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This rare ingredient from the Nile is a miracle balm for my skin — and it's under \$30 on Amazon

Jessica DeFino Mar 29, 2019, 12:50 PM



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This is a straight-up miracle product for my skin, if there ever was one. LXMI

- Nilotica, a relative of shea butter, is a rare ingredient sourced from the Nile in Africa, and it's a miracle balm for pretty much any skin issue, from dryness to acne to eczema.
- Beauty brand LXMI sources pure nilotica from its native environment in Northern Uganda and injects in into a bevy of beauty products — from an all-over body balm to a skin-changing sheet mask to a glow-giving highlighter — all of which are incredible, in my humble opinion.
- The range is available on Sephora and Amazon, and products will run you between \$8 and \$58.

I don't take the world "miracle" lightly, especially when it comes to skin care — I've learned the hard way that there's (usually) no such thing. Handling my chronic dermatitis and hormonal acne has always been a labor of love that involves gentle, natural ingredients and a *whole* lot of patience. But after discovering nilotica, a rare ingredient sourced from the Nile River by beauty brand LXMI, I'm reconsidering my entire skin-care philosophy. I'm just gonna say it: There *is* such a thing as a "miracle balm." And this is it.

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It seemed like kismet when a tube of LXMI's Pure Nilotica Melt showed up on my doorstep just as I was diagnosed with a skin condition known as pityriasis rosea. It's a sort of non-contagious relative of chickenpox, characterized by dry, scaly patches all over the chest, stomach, and back. (I know, cute.) There's no treatment for pityriasis rosea; my dermatologist simply said to wait it out, as the condition is known to self-resolve in six to eight weeks. After desperately cycling through my usual go-tos for dry skin (Aquaphor, Eucerin, coconut oil, etc.) without results, I decided to slather my body in nilotica overnight. My pityriasis rosea was *completely* gone in just two weeks — a full month sooner than a typical case. See? Miracle balm.

I thought, *If this ingredient can soothe an incurable skin condition on my body, what could it do for my face?* And that's how nilotica became the star ingredient in my all-over-skin-care routine. Today, I use it to moisturize my face, heal chapped lips, and keep my arms and legs silky-smooth. It's a one-stop shop for head-to-toe glow.

Read more: *I bought an infrared sauna blanket for \$400 on Amazon, and I've never been more energized and less bloated in my life*

"While working in Uganda, I was searching for a solution for my dry, jetlagged skin," Leila Janah, the founder and CEO of LXMI, tells Business Insider. "At a local market, I stumbled upon nilotica, an

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heirloom sub-species of shea butter that only grows in Northern Uganda and Southern Sudan, near the origin of the Nile River." The substance has been revered by locals for hundreds of years for its ability to soften and protect skin from the harsh sun, but it's relatively unheard of outside of the area. "I was astounded by the buttery texture with zero processing, and its ability to plump up and penetrate my moisture-deprived, overly traveled skin," Janah shares — and almost immediately, she knew she had to share its power with the world.

Nilotica's efficacy comes from its high fatty-acid content. "It contains 25% more essential fatty acids than traditional shea butter, and is also packed with nourishing vitamins A and E," Dr. Aanand Geria, a [dermatologist with Geria Dermatology](#) in New Jersey, tells Business Insider, calling it an ideal remedy for dry winter skin or heat-damaged, brittle hair. "The fatty acids give nilotica its texture," Janah adds. "Most pure shea butter is hard and waxy, while nilotica at room temperature has the feel of whipped butter."

This melt-in-your-hands texture is a huge part of why I'm so obsessed with nilotica. While coconut oil and shea butter are great, they have the tendency to harden at room temperature and usually require a little elbow grease before they can be massaged into skin. With [LXMI's products](#), there's none of that.



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Nilotica nuts before they're used to make skin-care products. LXMI

Nilotica also contains allantoin, which improves skin smoothness and protects it from irritating substances," Dr. Geria says. In other words, it's like a luxurious shield against bacteria, pollution, and environmental aggressors. As it protects on the surface, it heals deep within pores.

"Nilotica is clinically proven to reduce the appearance of fine lines like crow's feet, improve scarring, and reduce symptoms of eczema," Janah says (which explains why it healed my dry, scaly patches like *that*). "We also encourage those with acne to give it a try as a cleansing balm." Because nilotica has antibacterial properties, it can

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eliminate acne-causing bacteria without stripping skin of necessary natural oils. "It's superior to chemical-laden gels or foams that dry out and destroy the skin's microbiome and cause it to overreact, producing even more sebum," the founder explains.

Read more: [I put goat milk on my face to soothe irritation — and it actually works](#)

I gave her cleansing method a try with the [Pure Nilotica Melt Nourishing Balm-to-Oil](#), and my hormonal breakouts *loved* it. Normally, when acne is in the middle stages of healing, it develops a dry covering or starts peeling. But the fatty acids and nourishing vitamin E inside this African ingredient help keep skin clear and hydrated — no peeling skin in sight.

"I travel 500,000 miles a year and carry a tube of our single-ingredient [Pure Nilotica Melt](#) wherever I go," Janah says. In a pinch, it stands in for her overnight moisturizer, oil cleanser, and hand cream. "I'll even use the melt as an eye cream and massage into the under-eye area with a copper wand to depuff and remove dark circles." Talk about a multitasker.

