

BECAUSE YOU NEED IT SARAH VINE

MIRACLES DO HAPPEN

Skin-savers don't come cheap – but one range comes close

Dr Nick Lowe is beauty aristocracy. *Tatler's* guide to top doctors describes him as "a master of laser therapy... a pioneer in the use of Botox and fillers". When smooth-skinned beauties, from actresses to television presenters, casually mention a visit to "Nick", it is Lowe they are referring to. Other dermatologists revere him or are jealous of his success.

You might have thought, then, that when Lowe finally launched his own skin-care range, he would have pitched at the top end of the market: expensive packaging, a launch in Claridge's with fancy cakes and Lapsang Souchong tea, exclusivity in Harrods or Harvey Nichols, maybe a few showy celebrity endorsements.

I have before me a pot of his new Super Charged SPF15 Day Cream. The packaging is very classy: heavy frosted glass with discreet silver branding. Inside, a potent mixture of antioxidants

(pomegranate and raspberry), vitamins A, C and E and shea butter. I have been slathering it on my post-gastroenteritis complexion for a week or so now, and it is not looking half bad. The accompanying Age Correct Eye Serum is wonderfully soothing, and is currently combatting the effects of a 4.45am wake-up call from my four-year-old. It feels nice; it feels effective; it feels expensive.

What do you think? £40? £80? Come on, he's a big name, Dr Nick Lowe: clinics in London and Los Angeles, author of several books on skincare. Dr Perricone's range retails at around £45, as does Dr Weil for Origins; Dr Sebago is pricier (all good ranges, don't get me wrong, this is purely a price comparison exercise).

Well, get this: Dr Lowe's anti-ageing range starts at £9.95 for Hydrating Foaming Cleanser. The day cream is £16.95, ditto the eye cream. There's an anti-blemish range too, starting at £8.95, and two "skin solutions", a Redness Correcting Cream (£14.95) and a Brightening Radiance Cream (£16.95), which contains liquorice extracts. Best of all, you can get it in Boots. Lowe truly is the people's dermatologist.

Ah, but is it any good? Lowe maintains that there is only so much skincare can achieve; the rest has much to do with genes, lifestyle, a healthy diet, stress, lack of sleep (tell me about it), sun exposure. Miracles in a pot do not exist; you just need to look after your skin properly, inside and out.

The philosophy of this affordable range, then, is simple: prevention and repair. The ingredients and products have been trialled extensively over the past ten years in Lowe's clinics, as well as in clinical trials. To get that expertise, and still have change for the bus home, is the real miracle. ■



Lipstick Queen Berry Sinner, £15 (from www.spacenk.co.uk): opaque, silky, gorgeous

JOHN CAREY, PSC



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TRUTH IN BEAUTY
CLARE LAZARO

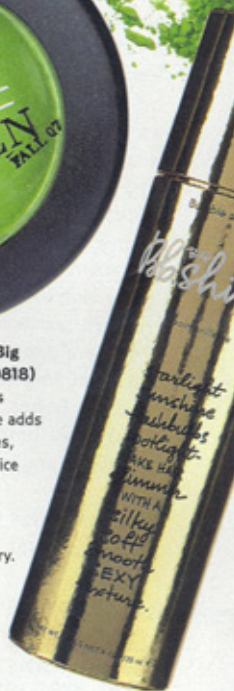
▼ MAC Alexander McQueen Pagan Eyeshadow, £10 at Harrods from 1 October (020-7730 1234)

This collaboration between Alexander McQueen, make-up artist Charlotte Tilbury and MAC is not for the faint-hearted. Expect graphic liners and bold colours inspired by Egyptian royalty.



► Bumble and Bumble Big Shine, £27 (020-7836 0818)

We love this shine spray's gold packaging. Big Shine adds a high sheen and defrizzes, making it the perfect choice for this season's sleek rolls, buns and braids or for calming down a voluminous blow-dry.



◀ Jo Wood Amka Organic Body Dew, £45 (0845 6076614)

An energiser for body and soul, this 99 per cent organic spray mist has an uplifting fragrance formulated with orange water that's ideal for nights out or long flights. Full of nutrients, it boosts skin tone and circulation.

