



# About Face

Liz Earle started her company as a small mail-order enterprise yet now sells a bottle of cleanser every 30 seconds. Nikki Dodds discovers the secret to her success



**Congratulations on recently celebrating your 15th anniversary! Has it gone quickly?** Thank you so much! It has indeed gone very quickly. We never expected that 15 years on we would be selling in over 90 countries across the globe – it truly has exceeded all of our hopes and expectations.

**You were a successful beauty journalist, broadcaster and author before starting the business so what prompted the change and did your experience in the industry help?** Despite having worked in the beauty industry for more than a decade, I had yet to discover high quality skincare with active botanical ingredients that really worked for all types of skin, even sensitive skin. It was my great friend Kim Buckland who suggested combining my research knowledge with her marketing skills to develop our own range.

**When you and Kim started the company what was the original goal?** Originally Kim and I developed the Naturally Active Skincare range for ourselves as we wanted to create a range that was simple, no-fuss

and dependable and also a pampering daily treat for everyone.

**What was the first product you created and why did you start there?**

Our first product was our Cleanse & Polish Hot Cloth Cleanser. The cornerstone of effective skincare, I believe, is cleansing as it is integral when getting rid of daily grime and impurities. We still only make this one cleanser because it has gone on to win so many awards for being the ultimate in concentrated, yet gentle, cleansing power and works on every age and skin type.

**You started by selling your products via mail order then moved to QVC, which is not the usual route for a glamorous beauty brand – what was the thinking behind this and why do you think it worked?**

Launching Liz Earle by Mail in 1995 was a natural step for us, as from the outset, we wanted to create a dialogue with our customers and mail order is a great way to achieve that. With QVC we didn't expect it to be so successful so rapidly but in our first show on QVC we completely sold out after only half an hour! I think it worked

**Above:** Liz Earle on one of her many sourcing trips. Here featured at the shea harvest in North Uganda where she found the shea butter used in her Superskin Body Cream.

because live TV is a very 'real' form of communication as viewers can listen and watch the demonstrations in the comfort of their home before making up their minds about whether or not they want to give it a try.

**I heard that one Cleanse & Polish Hot Cloth Cleanser is sold every 30 seconds, is this true and what is it about this cleanser that has made it such a phenomenon?**

Yes, it is true! We now sell one Cleanse & Polish every 30 seconds in over 90 countries around the world, and it has won more than 55 industry awards and accolades. When Kim and I first developed it neither of us thought the other would like it, as we have such opposite skin types. I suffer from dry eczema-prone skin while Kim has oily problem skin, so when we both got great results from the same cleanser we knew that we had discovered something special. It was our light-bulb moment!

**You're obviously very passionate about natural skincare and beauty but how has this influenced the ingredients you use?**

Throughout the range we use naturally active botanicals, herbs, plant oils and vitamins in quantities that make a genuine difference to the look and feel of your skin. We believe that natural ingredients offer more skin benefits – some of the most potent skincare ingredients are found in nature, including antioxidant vitamins, antibacterial essential oils

and anti-inflammatory herbs. Our skin is a complex, living organ and the very best results come from treating it holistically with naturally skin-compatible ingredients.

**The majority of your ingredients are sourced locally, how important is supporting local businesses for you?**

As a rule of thumb, if we can get a great quality ingredient in the UK we use it. The company philosophy is to always source the best ingredients, which means that we take each ingredient we need and investigate sources to make sure we're using the best and, where possible, local ingredients.

**You also support many sustainable projects overseas, which is fantastic news, what are you doing about this at the moment?**

We are constantly travelling the globe in pursuit of the perfect ingredient but at the moment I'm really excited about Kenyan yangu oil, which we use in our haircare range. The yangu oil is pressed from seeds that have been hand-collected by forest tribe community groups in Kenya who have been trained in sustainable forest work.

By placing a value on yangu trees in their native environment we help stop them being chopped down for wood or charcoal, which also helps preserve the local flora and fauna associated with them. Around 250 people collect the yangu seed, more than 80 per cent being

women, and each worker supports an average of five people, so more than a thousand people benefit from the collection of yangu seed.

**Are your ingredients fully organic?**

When it comes to skincare ingredients, organic certification is a statement about how something is grown and processed, it is not necessarily a statement about the quality of the ingredient. We try, wherever possible, to work with small independent growers like the people we have just spoken about and sometimes they aren't part of an organic certification scheme.

**You've stayed away from the anti-ageing tag, what's the reason behind this?**

I firmly believe that ageing is a natural part of life, not a disease needing treatment. Our philosophy at Liz Earle is to encourage a radiantly healthy complexion that positively glows with vitality – whatever your age.

The key factor in premature skin ageing is minimising the production of excessive free radicals within the skin. We can't turn the clock back but I believe our naturally active ingredients can help to 'slow the ticking' and will, over time, make a genuine difference to skin that is beginning to show signs of the natural ageing process. Beauty is much more than skin deep, but I have always believed that healthy, radiant skin is the icing on the cake.

**Go Shop!**



### HEAD THERAPIST AT LIZ EARLE, JO GIVENS, TALKS THROUGH HOW TO PAMPER YOURSELF WITH THE SETS SOLD ON BOARD

For both men and women the essential Cleanse & Polish will cleanse and gently exfoliate skin, leaving it smoother and clearer. The handy travel size Instant Boost Skin Tonic Spritzer is great for on-the-go refreshment and to help protect the skin from the drying atmosphere on planes. Gently massage Skin Repair Moisturiser into face and neck. You can also use your time on board to treat it to our Daily Eye Repair. This light, triple action cream, will not only help to moisturise your eye area but will also help to visibly reduce the appearance of fine lines around the eyes, mouth and forehead.

Give yourself a mini hand treatment by massaging our emergency skin salve, Superbalm, into nails and cuticles to help condition and soften. This travel must-have also soothes lips, softens dry or chapped skin and even works as a way to help tame flyaway hair!

And for men the onboard Naturally Active set is the ideal travel companion, as whether you're travelling long haul, short haul or just going to the gym, it contains all you need for clean, clear skin.

