

NEXT GEN legacy

Words **TANYA MEHTA, RADHIKA AGRAWAL,
OJAS KOLVANKAR & BARRY RODGERS**

During this unprecedented time, it is important that we need to shift our energy and focus on unity, encouragement, and support of one another. So, we're shining the spotlight on local brands and organisations that are doing great work, are eco-conscious, and have winning business models to boot. Go on, show these enterprises a little bit of light in these dark times



JUST HERBS

Ayurveda is an inherently Indian concept. And yet, most modern Indians don't particularly understand it, be it for medicine or self-care. "Ayurvedic beauty in our country has either been oversimplified, where it is reduced to a picture of a leaf on a label, or over-intellectualised, where it becomes so exotic that millennials can't relate to it," says Arush Chopra, CEO and co-founder of Just Herbs, a homegrown Ayurvedic skincare and make-up brand. The most interesting thing about the brand, which was created by Chopra and Megha Sabhlok, brand head and co-founder, is that it crowd-sources product development through digital channels and in-store activities. While this process comes with many challenges, it also has its unique set of benefits. At a time where the Covid-19 pandemic had businesses struggling to survive, Just Herbs launched Ayurvedic lipsticks made with ghee and sesame oil – thanks to their cult-like fan base of ingredient-conscious users. Their diverse skincare and haircare range offers everything under the sun – body butters, facial oils, hair serums, coconut oils, and more.

With clean and natural ingredients and green packaging, the brand does its bit in minimising environmental degradation and reducing waste. Today, the beauty industry has flooded consumers with a choice between millions of products. "Choosing between a product that's good for your skin and one which is safe for your health and that of the Earth is a choice you should never have to make," says Sabhlok.



Arush Chopra & Megha Sabhlok



Siddharth Somaiya

ORGANIC RIOT

Formerly an artist, Siddharth Somaiya worked in a specialty chemicals company for five years, allowing him to interact with many personal care brands around the world. Organic Riot was born out of Somaiya's realisation that 'safe skincare' in our country was a hoax. "Most problem-solving creams here have at least one hormone disruptor or carcinogen in them," he explains. In a country where the beauty industry relies heavily on consumer manipulation, his decision to offer complete transparency is worth applauding. The vegan, homegrown brand has a limited but impressive range of products for Indian skin, crafted after testing over 2,000 natural raw materials.

They source raw materials from all over the world – farms in regions such as New Zealand, the Amazon Rainforest, and the Konkan region of India. To warrant the potency of the oils, Organic Riot procures extracts only after gaining complete knowledge of how it has been extracted. Traceability, to Somaiya, is key. And he makes sure he does not keep this to himself. "As a conscious brand, I have come to realise that my role is to be an educator, who just happens to have these products," he says. He believes that brands that only display 'key ingredients' on their labels will soon be discarded and forgotten.