



Kari Gran is a skin care and makeup company created by local Seattleites Kari Gran and Lisa Strain. Using only all natural, organic and non-GMO ingredients, Kari Gran wanted to create products that would be good for women inside and out. (Joshua Lewis / Seattle Refined)

## Simplifying Seattle Beauty: Kari Gran Is The 'Little Black Dress' Of Skin Care

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Pop Quiz, ladies! What apparel item can you wear for a date, a fancy event or even to the office and still look classically stunning?

Three words: little black dress. It's simple, it's elegant and it naturally looks amazing on every woman.

Wouldn't it be great to have a skincare line like that?

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That's what a local Seattlite thought when creating her company. Kari Gran's skin care line is summed up by the phrase "The Little Black Dress of Skincare."

Using only all natural, organic and non-GMO ingredients, Kari Gran wanted to create products that would be good for women inside and out.

The inspiration started here in Seattle when Gran was diagnosed with an autoimmune thyroid disorder. Knowing that every thing you place on your skin goes directly into your blood stream, she sought to find a solution to incredibly healthy products, which proved to be difficult to find.

"I like to think I have a Ph. D. in consumption because I have tried every product on the planet since I was 11!" Gran exclaimed. "The inspiration was really that I was searching counters and Whole Foods for products that were clean, non-toxic and smelled good... but no! It didn't exist at that time!"

That is what led her back to her own kitchen to research and experiment with oils and natural ingredients. However, what took her products from her counter to across the country was her best friend from yoga, Lisa Strain.

Proclaiming herself as 'Chief Guinea Pig', Strain had been being given homemade samples for months and encouraged Kari to start a production. Her 'guinea pig' title was revamped into co-founder since the two created the 'Kari Gran skin care brand three years ago.

No longer in Kari's kitchen, the ladies moved all of the production to a building on Westlake Ave across from South Lake Union. Even with their brand being shipped worldwide, they still do all of the mixing of ingredients, handwrite all the expiration dates on the bottles and do packaging themselves.

Although the skin care line is three products, so much care is put into each bottle. The line is made up by the Cleansing Oil, Hydration Tonics and Essential Serum. They all can be used day and night, every single season and with any age or skin type.

Gran keeps it simple, saying, "I am taking [skincare] from 12 steps to three. This line is the go-to classic-not trendy. That is why it works."

The whole line works with simplicity. For example, with the cleansing oil, pump product into your hand and rub gently onto your face for a few minutes. It will erase any makeup residue or mascara. Use a hot towel twice to remove the oil.

Next, morning and night, create your own face cream with the Hydrating Tonics and Essential Serum. Spitz the Tonic into your cupped hand and add however much Essential Serum you feel is appropriate for your skin, whether it needs more hydration or less.

"It is all about what you want," Strain says as she rubbed the serum into her hands. "You are in control of what you need,

every single day. You have customization options; three steps but it does so much more!”

The entire brand was designed to do more than one service. The Hydration Tonic is used to create the face creme with the Essential Serum, the serum can be used to make the Kari Gran’s mineral makeup into a liquid foundation, and a whole variety of other pairings. You can see the makeup tricks and tips on her YouTube [channel](#).

Just like her skin care line, Kari Gran’s All Natural Mineral Makeup System carries only the necessities: Foundation, Mineral Blush, Setting Powder Veil, Blush, Concealer, Eye Shadow and Lip Whip.

The Foundation is the only product that comes in 8 shades, but the rest of the products are one simple color.

The reason is each product is extremely pigmented. The consumer gets the variety of color and definition from how they utilize the makeup. Each product creates many different shades by the pressure put on the brush to the skin or lips, the amount of layering and whether water is added.

“It is a matter of what you want to do. That is our answer to ‘why don’t you have thirty shades of lip color?’ You get to pick what shade you want it!” said Gran.

Demonstrating how the eye shadow can be six different shades with just one application, Gran says the dirty little secret in makeup industry is most companies will sell you a million different colors.

"But it's really just this simple," she said.

No dirty secrets are kept in this local brand. Uncomplicated, healthy and classic are characteristics of the Kari Gran brand.

Like Gran says, good skin is always in and never goes out of style.