

beauty & style

THE GREEN GUY'S GROOMING GUIDE

SMOOTH MOVES

The importance of pre-shave oils shines through in these product picks



By Kevin Raub

I loathe shaving as much as the next guy.

Still, the chances of me ever growing a beard pretty much come down to two possibilities: If I ever need to flee an international warrant for my arrest; or the end of the world à la Cormack McCarthy's *The Road*. Having succumbed to this somewhat daily fate, I find myself in constant search of *The Perfect Shave*. That just isn't going to happen without pre-shave oils, which soften and moisturize your stiff five o'clock shadow in preparation for the razor. Armed with my brand new Gillette Fusion ProGlide razor (what are they up to now, 10 blades?), I treat my precious mug to a slippery fiesta of natural and organic pre-shave oils in search of eternal shaving bliss.

I've always looked at **L'Occitane** products in wonder: So lovely, yet I've always felt they should be more organically oriented. It turns out **Cade Shaving Oil** is certified organic head to toe. Who knew? The recipe is simple, too: Certified organic juniper essential oil along with certified organic borage, evening primrose, macadamia, and sunflower oils. It's nicely priced as well, though I'd be lying if I said I didn't wish it had a little more zing to it. It's light both in scent and feel, so it doesn't give my beard that tingling love I like in a few other oils here. But I road tested this one with such a scruff, my sister told me via Skype that she wasn't feeling my grizzly look, and it tamed it into oblivion. But to truly win my heart, I need some spices and flavors to shake things up, and this one comes up short. loccitane.com

Jaimeearl's Prepare Pre-Shave Oil is exciting for so many reasons. First of all, it's larger and cheaper than most other

offerings here, and on top of that, does so much more: Not only does it do the obvious (nourish and lubricate) but it contains anti-inflammatory and—this is the kicker—SPF properties as well. Its ingredient list is a who's who of yummy oils: Grape seed (high in antioxidants and phytonutrients), cranberry (moisturizing), meadowfoam seed (emollient), olive (cell regeneration), wheat germ (protection),



rosemary (cell renewal), neem (anti-everything), and red raspberry oils (UV protectant)—all of which are certified organic with the exception of the rosemary. And Jaime is from Atlanta—my hometown. She's after my own heart, indeed. jaimeearl.com

Vitaman Shave Oil out of Australia, is all black pepper and spice with a hint of clove, though not as clove-like as the offering from Yum Gourmet. It's almost like a Punjabi curry, which I have just finished living on for three months, so I should know. The usual suspects are here: Jojoba, sweet almond, clove bud oil and vitamin E, with noted surprises like black pepper and patchouli oils. But what makes

Vitaman's oil even more interesting is that it doubles as a massage oil. I imagine this could turn the old man's "Triple S" morning routine (Shit, Shower, and Shave) on its head. May I suggest Shower, Shave, Seduce? I mean, seriously. Nobody actually has a job anymore. Where do you have to be? Slap this pre-shave oil on your face, followed by slapping it all over your honey. vitaman.com.au

Yum Gourmet can seemingly do no wrong and its **Pre-Shave Oil with Clove** is no exception. It smells delightful, a combination of Christmas and a candy shop—like shaving inside Willy Wonka's Chocolate Factory on Boxing Day. Organic jojoba, organic grape seed and rosehip oils provide the nourishment and lubrication and there's organic arnica, too. Essential oils of peppermint, ginger, and cypress insure the masculinity of it all. It's a pleasure to apply, which is more than I can say for most oils that happen across my face. The trick with all of these is applying them and letting them sit for a minute, soaking into your whiskers and working their magic—a hard sell when most of us just want to get shaving over with. This one, however, sits on my face with pleasure. yumskincare.com **OS**

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