

7 Canadian brands leading the natural skin care trend

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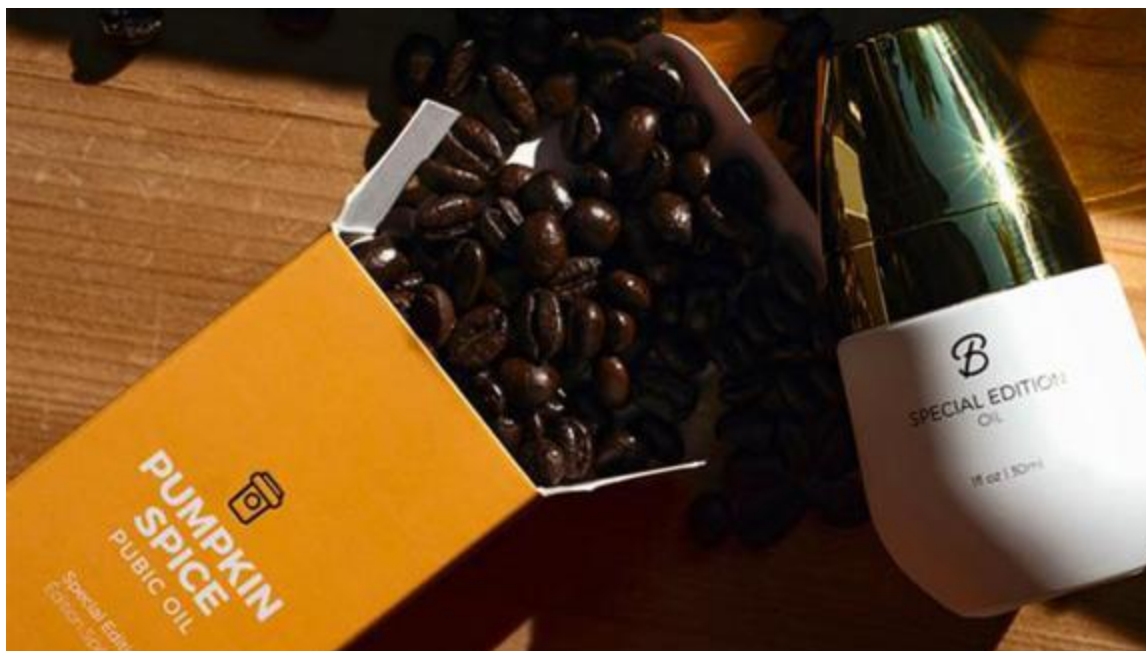
(CNN) —

The worldwide trend of natural skin care has grown in popularity in recent years, and Canada is leading the way. Consumers are moving away from products that contain harsh chemicals and are instead looking to source natural, plant-based solutions to common skin care issues.

Blessed as we are with natural resources that encompass the arctic tundra, freshwater lakes, clean mountain air and ancient boreal forests, Canada is well situated to produce some of the best organic and natural skin care brands.

Below, we've rounded up some favorites that will enable you to shop local skin care products and support Canadian businesses as well as treat your body, face and hair care to premium natural ingredients.

Bushbalm



Bushbalm

PHOTO: Bushbalm

Ottawa-based Bushbalm sells 100% natural body products crafted with premium quality oils specifically formulated (but not limited to) the delicate bikini area. Its formulations made with jojoba and other essential oils help to prevent ingrown hairs, target dark spots and relieve the burn from razor rash.

Try the special-edition Pumpkin Spice Bikini Oil (\$36; bushbalm.ca), which has a delicate, spicy smell like a perfect autumn day. Made with Vitamin E and B, it's best applied all over your body when your skin is still damp from the shower.

To prepare your skin to best absorb the oils, first try the Sweet Escape Exfoliating Scrub (\$30; bushbalm.ca). Scented with tangerine and vanilla, this sugar scrub will have you smelling like dessert!

The sleek, modern packaging looks and feels expensive, and it's certainly one product you'll want to display on your bathroom vanity.

Boreal Folk



Boreal Folk

PHOTO: Boreal Folk

The wildcrafted bath and body products from Boreal Folk are made by Raphaëlle Gagnon, who lives with her husband off the grid, deep in the forests of Northern BC. Gagnon forages for the natural ingredients used in her products and uses biodegradable or reusable packaging. Small-batch production helps to ensure the highest quality, and everything is made by hand either in the wild or on the road in their mobile studio.

