



The Green Guy's GROOMING GUIDE

Soap Stars

A sampling of organic soaps leaves our columnist squeaky clean.

By **Kevin Raub**

Believe it or not, I'm actually a morning person—I need little incentive to rise and shine at the crack of dawn each morning—but that's not to say I don't appreciate a little hand-holding through the first few minutes of sunlight until I get to my Fair Trade cup of Joe. That's where my choice in soap comes in. Of all the toiletry items currently available in organic versions, soaps are perhaps the most plentiful and offer the easiest transition (I mean, anyone who has seen *Fight Club* knows soap derived of any kind of fat is thoroughly disgusting, so it's not a hard sell). In addition to keeping me squeaky clean, I like a soap that slaps me in the face (and maybe on the fanny) and helps put the swagger in my step. Let the experiment begin.

The appropriately titled **Organic Guys Bar** from the U.K.'s **Simply Soaps** is just that: A nice enough bar of soap, with no fancy-shmancy essential oils to make me smell like I'm heading into herbal warfare, no added pomp and circumstance. Don't get me wrong, there's sunflower oil, tea tree oil, palm oil, coconut oil, cedarwood, and sage here, but in small enough doses to keep true to its name. Anything else wouldn't be so simple now, now would it? Truth be told, I kind of like my soap to tell me something in the morning, like, 'Get the hell up!' for example. This one doesn't do it, but kudos for its carbon-footprint friendly bio-wrap packaging and direct catering to men.

That's *almost* what **Awaken** does, a 96 percent organic soap laced with coffee, cinnamon leaf, basil, and patchouli, from California's **Pallas Athene Soap**, a pleasant little company that is nice to animals and the environment. This mild exfoliating soap is full of lovely ingredients (avocado, jojoba, wheat germ, cardamom, oats) but its scent is a mere peck on the cheek when I want a punch in the face. I mean, look...I'm going to

get out of the shower and lunge for my coffee anyway, but it's nice to get a jumpstart while I wash between the toes. There's organic, shade-grown coffee here, but it's a Short when I need a Venti.

Kiss My Face's Sports Complex soap gives off a little jolt, but it's more medicinal than energetic. That's due to the tingly blend of jojoba and eucalyptus oils that are set into the oversized bar (8 ounces is a bit too unwieldy until you've used it for a few weeks). The base is certified organic palm oil, which creates a nice, creamy lather, but the eucalyptus comes off as more menthol, giving me the impression I'm treating my entire body for a head cold instead of giving it a thorough dousing. Kudos to Kiss My Face, however, for the excellent size-to-cost ratio of this soap, which lasts considerably longer than the others on this list.

I got super-excited when I heard about the little natural soap company from Texas that could, **Fraiche**, as they had a soap with actual coffee beans and cocoa embedded within. But their **Cinnamon Hazelnut** version was more like washing my body with dessert. My inclination was to eat it, not slather it on. Their **Green Tea** soap fared better—I'm digging the certified organic olive oil, Dead Sea powdered clay, and, of course, green tea. I felt less emasculated using it (and less like a pastry chef) and I didn't have to clear the drain of coffee beans afterward.

Pangea Organics' **Canadian Pine with White Sage** soap is a highlight—something about this one makes me feel like Grizzly Adams after a wild night chopping firewood and cooking pork and beans over an open fire. It's like washing with a pine tree, which I like. It's full of organic street cred (soybean oil, coconut oil, Manitoba harvest hempseed

Mineral Makeup for Men

It's a disturbing trend, but somebody had to test it, so with my manliness squarely on the line, I spent a few days under a layer of the latest movement in facial SPF: Mineral man-makeup. Why minerals? Titanium and zinc provide broad-spectrum UVB and UVA protection, unlike chemical sunscreens, which do their best just to handle UVB. Why makeup? I'm still struggling with that one.

HVE Bronzer for Men is made exclusively for men by Jane Iredale and features five shades to choose from, all with SPF 18. I won't sugarcoat: It's dishearteningly emasculating to powder my nose with this stuff, but I can't fight the results, a nice little glow to my otherwise sun-starved grill. If my friends see me apply this, though, I will have a lot of explaining to do. *A lot.*

Less eyebrow-raising is Luzern's **La Defense SPF 30**, a 100 percent mineral, anti-UVB, -UVA, -infrared, and -pollution sunscreen from Switzerland that reduces the sun-induced breakdown of the collagen matrix, one of the primary causes in the development of lines and wrinkles. It's damn hard to rub in, though.

My favorite is Juice Beauty's **SPF 20 Medium Mineral Moisturizer**; its medium tint absorbs the easiest and doesn't leave a ghostly hue on my face. Certified organic white grape and pomegranate juices are thrown in the mineral mix, which helps me reach my daily allocation of fruits and vegetables *and* ward off cancer. For that, I'll gladly sacrifice a little masculinity. **SS**

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