did he know that just a few decades later his miracle broth™ would be used in over 30 products, the latest of which is the new Eye Balm

Intense (£82.50/ page 35). Hailed as a miracle product the Eye Balm Intense has three times the amount of broth than any other product, as the skin on the eyes is three times thinner than anywhere else on the body. However, what is so fantastic about the Eye Balm Intense is that it can be used anywhere on the face

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where there tends to be a slight inflammation. Miraglia explains: 'Women tend to have other parts of the face that can be a real problem area, such as the chin, so I ensured that the Eye Balm Intense contained a lot of the miracle broth™ as we know that the wonderful thing about it is that it works as an anti-inflammatory.'

It seems incredible that something so powerful can come from something as simple as sea kelp but the results seem to be speaking for themselves with La Mer conducting recent clinical tests for the Eye Balm Intense and the results showing an 81 per cent improvement in hydration.

Does this mean a future that will see us all bathing in sea kelp in order to retain our youthful good looks? 'Well, I do think that the future of skincare will certainly be much more holistically led,' says Miraglia. 'La Mer certainly sees a future where, as a brand, we are more about healing and able to offer people a viable natural alternative to invasive surgery.' So, surgery or sea kelp? well, with a brand like La Mer leading the charge, we may have the option sooner than we think. **Go Shop!**

## 1

**LA MER: STEP BY STEP**

Apply three pumps to the forehead, cheeks, jawline and throat and pat gently into skin. This minimises the appearance of pores, even skin-tone and deliver extreme radiance to skin.

**The Radiant Infusion** £68/ page 35

## 2



Apply The Eye Balm Intense to immediately soothe and hydrate the eye area. Apply a pea-sized amount using the silver-tipped applicator and follow the contour of each eye.

**Eye Balm Intense**, £82.50/ page 35

## 3

Apply La Mer Moisturizing Cream to activate the key ingredients and the Miracle Broth's renowned healing energies, warm a small amount of the cream between your fingertips until it becomes transparent. Next, apply to forehead, cheeks, jawline, throat and décolleté by gently patting into skin. Massage the cream into skin with gliding upward motions beginning with throat, moving up the jawline and cheeks to your forehead.

**Moisturizing Cream**, £80/ page 35


