MANASI 7 ALL OVER COLOUR IN DIANTHUS AND GAZANIA, £39 each; KAER WEI MATTE, NATURALLY LIQUID LIPSTICK IN BLOSSOMING, £27

GROWING THEIR OWN WAY

The luxury beauty brands making farming chic again.

What is an organic skincare brand to do when it can’t find the right raw materials? Grow its own, naturally. But for founders ploughing their own furrows, taking the leap into land management is as much about regeneration as quality control. ‘I don’t think people realise how much potential there is to grow skincare ingredients here in the UK,’ says Janine Summers of Olivanna London, who for the past three years has been turning an estate just outside London into an organic farm. It’s a slow process that started with a team of 200 sheep. ‘We’ve let them graze for two years – they keep the grass down, pull out the weeds and prepare the ground without pesticides, weedkiller or tilling,’ says Summers. By avoiding tilling (which erodes the soil, disturbs the ecosystem and releases carbon into the atmosphere), she also does her bit for biodiversity. It’s something that figures in the plans of many brands right now, from Guerlain’s partnerships with beekeeping programmes around the world to a luxury skincare-maker bringing rare olive trees back from the brink of extinction.

‘Everything we do is to preserve the heritage of the land,’ says Furtuna Skin’s Agatha Relota Luczo, an ex-model turned CCO who persuaded her husband to buy back a half-acre of family estate in the hills of Sicily, plus 700 acres more. ‘We combine state-of-the-art green technology with centuries-old farming practices, not just for genetic diversity, but to conserve the traditions of the people,’ she says.

In the fields of Grasse, perfumer Aurélien Guichard has been recognised by UNESCO for the techniques he uses to grow and harvest his own rose centifolia and tuberoses, including releasing ladybirds into his fields instead of pesticides. His aim? To reduce waste, protect soil fertility and enhance biodiversity. And proving that getting one’s hands dirty really is the smartest choice for a chic fashion and cosmetics house, Dior is regenerating six hectares of land on the Normandy coast by rebuilding hedgerows, reintroducing native vegetation and putting in a pond to attract wildlife. Eventually, the land will support 50,000 rose bushes, so Dior can source the rose extracts it uses in its Prestige skincare without fear of harming plant biodiversity and, ultimately, leaving the land in a better state than before.

SAVE YOUR BLUSHES

At Anna Sui, makeup artist Pat McGrath swept blush up over temples and eyelids, and at Etro, it was topped with a delicate scatter of crystals. For a flush that works anywhere on the face, Manasi 7’s sweet pots of multipurpose colour are made in small batches from locally farmed and wild-harvested materials and have paper and plant-based packaging. Or pick up makeup artist Kjaer Weis’s award-winning Blossoming blush – it’s so popular that it’s inspired a new spring collection.
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