"On a long flight, I use our [Deep Hydration Sheet Mask](#) and then a dollop of Melt as a moisture barrier; it makes you look greasy at first, and then absorbs completely leaving dewy skin by the time you land," she says. Second to the balm, the sheet mask may be my



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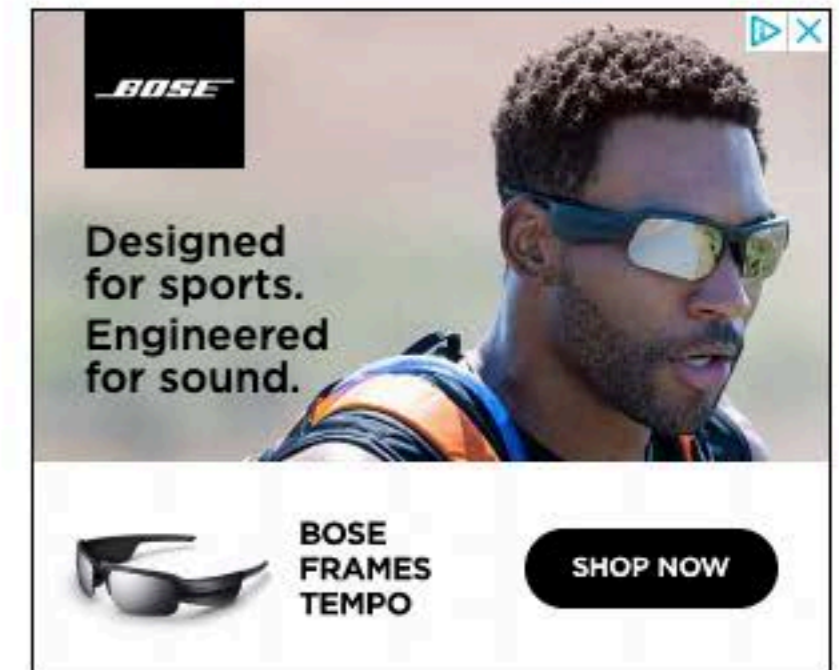
favorite offering in the LXMI line, too. The name says it all; it delivers deep hydration and a next-level glow in just 20 minutes.

Other standouts include the [Lip Melt Treatment](#) — my new take-it-everywhere lip balm for a dry winter pout — and [Goddess Glow](#), a rose gold tinted balm that can be used as a skin-hydrating highlighter on your cheekbones, brow bones, and cupid's bow.

"I even occasionally cook with nilotica, as it works as an enhanced coconut oil in smoothies and vegan snacks," the founder shares. "Practically everyone of our products is edible — I believe that whatever you put on your skin should be as safe as what you put in your mouth." As a natural beauty buff, I appreciate this. I'm pretty strict about what I let soak into my sensitive skin, and anything that's pure enough to eat gets my stamp of approval.


If you're interested in experimenting with nilotica in the kitchen, reach for the single-ingredient [Pure Nilotica Melt Nourishing Balm-to-Oil](#) or [Pure Nilotica Melt](#). "These products contain just a single, organic ingredient: 50 nilotica nuts, cold-pressed into a luxurious balm," says Janah. "I sometimes add it to my morning coffee or smoothie."

As if all that multi-benefit goodness wasn't enough, LXMI's products support marginalized women living in the ingredient's native area "through the wild harvesting, production, and exportation of



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nilotica," according to the founder.

Sourcing from Northern Uganda presents another positive, as well: Plants wild-harvested from their native environment are more potent. "I think a lot of brands don't understand the importance of terroir, which refers to the origin of your beauty ingredients and the soil microbiome that they have developed in," Janah says. "It's been proven scientifically that wild plants have higher nutritional content than farmed ingredients, even organic ones, and that's a core tenet of our brand."

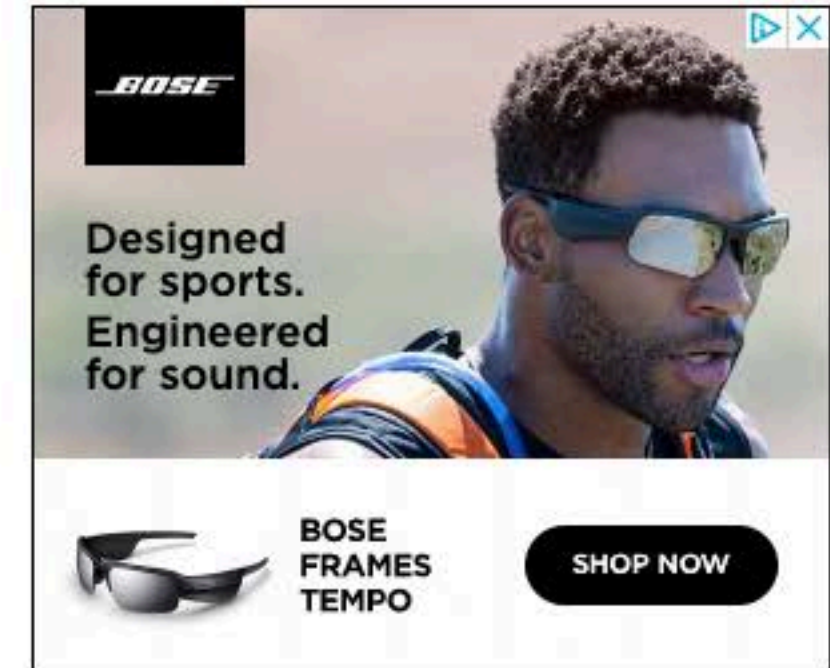
In my opinion, all these little things — the purity of the nilotica, ethical sourcing practices, and organic, wild harvesting — add up to something bigger: a straight-up skin-care miracle, if there ever was one.

Buy the LXMI Pure Nilotica Melt from Amazon for \$28

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