

THE MAGAZINE ABOUT SHOPPING

Lucky

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Beachy
Waves**

For Every
Hair Type

THE LUCKY GIRLS ISSUE

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Waterhouse,
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and more!**

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30 Pieces
You'll Wear All
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The Look That's
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**The
Brooklyn
Fashion
Revolution**

APRIL 2015



BB NATION

Maura Lynch goes skincare shopping in South Korea—a.k.a. the new center of the beauty universe—for The Next Big Thing.

You know the naked-in-public nightmare? Getting off a 17-hour flight—skin dehydrated and blotchy, undereye circles the size of saucers—in a country where each glowing complexion is more beautiful than the next is a remarkably similar (and equally terrifying) feeling.

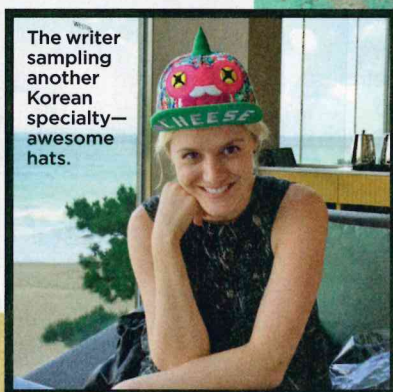
I've come to South Korea on a pilgrimage. Good skin has always been my best asset, and while Paris has long reigned as the beauty capital, South Korea has all but replaced it in the past five years, turning the entire world on to a new generation of skin perfectors: BB creams, sleeping masks and water peels.

"Beauty in South Korea is all about skin," says Charlotte Cho, the founder of the popular e-shop Soko Glam, one of many places now making the best of Korean beauty available in the U.S., from sites like Amazon and Memebox to stores like Sephora and Target. Cho, who is Korean American, worked for Samsung in South Korea for five years.

Korean fashion blogger Joy Yun's complexion needs no filter.



From left: Sulwhasoo Capsulized Ginseng Fortifying Serum, \$150, nordstrom.com. Laneige Multiberry Yogurt Peeling Gel, \$22, luckyshops.com/target. Artistry Ideal Radiance Illuminating Essence, \$123, amway.com. Dr. Jart+ Water Fuse Water-Max Sleeping Mask, \$48, luckyshops.com/sephora. Amorepacific Color Control Cushion Compact, \$60, nordstrom.com



"When I first moved to Seoul," she says, "my colleagues laughed when they saw I only had face wash and moisturizer."

A typical South Korean skincare routine can involve upwards of 10 steps. As a result, Korean women spend twice as much on skincare as American women, according to marketing research firm Euromonitor. Unsurprisingly, beauty companies from around the globe are racing to get into the market.

And the research and development going on in the country is just as attractive as its hyperactive consumer base. "There's a certain advancement in the devices, packaging and botanical ingredients that's unlike anywhere else," says Paul Seehra, Ph.D., director of research and development for U.S. beauty brand Artistry's Asia Beauty Innovation Center.

In the resort city of Busan, beauty boutiques line the streets like Starbucks. At mass chain Olive Young, there are sheet masks for everything: feet, neck, lips, elbows. I pass over the more confounding potions—such as Bounce Cheese Cream, which claims to "extend bouncily on your face such like 'mozzarella-cheese,'"—in favor of Shinefull



Booskin, an essence/toner hybrid that you press into your skin after cleansing.

At the massive department store Shinsegae, I buy a mousse treatment from the high-end line Hera, which a Google translation (the instructions are, of course, in Korean) tells me you're supposed to wear over your other skincare products to help with ingredient absorption. It feels tingly and cool and miraculously eradicates all the redness in my skin, leaving it clear and porcelain, just how I like it.

Hera is one of the biggest brands in Asia at the moment—its ads feature Jun Ji-hyun from the K-drama *My Love From the Star*, an actress so influential that, after a rumor spread across the blogosphere that she wore Yves Saint Laurent Rouge Pur Couture Lipstick in Rosy Coral #52, the shade completely sold out. Watch the show, though, and I bet you'll be less struck by the shade of her coral lipstick—spectacular as it is—than by her smooth and lit-from-within skin.

Jun's character frequently touches up with a cushion compact (cream hidden underneath a sponge, so when you press down with the applicator, you get the tiniest amount of product). Inspired, I pick up the original version by Amorepacific in hopes of replicating her flawless complexion.

After one use, I feel totally transformed—in the subtlest way. The formula glides over my skin like silk, is completely imperceptible ... and yet makes me look like I have a lightbulb beneath my cheeks. And while my skin may not be number one in the world (Jun Ji-hyun may actually hold that title), it's nice to know that now, burrowed in my *Comme des Garçons* pouch, there's something that will instantly make me feel a little more luminous and put-together—wherever in the world I am.