



The Green Guy's GROOMING GUIDE

PIT STOP

A heroic quest for natural deodorants that deliver.

By **Kevin Raub**

You can't imagine the love-hate relationship I have with deodorants. Be they synthetic or natural, an uncomfortable percentage of them cause a rash, a burning sensation, or a reaction in my lymph nodes—a problem my mother tells me my late father lived with as well. There wasn't an autopsy, so who's to say it wasn't deodorants that stole him from us long before his time? Suffice it to say, I'm picky about what I rub under my armpits. Finding a deodorant that not only works but *works for me* is an Everest-like challenge made even more difficult by narrowing my field of choice to natural. Though this was, in my humble opinion, the least effective segment of the organic movement until recently, I'm now happy to report there are a few natural deodorants out there that actually do keep one from clearing a room.

On first application, **Lafe's Natural and Organic Tea Tree Hemp Stick** stung my pits a little—perhaps that was the certified organic hemp oil or just my sensitive skin—but after a day or two, the sting went away. I was happy. But then it returned, so this Texas-produced deodorant didn't quite find its way onto my love list, though there is no shortage of great things about it. It's 71 percent certified organic, it glides on invisibly like a regular stick deodorant, it smells slightly medicinal but not overbearingly so, and it works! How novel. The company even shells out one percent of its proceeds to breast cancer; and they have been at it since 1992, so there's been plenty of time to get this right. I have Tea Tree under my arms, but this line also comes in Unscented, Active, Lavender, Fresh and Powder. www.lafes.com


Finally an organic deodorant that doesn't feel like I'm using anything other than Speed Stick! **Bumble & Bee's Pit Putty** is everything a natural deodorant should be. It looks and feels like a traditional deodorant stick, right down to the white smears on

my colored T-shirts when I don't get dressed carefully enough. It's 100 percent organic and free of all things that will one day drive me batty. It smells wonderful, like lemon and clove, and after subway-testing it on a non-air-conditioned Brazilian Metro, my pits still smelled like Christmas. Arrowroot powder, extra-virgin coconut oil, lemon peel, and clove essential oils round out the certified organic wonders here. It comes in whimsical cartoonish packaging and with a 100 percent guarantee. I can smell a deal like that from miles away! www.bumbleandbee.com

A revolution in natural deodorants was promised by the new and improved **Organic Grooming by Herban Cowboy's Unscented Deodorant**, just released in May. This one immediately grabbed my attention due to its ousting of propylene glycol, instead relying on a renewable corn-based derivative which is non-irritating (after my own heart, indeed) to handle fragrance distribution duties (it comes in Dusk and Wild scents, too). It contains certified organic sage, parsley, rosemary, and aloe and calls on both historic and cutting-edge bactericides to bring this baby up to commercial deodorant strength and effectiveness without the damage. For a product that has spent a full seven years in Research & Development, I expected big results—the kind of results seen in testing during tantric sex or a marathon. But being that I'm neither Sting nor Kenyan, a standard run through the neighborhood had to suffice. Did it pass muster? Did it now! A 40-minute run in near-equatorial humidity and I was still respectable, according to the good ole spousal sniff test. My only complaint is the slighter “creamier” texture depletes a bit faster than traditional stick deodorants, so you need to buy it more often. Other than that, you're looking at the next generation. www.organic-grooming.com

Europeans haven't always had their armpits on the pulse of deodorants—let's be

frank here—but the Germans have manufactured a winner with the **Logona MANN Deo Spray**, an unassuming little guy that does a big-time job. I gave it the 5K test in 4 PM afternoon heat and lo and behold, a solid run didn't deter this BDIH-certified natural deodorant. It smells woodsy without smelling like a pine tree, and owes much of its greenness to certified organic witch hazel and birch leaf extracts. I'm not sure why this one works over the ones here that do not, but I'm guessing it has to do with the poplar bud extract, as I don't really know what that is, and it's what's missing from the others here. Either that or good old-fashioned German engineering. www.logona.de

Erbaviva's Lemon & Sage Deodorant smells wonderful—certified organic essential oils of lemon, sage, patchouli, and tea tree make for a lovely underarm bouquet—but as with most natural deodorants, disappointment inevitably follows. If you are sitting around your air-conditioned house on a *Lost* DVD marathon, mixing these essential oils into a slightly stingy organic grain alcohol base *might* work, but if you move whatsoever in temperatures above 70 degrees Fahrenheit, it's not going to cut it. That's a shame, because Erbaviva is a cute little company doing great things for the organic movement (especially for mothers and their babies), with a load of celebrity fans, but I can only think it's the Organic Stretch Mark Oil for mama or Sniffles Organic Chest Rub for baby that they love, not the spray deodorant. So, this one works for couch potato-ing, but doesn't work for beer runs to the kitchen. www.erbaviva.com 

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