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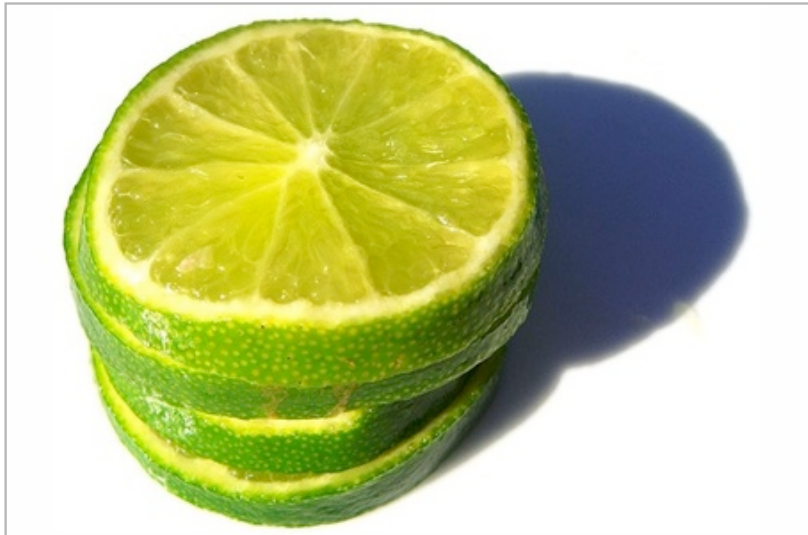
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WELLNESS / ECOSALON HOME

Aug 19, 2008 at 4:00 am by Sara Ost

DIY Beauty Treats: Eco-Friendly Facials



I love to get my organic mani-pedis at a sweet spa in Mill Valley, CA. **Biondina** is the boutique beauty brainchild of Carrie Nelson, a clinical skin specialist, aesthetician and self-professed beauty product junkie. I happened to luck out when I stepped in last week for an impromptu polish and discovered that a free class for DIY organic facials had just begun. Nelson and her staff insisted I participate, and as I enjoyed organic cupcakes from a neighboring bakery and took a sneak peak in the eco goodie bag, I learned several smart beauty tricks for inexpensive and nourishing at-home facials.

According to Nelson, most beauty products can easily be substituted with organic basics like vegetable glycerin cleanser, olive oil, sugar and even avocado. Though every woman should use an antioxidant moisturizer, an anti-aging serum containing retinols and daily sunblock, the expensive toners, cleansers and treatments just aren't necessary. To prove it, she demonstrated surprisingly indulgent facials that used every day items you'd find in your pantry. These two were my favorite:



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Eco Exfoliation

Exfoliation is the key to a glowing complexion and it's very easy to purify your skin of old, dead cells and oily buildup in order to get that glow. Sugar is a terrific exfoliant - Nelson says it is gentle enough to be used before date night. Simply blend a few teaspoons of organic, raw sugar with organic extra-virgin olive oil and rub into your face. For a really deep exfoliating treatment, rub for 5 minutes in small, circular motions. For a more gentle treatment, only rub for a minute. Limit exfoliation to twice-weekly sessions to give your skin time to renew itself. The ingredients for this facial are things you probably have on hand. They're also eco-friendly, organic and healthy for you!

Eco Moisturize

According to Nelson, there's no need for a pricey investment in *Crème de La Mer*. Natural foods and substances are safer, better for the environment, less expensive, and easier to come by, as well. The ideal moisturizing treatment will gently remove dead skin cells so that your skin is primed to absorb as much moisture as possible. In addition to a nourishing moisturizing ingredient, a humectant, which will draw moisture to your skin and create a protective layer, is also necessary. Here's how to create this triple-action treat at home:

Mash 1/2 of an avocado with 1 tablespoon of organic, local honey. (You **don't have to use an organic avocado.**) Blend in about a teaspoon of organic heavy cream. (The cream contains lactic acid, a gentle exfoliant famously used by Cleopatra.) The avocado is a rich emollient, while the honey acts as an antibacterial humectant. Leave on for 20 minutes and indulge as often as you like.

Another tip I picked up involves making use of leftover lime wedges (or any citrus slice). After cleansing, gently dab your nose, cheeks, forehead and chin with the fruit to give yourself a mini-vitamin C skin treatment.



Your rather pink editor with Biondina spa owner Carrie Nelson.

If you're a Bay Area resident, it's worth the trek to Mill Valley for an organic rose pedicure or beauty treatment. (Or cupcake!) See [Biondina](#) for treatments, event information and specials.

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Images: (*top, bottom*) Darwin Bell, Carrie Nelson

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