Try the wild mint lip butter (\$20; borealfolk.ca) made with rosehip oil and nettle and mint collected from the marshlands of BC. There's also the Prairie Facemask (\$18; borealfolk.ca), which uses clay from what were once ocean beds in the Canadian prairies to help detoxify and clean the skin. Simply mix one teaspoon of clay with either water, honey or yogurt and massage gently on the face, then rinse off as it dries.

Bathorium



Bathorium

PHOTO: Bathorium

The team at Bathorium aims to completely elevate the bathing experience by producing luxurious bath bombs, salts and soaks free of harsh chemicals, phthalates or parabens.

Bathorium is based in the National Capital Region and uses ethically sourced natural ingredients like essential oils, flower extracts, kaolin clay and sea salts.

The brand's bath bombs, like the bergamot- and patchouli-infused Snooze Bomb (\$12; bathorium.com), which turns the bathwater a lovely pale violet colour, make excellent gifts.

Children will also love the Little Charlie kids' range, which includes Bubble Bath Milk (\$18; bathorium.com) made with chamomile and lush-smelling coconut milk.

Basd



Basd

Basd is located in Kitchener, and all of its cruelty-free products are made with simple, natural and organic ingredients.

Its body washes (\$15.99; basdbodycare.ca) and body lotions (\$24.99; basdbodycare.ca) come in four different scents: Seductive Sandalwood, Indulgent Crème Brûlée, Invigorating Mint and Refreshing Citrus Grapefruit.

For super-soft skin, try the brand's exfoliating coffee body scrubs, available in Indulgent Crème Brûlée or Invigorating Mint scents (\$19.99; basdbodycare.com). The sea salt and coconut sugar slough away dead skin, while the organic coffee is thought to improve circulation.

Basd also has a body-positive and inclusive brand focus, as evidenced by its Instagram page, which is brimming with positive representations of many different body types.

Wildcraft



Wildcraft

PHOTO: Wildcraft

This 100% natural Toronto-based body and face care brand is known for producing small-batch, carefully crafted products, including cleansers, serums, creams and scrubs.

All products are made by Wildcraft, so they control every formulation and ensure that all ingredients are cruelty-free, elemental or plant-based and sustainably sourced.

Its skin care kits (\$120; wildcraftcare.ca) are categorized by your skin type, including dry, combination and oily, and include five premium products. The sweet-smelling Soak Herbal Bath Blend (\$30; wildcraftcare.ca) contains real organic flowers, including rose, lavender, chamomile and calendula, and makes a very pretty gift.

One of the brand's bestselling face products is the Calm Face Lotion (\$34; wildcraftcare.ca), a gentle, light cream that feels great underneath makeup and is designed to help calm breakouts.

Clarity Apothecary



Clarity Apothecary

PHOTO: Clarity Apothecary

The Clarity Apothecary in gorgeous Tofino, BC, is owned by Claire Bond, whose passion for creating meaningful connections between aromas and healing has inspired her to create nine signature scents.

You can purchase a range of products, including essential oils and sprays, serums and face and body care from the website or from retailers across Tofino, Vancouver, Ucluelet, Whistler and even as far as Los Angeles.

If you aren't sure which scent to pick, purchase the Introductory Set (\$65; clarityapothecary.com) and try out all nine varieties. A handmade display crafted from salvaged wood from Claire's hometown of Tofino holds each 5-millilitre Bath and Body Oil in the collection.

The body and room sprays (\$35; clarityapothecary.com) help to create a cleansing environment in your home. The Aloha blend, my favourite one, features wild ginger and is particularly delightful.

Smith Farms



Smith Farms

Sisters Julia and Rebecca Sinclair-Smith make their all-natural skin care products from their family farm in Western Quebec. The Smith Farms range includes body lotion (the product that started their business), facial toners, serums, moisturizers and gift sets, all in minimalist, environmentally friendly packaging.

The brand's ingredient lists are readily available, organic and locally produced where possible and do not contain harsh chemicals, perfumes or parabens.

Try the Goat's Milk Face and Body Soap (\$9.99; smithfarmsproducts.com). It's lightly scented with lavender oil, and the olive oil base is incredibly gentle, moisturizing and suitable for sensitive skin. The Vitamin-Rich Hand Cream (\$19.99; smithfarmsproducts.com) contains chamomile and vitamin E and can soften even the hardest-working hands.