



The Green Guy's GROOMING GUIDE

Feet First

Our dedicated columnist pounds the pavement in search of the perfect foot balms.

By **Kevin Raub**

We writers spend a surprising amount of time on our feet (that's because most of us are poor, and therefore don't have cars, so we walk everywhere). Since my main gig as a travel writer also encompasses guidebook writing, my peddlers often are pounding the pavement 12 hours a day for month-long stints. Put simply, Epsom salt ain't gonna cut it: I need some heavy-duty healing measures to put the spring back in my step. Lucky for me, there's no shortage of natural foot balms and creams aimed at rescuing my weary feet.

The Victorian Garden Peppermint & Lemongrass Foot Balm came out of South Africa, in my luggage, on a recent safari trip (half the fun of traveling is seeing what I can pick up along the way!). This fervently eco-friendly little company makes a wealth of light, wonderfully smelling products in Kiehl's-like packaging. The foot balm smells like a delicious Thai soup, heavy on the lemongrass and peppermint with a healthy dose of organic shea and cocoa seed butters and jojoba and evening primrose oils. It absorbs nicely and isn't greasy whatsoever, leaving my feet feeling fine. South Africa is a long way to travel to buy it, but when has anything good ever come easy?
www.thevictoriangarden.co.za


The Amazon holds many secrets, most of which I like to eat (açai, for example!), but with the recent discovery of a previously unknown Amazonian tribe in Brazil, I started thinking: The folks living there must know a thing or two about natural self-care. **Ikove by Florestas Foot Cream** is exploiting that fact for the better of mankind, most notably calling upon wild-harvested rainforest Guaçatonga and Copaiba extracts, two trees that tribes use

to disinfect and purify, as well as essential oils from Brazil nut and Babaçu to moisturize. After slapping this stuff on, my clean-smelling feet feel ready for jungle trekking. My mind, due to the company's ECOCERT certification, as well as its Fair Trade practices, is at ease as well.
www.ikove.com

Before I move on to the next one in the bunch, I have a confession to make: I love all things Weleda (mainly due to the nifty German packaging). Everything they create smells great. But it's pricey, so it needs to work as well (my love cannot be bought by mere pheromones alone). **Weleda Foot Balm** calls on biodynamic (a step above organic that dates back to the Depression) calendula and marigold extracts and organic, anti-bacterial myrrh to combat calloused kicks. This rub rides the fence between the easier-to-absorb options here and the thicker, gooier balms that require staying off your feet for 30 minutes post-application lest you risk the floor coming out from under you in a violent misstep. It doesn't dazzle and delight with peppermint and other tingly oils, but rather leaves feet feeling fresh and delicious, smelling good enough to (almost) eat.
www.usa.weleda.com

As the name implies, **Dragonfly Fortissimo! Serious Salve** is probably a bit out of my league: This gloppy Canadian product, handmade in Cowichan, British Columbia, must be what lumberjacks and coal miners call on to mend the cracked fissures of their scaly paws. Made with 100 percent essential oils and organic shea butter, vitamin E, beeswax, and plant oils like certified organic lavender (distilled by the owner herself), it

penetrates deep and hard, leaving my feet soft and buttery after but one application. It feels like Vaseline but without all the petrochemicals. I mean, this stuff could turn a diamond into a Kashmir sweater in no time. It lacks the tingly oomph of others here, making things like peppermint and menthol seem like small-time gimmicks. This one is for the big boys.
www.dragonflydreaming.com

As a constant world traveler, my feet find themselves stepping in some very suspect showers in some very out-of-the-ordinary places. Hence, athlete's foot is a common hazard of the job. **Dr. Hauschka's Rosemary Foot Balm** must have been invented specifically for me. Essential oil of rosemary and silk powder pack a one-two punch, working simultaneously to keep my feet dry (thank you, silk) and refreshed and ready to run (kudos to the rosemary), all packaged in a convenient travel-size. The vaguely menthol sensation is a little tingly but nothing overwrought. The entire product is not only BDIH Certified Natural—Europe's most stringent certification—but is biodynamic as well. The downsides are twofold: The doctor must not realize that I write for a living, so the hefty price tag isn't quite as soothing to my bank account; and, at a mere one ounce, the tube only lasts about 10 days. If that disappointing combination doesn't give you pause, this one is a real treat for the feet. 
www.drhauschka.com

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