

THE TIMES

KEEPING UP APPEARANCES PRUE WHITE

COUNTER INTELLIGENCE
The latest beauty discoveries from Down Under

Admittedly, Margaret Cobbe isn't actually Australian, but the key ingredient in her beauty range is the traditional Aboriginal emu's arse oil, which is lauded for its hydrating qualities. Her **Hydrating Foot Soak** (£20, www.margaretcobbe.co.uk) also contains fragrant lemon myrtle to soothe tired feet. Follow up with **Nourishing Nail and Cuticle Serum** (£10), which contains Australia's natural anti-inflammatory tea tree oil, to stave off infection and leave nails healthy and strong.

Betta Creme Eye Colour (£20)

Betta was the brainchild of **Bianca Merris**, an Australian make-up artist. Now sold in more than 20 countries, its light formula really accentuates natural beauty. **Creme Eye Colour 'In Quartz'** (£20, www.bettacosmetics.com) is a sleek, shimmering tint for eyelids that can also be used on cheekbones.

Free from parabens, sodium lauryl sulphates and synthetic colours and fragrances, the Australian Organics range makes the most of plant extracts and pure essential oils. Its **Avocado Oil Shower Gel** (£3.99, www.australianorganics.com) contains zesty lime and lavender to refresh and calm the senses, and avocado oil to cleanse.

Dr LeWinn's Private Formula products are tested against the harshest of climates – the outback. Its **Revitalising Hand Polish** (£20, www.drlewinns.co.uk) contains ingredients designed to combat the ageing process and hydrate brittle nails: sea salt exfoliates, macadamia and aromatic oils nourish, and citrus acids soften.

Dr LeWinn's Revitalising Hand Polish (£20)

Jurlique's approach to beauty stems from a respect for biodynamic and organic farming, as practised on its farm in South Australia. Launched this month, the Biodynamic Beauty Range is a gift for ageing faces. The **Balancing Treatment (£20, www.jurlique.co.uk) exfoliates dead skin to encourage cell renewal and reveal a glowing complexion, while **Beauty Serum** (£50) reduces puffiness and redness and brightens your skin.**

Salon Spy: ORIGINS
42 Neal Street, Covent Garden, London WC2 (020-7836-9003, www.origins.co.uk)

Atmosphere: Don't expect fluffy white towelling robes and soothing music from your facial at Origins – you really do get what you pay for. The Origins facial is £15 for 45 minutes, which is reasonable against any products you choose to buy afterwards – in other words, an absolute bargain. It takes place in a corner of the Neal Street shop, which is crowded off with a thin screen to provide a bit of privacy. It doesn't shield against the hubbub of Covent Garden, particularly on a busy Saturday afternoon when the shop is rammed full of Origins regulars, both men and women, but at least they can't see you in all your vulnerable glory.

Treatments: Clarity was our spy's therapist for the afternoon, and she was fantastic. A true Origins advocate, she worked her magic: taking a brief skin history and then tailoring the facial to our spy's needs. It's a short treatment, so no extractions or tedious gel-gleety. Origins is simply confidant with its – **Clarify** – **Moisturise** – **Hydrate** – **45 mins** – **Leaves** – **to** – **switch** – **to** – **Marka** – **if you h** – **either** – **to** – **smash**

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