

“The Rose Sheet”[®]

COSMETICS, SKIN CARE AND FRAGRANCES

DECEMBER 17, 2012

Vol. 33, No. 51

Surya Brasil Targets *Preciosa* To U.S. Salons, Facing Resistance At Mass

SUZANNE BLECHER s.blecher@elsevier.com

Surya Brasil is beefing up its natural and organic hair-care offerings in the U.S., initiating a stateside launch of its *Amazonia Preciosa* line featuring sustainably harvested Amazonian ingredients.

The firm has set its sights on salons after meeting with resistance from mass retailers on the basis of pricing.

Already popular in Europe and South America, *Amazonia Preciosa* is the only one on the U.S. market to feature essential oil garnered from the bark of the *Preciosa* tree in the Amazon rainforest, which is known for its cleansing properties and fresh fragrance and used by natives to wash their hair and faces, according to Wanda Malhotra, director of U.S. operations for Surya Brasil.

While the firm's Color Fixation Restorative Shampoo and Conditioner can be found in stores like Whole Foods Markets and Ricky's for \$9.99 each, *Amazonia Preciosa* products are priced at a premium, reflecting their higher concentrations of natural ingredients, Malhotra said.

For example, *Amazonia Preciosa Buriti Restorative Color Hair Mask* (\$15.99) features oil from the vitamin- and iron-rich buriti fruit, used by indigenous peoples to protect against damage from UV rays, pollution, wind and other environmental factors, Surya says.

The product also contains ucuuba, an oil from the nutmeg family, emollient-rich murumuru, super moisturizer cupuacu, andiroba seed and Brazil nut oil, according to a product insert.

Sao Paulo, Brazil-based Surya Brasil works with the indigenous Yanomami tribe, considered to be the “guardians of the forest,” to source ingredients for the line sustainably and protect the biodiversity of the Amazon.

While just beginning to offer its *Amazonia Preciosa* line to U.S. retailers, Malhotra has already experienced some pushback, with clients like Whole Foods Markets expecting a lower retail price for the product. Many of the grocer's natural shampoos

and conditioners fall under a \$10 retail price point.

“If I make a mask with these ingredients and sell it for \$9.99, I'm either paying to sell it or I'm reducing the amount of ingredients, which is not what we are going to do,” Malhotra said in a Dec. 5 interview.

Natural ingredient concentrations in the hair mask are so high that “you can see the fruit” in the formula, she added.

Brazil Nut Shampoo (\$19.99), another entry in the line, contains a 21% blend of aloe vera, Brazil nut oil and cumaru. In all, *Amazonia Preciosa* comprises 23 skin, body and hair-care products, including a purifying and firming Facial Clay Mask (\$23.99), emollient-rich Liquid Hand Soap (\$28.99) and Massage Oil (\$69.99) packed with Brazilian oils and botanicals.

Many of the products in the line are labeled as 99% natural and contain organically farmed ingredients. *Amazonia Preciosa Cupuacu Shampoo* (\$19.99) is one such product, with roughly 23% of its ingredients derived from organic farming. The entire *Preciosa* line carries Ecocert and Cosmetique Bio natural certifications, along with vegan and cruelty-free status.

To find a welcome home for *Amazonia Preciosa* in the U.S., Malhotra has begun approaching New York hair salons, including Salon Ishi, which offers hairstyling, nail services, aromatherapy and “shiatsu pampering options,” according to its site.

Unlike mass retailers, salons “understand the value” of high-quality ingredients and are less likely to balk at the price, she said.

While Buriti Extra Gentle Shampoo is admittedly not “super cheap,” if you “understand what it does for your hair, the ingredients in it and the value of what it is doing for the environment and society, \$19.99 is nothing,” Malhotra said.

New Home For Naturals?

Surya's distribution strategy could prove beneficial not only to the company but also to the salons it's targeting.

Media coverage in recent years has painted salon services as potentially toxic, eye-watering experiences using chemical-laden formulas. Reports of adverse health effects associated with popular formaldehyde-based hair-smoothing treatments, such as *Brazilian Blowout*, for example, have aroused concerns among consumers and prompted regulators to crack down on products and practices in salons (“*House Reps Request Clarification From FDA On Brazilian Blowout Status*” – “*The Rose Sheet*,” Dec. 17, 2012).

The professional beauty community has been slower to adopt natural products than the consumer market due to the perception that they under deliver on results compared with conventional formulas, but wider use of natural-orient-

ed products in spa and salon settings could help stylists and aestheticians win back the public’s trust.

Last year’s Cosmoprof North America trade show in Las Vegas featured a number of natural, “chemical-light” products targeted to beauty pros, including Italian firm **Philip Martin’s** hair-care line made with up to 90% organic ingredients and **Liquid Keratin’s** self-titled line of home-use straightening products, touted as “a better alternative to control unmanageable hair than the expensive, toxic and dangerous treatments being offered by salons” (“*Natural, “Chemical”-Light Products Targeted To Beauty Pros At Cosmoprof*” – “*The Rose Sheet*,” Aug. 15, 2011).

Risk-Free Trial Offer

[CLICK HERE](#) to start your 30-day, risk-free trial of “The Rose Sheet”

Top down, comprehensive weekly industry insight and analysis.

© 2012 F-D-C Reports, Inc.; An Elsevier Company, All Rights Reserved.

Reproduction, photocopying, storage or transmission by magnetic or electronic means is strictly prohibited by law. Authorization to photocopy items for internal or personal use is granted by Elsevier Business Intelligence, when the fee of \$25.00 per copy of each page is paid directly to Copyright Clearance Center, 222 Rosewood Dr., Danvers, MA 01923, (978) 750-8400. The Transaction Reporting Service fee code is: 1530-1222/12 \$0.00 + \$25.00. Violation of copyright will result in legal action, including civil and/or criminal penalties, and suspension of service. For more information, contact custcare@elsevier.com.