



## Getting Personal With Eco-Skin Expert Kari Gran

Read our exclusive interview with Kari and find out what she carries in her bag

By: Shuchi Mehta

Posted September 17, 2014

Looks may be skin deep, but radiance comes from within. Seattle-based beauty maven, co-founder and owner of the [Kari Gran](#) brand of natural, non-toxic skincare and self-described "beauty junkie" began her quest for natural replacements to her daily beauty routine when she was diagnosed with an autoimmune disorder. Her philosophy is that ingredients matter—whether they're in your food or on your face. We had the privilege of getting an in-depth glimpse into the life of this local celeb...and into her handbag. Sit back, relax and feast your eyes (and skin) on some of Kari's eco-skin beauty tips, tricks and must-have products.

### **In your own words, what is the reason you started this company?**

*The company is really the brainchild of my business partner, Lisa Strain. I was immersed in the land of formulating and testing a line of healthy products on myself for years. It was only after giving her the gift of the line that she brought the idea to life as a business. How often in life are you lucky enough to have someone say "hey, this is something you love and are really passionate about, why don't we give it a go as a business?" It still feels a little surreal.*

### **What are some of your no-excuses beauty routines/rituals?**

*Washing my face every night before bed, period. Using the Kari Gran skincare system has become a ritual and something I really look forward to doing. Waking up with clean, hydrated skin isn't so bad either.*

### **What are some of your beauty routines that you try to squeeze in when you can?**

*I like to use a greek yogurt/manuka honey mask for a light, gentle weekly exfoliation. It's just equal parts of 2 percent organic plain yogurt and honey. Leave it on 10 minutes and wash off. Another favorite is a good old fashioned Epsom salt bath with some lavender essential oil.*

### **What is your advice to women with problem skin?**

*Take a good hard look at what you're eating. Often times that can be a big culprit. Breakouts are generally an*

*expression of inflammation that is happening in the body and it shows up on the face. Another thing that happens is women try a lot of products all at once to remedy the situation, which tends to backfire.*

**We've grown up with the idea that oil = bad for your skin, but today that opinion is slowly evolving. Your skincare line incorporates many essential oils in your products; why do you love them so much?**

*Not all oils are created equal and people should be on board with the idea that mineral oil and petroleum-based oils are not good for the skin. They will clog your pores. I think this is where our phobia of oil came from. Plant based oils and essential oils are amazing; they smell good and nourish the skin. It's a little like eating good healthy fats like olive oil which are good for you but margarine—not so much.*



**Skincare is more than just skin deep and on your blog you talk a little bit about the importance of nutrition. We want to know what you eat! What are some of your favorite skin-loving foods and what does a typical breakfast, lunch, dinner menu look like for you?**

*A perfect day (and let's be honest, they aren't all perfect) is typically a breakfast of black coffee, eggs and a green drink packed with good-for-you, skin-loving foods: kale, parsley, cucumber, ginger, lemon juice and pineapple. I make enough in the Vitamix for breakfast and a mid-day snack that I throw in my bag. Lunch is usually leftovers from the night before or avocado and tomatoes on Udi's gluten free bread and an apple or pear. We always have almonds on hand at the office and one of our building mates has been providing a daily supply of cherry tomatoes from their deck for snacking. My favorite dinner is grilled salmon with a side of sautéed kale and roasted potatoes. The omega-3 fatty acids in salmon are so great for the skin.*

**Can you provide a quick beauty routine/tips for those women with busy family lives or careers?**

*Wow, this is the perfect opening for a little shameless self-promotion. When I decided to move away from an eight-step daily skin care regime, it made my life just a little bit easier (not to mention [how much less] I had to pack for travel). Our entire line is focused on a minimalistic approach to both skin care and makeup. Add the Clarisonic weekly and it's a fast and easy extra exfoliation. With makeup, we like to promote a quick and easy five-minute-face. I've lived with the choices of 20 blush and eye colors in my cabinet and those days are long gone. I favor a more timeless, "goes with everything I wear" approach. Plus, it looks really great on every skin tone.*

**How do you balance your busy career and your life?**

*I practice yoga three to four times a week as well as Transcendental Meditation. If you would have told me that 20 minutes of meditation twice a day would actually give me more time (and peace of mind), I would have told you to find me a 25-hour day to make it work. The reality is, it has kept me sane in the land of a startup. Life is always*

going to be full of ups and downs and I have to have things in place so I don't tip over when things get a little crazy.

**Do you use any non-Kari Gran products? What are some of your favorites?**

*Absolutely. Sunology SPF 50 face crème is something I use every day, not just in the summer. Sunblock is hands down the best anti-aging product on the market. Zoya makes great nail polish that's free of all the bad stuff that usually comes with nail polish. It stays on like crazy too, which is a big bonus.*

**What are some products that you absolutely can't live without or that you always carry with you? We want to know what's in your bag!**



**1. Lip Whip** has to be at the top of my list. There are always at least three in my bag. I've been testing new colors to add and so I keep my working samples with me and see if I really want to use them. It's been tough to pull me away from our first color we added to the line this spring. Radiant is my standard go-to.

**2. Hydrating Tonic and Essential Serum travel sizes:** I use the tonic to mist mid-day when I'm feeling parched and it does a nice job of refreshing my makeup. The serum works wonders mid-day around my eye area which is really dry. I also mix the two in my palm for a lightweight hand lotion. They are the best on an airplane too.

**3. Lisa's current playlist obsession notebook.** Her rock-and-roll tendencies are starting to rub off on me.

**4. iPhone or my mini-laptop**

**5. Green drink** (kale, parsley, cucumber, ginger, lemon juice and pineapple): this is my back-up plan if the day gets a little light on the fruit and vegetable intake.

**6. Pinch Provisions bag:** Believe it or not, there are 15 things that you never knew you might need stuffed into this little pink bag from everything you need to fix your nails to stain remover.

**7. Eyelash curler:** This is something I've had in my bag since the late '80s! It gives you that instant "awake" look, even when you're not.

**8. Perfume roller:** *I miss wearing perfume since giving up synthetic fragrance. This is my own little creation of my favorite French rose essential oil blended with a few other plant oils.*

**9. Mini tape measure:** *This is a throwback to my days in real estate. It was a gift from a client and comes in handy.*

**10. Reusable bag:** *This takes up very little space and saves getting a bag when I do a quick stop at the grocery store.*

**And last but not least, are you looking at any big changes for Kari Gran skincare? Any new products we can look out for?**

*I'm always using Lisa as our head guinea pig to try products we have had our customers ask for. Our latest products are two new Lip Whip colors for holiday: 'Naughty' (a dark, shimmery plum) and 'Nice' (a peachy-nude). We also just launched our all-natural mineral makeup line this summer—it's completely toxin-free and, similar to our three-step skin care line, is completely customizable.*

It may be fate or coincidence, but now that you're probably super excited about stocking up on some healthy Kari Gran beauty products, we have a surprise. For the first time ever, Kari Gran announced a skincare sale last week through this Sunday, 9/21. She calls it [The Little Black Dress of Skincare Sale](#). We approve.