

A BOLT OF BLUE

by [julie](#)
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KARI GRAN SKINCARE

The beauty of being in your forties is that you learn to respect your body. More than ever I am aware that toxins can do harm to my body, from preservatives and harsh chemicals sprayed on food, to strong chemical agents added to beauty products. So, when my pal Christina introduced me to [Kari Gran](#), a skincare company from Seattle that promotes natural products in an effort to preserve women's health, I got excited. They sent me their starter kit and it was love at first site. Not only are the black bottles sleek, but the smell is heavenly and makes me feel like I've set foot in a spa twice a day, and then of course...my skin started GLOWING. Needless to say....I'm now a loyal customer and fan!



[Kari Gran skincare](#) is the creation of Seattle native, [Kari Gran](#). Through her own experiences with hormonal imbalances caused by an autoimmune disorder, she began searching for natural beauty products that would not cause any harm to her body. Her research led her to the idea of starting her own skincare line and with the help of her friend [Lisa Strain](#), Kari Gran skincare products became a reality. Kari Gran products are free of petrochemicals, parabens, phthalates, mineral oil, chemical additives, toxins, preservatives, synthetic fragrances or animal-tested ingredients, and they are an Eco friendly company!

Thanks to my friend Christina, I was able to ask Lisa and Kari some questions regarding their beauty products and company philosophy.

Kari, you declared yourself a beauty junkie before being diagnosed with an autoimmune disorder. After the diagnosis you ardently researched and became aware of the dangers of toxins in products and how they can enter your bloodstream. What are the worst offenders and why?

Unfortunately, the list can be long and daunting. My personal top three are:

Parabens: They act as endocrine disruptors and my poor hormonal system is already confused enough. Look on the label for the following ingredients: Methylparaben, Propylparaben, Isoparaben, or Butylparaben.

Phthalates: They are also hormone-disrupting chemicals (labeled as: Vinyl, PVC, Phthalates, DEHP, Fragrance and Parfum).

Petrochemicals: They are petroleum byproducts that coat the skin like plastic and clog the pores.

****Cosmetic Petrochemicals** appear as: (Paraffin Wax, Mineral Oil, Toluene, Benzene, Phenoxyethanol, Anything with **PEG** (polyethylene glycol), Anything ending in **'eth'** indicates that it required ethylene oxide (a petrochemical) to produce. Anything with **DEA** (diethanolamine) or **MEA** (ethanolamine), Butanol and any word with **'butyl'**, Ethanol and words with **'ethyl'**, Any word with **"propyl"**, Methanol and any word with **'methyl'**, Parfum or fragrance – 95% of chemicals used in fragrance are from petroleum.



I think there are so many people unaware of the ingredients in their beauty products and whether or not they are being tested on animals or contain gluten or other animal byproducts. What needs to be done to bring better awareness?

For me, I had to advocate for my own health and that started with reading food labels. I credit [Michael Pollan](#) for that one. Then, I moved to the labels of my beauty products. I did get tricked a few times by the greenwashing techniques of companies using a few key buzzwords like paraben-free, which doesn't always mean they have a clean ingredients deck. We want to provide the consumer with education, not false promises and are very transparent about what we put into our products.

In your skincare line, oils are of the utmost importance and not just any oils. Why are oils so important and what are the oils to avoid?

Healthy oils nourish and hydrate the skin (think about the oils that are good for you when you eat them and that's a great place to start when checking labels for ingredients) One of my personal favorites is avocado oil. I think we all have a fear of oil in beauty products because of the oils derived from petroleum that do in fact clog pores. Check your labels and I'll bet you see some of the unhealthy Cosmetic Petrochemicals I listed previously.



The great thing about having a midlife epiphany is being able to share that information with your friends and family. How has your life changed since you started Kari Gran skincare and what's the most important thing you can tell young women about taking care of their skin?

You mean a mid-life crisis? I love being able to talk skin care and green living all day long and one day, I may even get paid more than minimum wage! Really, over the past 10 years, I've really been seeking a better way of living in hopes of feeling better on every level. When you have a chronic illness, you just don't get to set it down if you're busy and get back to it when you have a chance to breathe. It's all about what choices I make, on a consistent, daily basis, about what I put on and in my body. The most important thing I can say about taking care of your skin, to women of any age, is wear sunblock every day of the year. It's not just limited to summertime. In addition, think about your skin as what it is, the body's largest organ. Up to 60% of what you put on it can be absorbed into your bloodstream. You don't think so? Think about a nicotine patch....

In a way, skincare almost seems to be returning to it's roots...back to essential natural essences, herbs and oil. It reminds me of something from the Medieval days, where they would go gather their herbs, and return home to grind them with a mortar and pestle. It's strange to even think about how we got to where we are today, with scientists in labs adding chemical additives to lotions, soaps and shampoo. How did we ever get to a point where it was okay to harmfully modify our products? The best way to control what goes inside your body is to support companies like Kari Gran!

Thanks to Lisa and Kari for answering my questions!

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