

'MY LIFE IN A DAY'

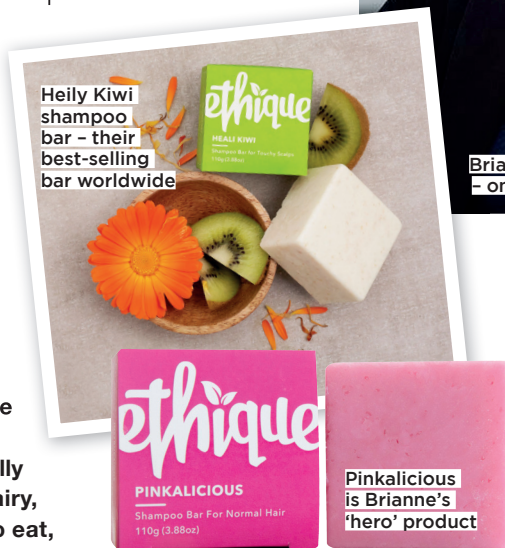
BRIANNE WEST

The founder of solid beauty bar company, Ethique, talks about ridding the world of plastic bottles



Brianne is changing the world - one soap bar at a time

I wake up around 7.30am, get ready for work, then drive the 15-minute journey to my office in Christchurch, New Zealand, where I'll have a coffee in a reusable KeepCup, and visit my chief operating officer (COO) to discuss some hairbrained idea I've come up with overnight. Food-wise, I like to call myself a carnitarian, trying to eat in an environmentally friendly way with no meat or dairy, but I'm often so busy I forget to eat, so breakfast and lunch will be whatever someone picks up for me. I spend most of my day answering emails; meeting and talking with retailers, customers and the media; and the rest of my time on product development. I don't get to spend as much time in the lab as I used to, but I started Ethique (ethiqueworld.com) to save the world from plastic bottles and we've saved 3.4 million bottles from production so far, which is pretty awesome.'



Heily Kiwi shampoo bar - their best-selling bar worldwide

ethique PINKALICIOUS Shampoo Bar For Normal Hair 110g (3.88oz)

Pinkalicious is Brianne's 'hero' product

handmade solid beauty bars in place of liquid beauty products - to reduce waste in an incredibly wasteful industry. The first product I created was Damage Control, a shampoo bar still sold in the exact same formula as when it was first introduced. Working out of my tiny kitchen at home and making just 1kg of product at a time in a microwave was hard - I went through seven of them as they kept setting on fire! - but in time, I hired a COO to take charge of scaling up the business. We now have three eco-factories in New Zealand that handmake up to 156,000 beauty bars a day to ship around the world.'

NO MORE PLASTIC

'From day dot, the focus of Ethique (French for "ethical"), was to be as sustainable and ethical as possible, which meant getting rid of all plastics (our packaging is 100 per cent compostable), and using ingredients that are 100 per cent Fairtrade, cruelty-free and vegan, with no palm oil, parabens or animal

by-products. Right now, we're working on 34 new products, and launched a new deodorant at the end of July.

'Being a night owl, I work best from 5pm onwards, and often don't finish until 9pm in the summer. I don't have many days off, but I don't have a husband or kids, so I'm happy with Ethique being my life. In my spare time, I read a lot and I am learning to play tennis. I'm also going back to university soon to study for a Masters in marine biology, with the goal of carrying out non-profit research to find solutions to the ecological problems facing us. My ambition for Ethique is that it will become a billion-dollar business, with an Ethique bar in every shower, and we'll save the world from plastic - and I mean that in all seriousness.'

BRIANNE'S SUSTAINABILITY TIPS

- Lessen the amount of meat products you eat to reduce the impact of meat production on the environment. Doing Meatless Mondays is a great start.
- Stop using any form of single-use plastic. From bags and bottles to coffee cups and straws. Notice its uses and change your habits.
- Insect population is falling by 75 per cent. If you can, create an insect house or butterfly garden.

ECO BEAUTY PIONEER

'As a self-taught maker of cosmetics, I started my first cosmetics company at 19, selling a basic line of liquid shampoos and creams online. A year later, I started another company but struggled to keep up with demand, so I sold both companies and went to university to study biochemistry. While studying, I started Ethique, in 2012 - the only company in the world devoted solely to producing

WORDS: Jo Ebsworth. Ethique products are now available to buy in 840 Holland & Barrett stores across the UK, as well as being sold online at ethiqueworld.com