

Austin entrepreneur is a natural

NeuSkin owner takes an organic approach to career

By Amy Gabriel

SPECIAL TO THE STATESMAN

It seems a lucky thing to pair passion and profession, and Elizabeth Bentley has managed to merge the two by opening her new skin-care boutique, NeuSkin. After an early journey of searching for personal skin-care solutions and testing countless products, Bentley, 35, a University of Texas alum and former owner of an Austin massage therapy business, decided to parlay her personal journey into a career.

Glossy: Has starting your own skin-care and beauty studio been a longtime dream?

Elizabeth Bentley: Starting my own business has been more of an evolution. I've been on a quest to do what I love for a long time. I've worked for skin care companies, with makeup artists and spent a year apprenticing under a scientist and aesthetician. With a passion for skin care, the knowledge I coalesced from each of my experiences and a desire to work for myself, I decided to start my own business.

What specifically about the Austin market gives you the encouragement to launch your own business?

Austin is full of young entrepreneurs who have the devotion and fortitude to open small, independent businesses. Fortunately, there is such a strong backbone of local support within our city. Austin's also very keen on what the leading standards are in the world of health. Austinites are concerned with beauty but with

more of a natural and healthy approach.

If your skin could talk, what would it reveal to us about you?

My skin reveals the normal imbalances that everyone has. I break out, I get dry, I have freckles and signs of aging, but my skin is in the best condition it can be in for my age. I'm fortunate to have the tools with which to address my skin's needs and to educate my clients.

In what ways has your beauty regimen evolved over the years?

It's been a long and sordid process of elimination. I've tried every dermatologist prescribed topical medication, as well as antibiotics and even Accutane as a teenager. The more I've learned over the years, the simpler my regimen has become.

What is a common misconception when it comes to skin care?

We have a tendency to think using more of a product will give us better, faster results. This is a false assumption.

What is your personal fountain of youth?

Optimo-Firm Peptide from Inventive Eco Organic. It firms and supports the skin's natural healing mechanisms, increases radiance while improving the skin's tone, pigmentation and texture. Also, MSM (Methyl-Sulfonyl-Methane), which is a nutritional supplement that is essential to the function of every organ, cell tissue, antibody, hormone and enzyme. It has incredible anti-inflammatory and antibacterial properties.



ELIZABETH BENTLEY

NeuSkin owner Elizabeth Bentley has simplified her own skin-care regimen over the years.

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You feature the Austin-based Inventive Eco Organic line of skin care products in your studio. In a society that uses the term 'organic' on the ready, tell me, what does 'organic' mean to you?

Organic skin care is free of toxins. The skin is our largest organ; it's also the thinnest. Only 1/10th of an inch separates you from all sorts of toxins. Skin is highly permeable, allowing what you apply to your skin access to your blood-

stream. Bottom line, you should not put anything on your skin that you wouldn't be willing to eat.

Do you think regular skin maintenance eliminate the need for cosmetic surgery?

I do. Most people have not been taught how to properly wash their face and how to care for their skin. I think the beauty industry is so vast, and we are clueless about what our skin care needs are and how to address them. If we have acne, we race out to buy the harshest over-the-counter acne medication or a dermatologist for an even stronger treatment. If we have wrinkles, we are tempted by expensive cosmetic procedures and department store creams. We are at a huge disadvantage with the

lack of overt information about ingredients and how they will affect us long term. Most of us are trying to recapture our youthful past or find a quick fix with unrealistic expectations. The reality is that we have to take time to learn about the right way to care for ourselves.

What is the one piece of advice you would give to women who strive for healthy, youthful skin?

You should nourish your skin the same way you nourish your body. A diet rich in omega-3s and antioxidants, organic veggies and lean meat, exercise, enough sun exposure to produce vitamin D, but not enough to burn your skin, restful sleep and a natural skin-care regimen.