

# Montrealin Suomalainen

---

## *MEET JENNIFER BRODEUR - JB SKIN GURU WITH FINNISH ROOTS*

It is always a great delight to meet new Finns and Finland minded people in Montreal and share their stories with the community. This time it is my pleasure to introduce you to the entrepreneur Jennifer Brodeur who acted as one of the gold sponsors of our Suomi 100 gala. Not to forget to mention, she also created the stunning flower arrangements of the event and generously offered the lovely loot bags to the guests.

Jennifer, also known as JB Skin Guru, has made skin care her passion for the last 20 years. It was curiosity that led her to her career. *“I so desperately wanted to understand the correlation between food, lifestyle, and skincare. I started my career as a teacher, specializing in Chemistry and Biology. It was only in 2003 that the entrepreneur bug bit me. I am proud to say that I love to learn, I am still curious, and yes, I am a nerd!”*. She has dedicated years to teaching, researching and creating natural skin care remedies. She is the mastermind behind *Max +*, a highly sought-after LED light therapy machine used by skin care specialists around the world. Her sought after line of skin care products, *Peoni*, is shipped worldwide and her loyal customers are well-known figures - Karine Vanasse, Michelle Obama and Oprah among others.

Born to a Finnish mother and Canadian father, Jennifer has felt a very strong

connection to her Finnish roots. *“My äiti was born in Tampere, Finland, before her family immigrated to Canada. They actually had a large family of seven girls, three of whom were born in Finland. The Hytönen girls were pretty well known amongst the Montreal Finnish community”*. It is noteworthy to mention that Jennifer’s mother, Paula Hytönen, was a ballet dancer with Les Grands Ballets de Montreal. *“My mummo encouraged my äiti to dance because she had a natural talent. Eventually, she made her way to Les Grands Ballet de Montréal in 1957. She also danced on a TV show called “Like Young”. We recently found articles calling her a young up and coming talent to keep an eye on!”*.



*Jennifer with her mother, Paula Hytönen.*

# Montrealin Suomalainen

---

Jennifer says she sees very much the Finnish identity in her: *“I feel I was born with Sisu. Sisu has a mystical, almost magical meaning. It is a Finnish term that can be roughly translated into English as strength of will, determination, perseverance, and acting rationally in the face of adversity (failure). Sisu is not momentary courage, but the ability to sustain that courage. I believe my inner Sisu gives me the ability and courage to keep growing! When I have bad days, I think of my grandparents what they sacrificed in order for us to have better lives in Canada. It always works”*.

Jennifer believes that heritage is the heart of family history. As such, she wants to research, discover, preserve, and celebrate her heritage. *“You can imagine how elated I was when I did my ancestor test and my ancestry report said I was 100% European, 46% Finnish (makes sense)! It wasn't just me saying it, it was in my DNA in black and white!”*.

Jennifer has visited Finland several times and she has many great memories of her visits: *“My very first trip is certainly one of my most memorable. Not only because it was my first trip, but because I had the honour of bringing my äiti with me. We were both able to catch up and meet with family. Watching my äiti reconnect with her roots was stupendous! Everyone was so impressed that my äiti's Finnish was still so well spoken after so many years. Even though I was there for work, giving my first lecture in Helsinki, I felt so much pride.*

*Another great memory, is my trip to Lapland. It was special because I had taken the time beforehand to learn about the history of the Sami people, the land, and of course, the Northern Lights.*



*Jennifer enjoying her visit to Lapland*

Jennifer is about to launch a new product line Lumi and interestingly the inspiration comes from Finland. *“This line is certainly inspired by and dedicated to my Finnish heritage and to my grandparents. As you know, LUMI means snow. My inspiration for the product line was the snow and the Northern Lights. However, that's all I can say for now, but we are launching very soon!”*

We wish her all the best with the launching of the new product line and hope to see her in the coming events of our community.

*Karoliina Muukari*