



The Green Guy's GROOMING GUIDE

Face It

These organic facial washes contain everything from fruits to vitamins to keep your mug grime-free.

By **Kevin Raub**

If there's one line of natural skincare products that leaves men saturated with choice, it's face washes. My mom was always asking me as a child, "Did you wash your face?" It's stuck with me all these years that it's a pretty important part of daily upkeep. We already tackled scrubs in a previous column, but what about everyday mug maintenance? As I'm a little dreary when I step into the shower in the morning, I like something with some *oomph*, something that sends a rush of blood to the head and kickstarts my day with a foaming cocktail that pleases as many senses as possible all the while digging out the dirt. The scrubs do their dirty work to get out the grease and grime that is embedded deep in my pores, but in-between, I like to do a little preventive maintenance. My face isn't particularly oily or dry, so the following reflects products for the average man's face: Normal. Whatever that is.

Jason's Super-C Cleanser Gentle Facial Wash despite its mouthful and somewhat redundant name, it isn't necessarily for men

specifically, but I took to it a while ago for two reasons: the vitamin C Complex with Ester-C and Beta Hydroxy Acids, responsible for wiping away the dirt, is like slapping a bucket of freshly squeezed orange juice on my face every morning. It's also packaged in a long, slender tube, which makes it ideal for space-efficient travel. The whole thing feels extra-powerful, especially in the antioxidant department, and it feels like it's working the minute it goes on. Given that perception is half the battle, this one earns major kudos. Certified organic aloe-vera leaf gel removes dead cells and excess oil.

www.jason-natural.com

Rare2B's Toning Cleanser part of a 100 percent certified organic, 100 percent vegan product line out of California, is full of things I like (grapefruit, pineapple, witch hazel, cedar bark, and peppermint), but not too much of any of them. The result is a mildly masculine face wash that doesn't make me feel like a lumberjack (all that pine and cedar), or too fruity (all that citrus) or too light in my loafers (all that lavender and honeysuckle). And this one pulls double duty. Not only does it whisk away the crud, but it tones up those pores as well, reducing their size, for those who are overly concerned about such things. I'm not. But I am concerned about the effects of UV exposure on my precious face, and the inclusion here of white horehound, a perennial herbaceous plant indigenous to the U.K. (where it's also used to make a lovely beer), helps trim back that damage before I even get to my SPF moisturizer. www.rarenatural.com

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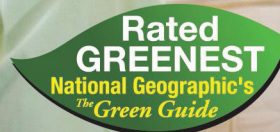
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From the Great White North comes **Yum Gourmet Skincare's Blue Chamomile Cleanser**, which is true to its name: It's a delightful face martini that seems good enough to drink. Organic green, black, and white teas deliver a triple burst of powerful antioxidants, as well as that morning burst of caffeine that I'm seeking. Extracts of blue lotus and German chamomile are the face wash equivalent of a long, hot bath—a de-stressing and soothing liquid massage. It's silky and foamy, two important traits (according to a dermatologist I once dated who had skin like milk). It's also mild, which is important for men so that they think they aren't overwhelming their face with a perfumed concoction that is borderline sissy. It's for the mild-mannered man, like me.

www.yumskincare.com

Anise is a pretty polarizing flavor, you either like it or you don't. I do, so things like black licorice, absinthe, and **YonKa for Men's Foam Gel** do not offend me. Organic licorice root extract dominates this slippery gel, but it's rounded out by organic citrus, peppermint, and patchouli leaf essential oils as well as YonKa's herbal concoction that includes rosemary and thyme. The cleansing is handled by coconut and palm, red algae clarifies the skin, and iris root tightens up those pores. I haven't yet met a YonKa product I didn't like, and this one is no exception. But it ain't cheap. www.yonka.com

Other than a questionable Drakkar stint in high school, I've never been a fan of colognes, so I'm surprised by how much I love **Pevonia Botanica's Aqua-Gel Foaming Cleanser**—the most perfumed cleanser of this bunch. Pevonia, an elite-spa line, is not yet certified organic, but is chemical and cruelty-free (and comes in post-consumer recyclable and biodegradable packaging) without coming off as tree-hugger. For this reason, it's a great bridge product between the two worlds. This silky gel, laced with organic saponaria root extract, green tea, and lemon verbena extract, foams quickly and thoroughly, wiping away impurities with a zest of patchouli-lavender, a strong, masculine scent that is the manliest bit of my morning. Just a little dab will do ya—just like Drakkar. www.pevonia.com

Hungary's **ilike's Nettle Exfoliating Wash** even in all its regurgitated pea-colored-green glory, is also a face wash I wouldn't kick out of the shower in the morning. The use of organic, hand-harvested pulps (rather than extracts) gives it a more powerful organic boost (it's all very Old World). Ilike's products are interesting across the board, mainly because of their use of unconventional ingredients you've never heard of, like stonecrop, soapwort, yarrow, naseberry and rowan sorb, to name a few. They aren't nearly as superficial as their competitors about looks and smells, as these products rarely look or smell like anything desirable. This face wash is no exception—using it is a bit like dumping wheatgrass on your face—but I like it because it is not mass produced and they've been at it in their organic gardens in Hungary's Carpathian basin for 50 years. There are downsides, though. Are you familiar with stinging nettles? This one stings like holy terror if you get it in your eyes. Speaking of eyes, no need to rub them for clarity, it really does cost \$64. www.szepelet.com

Kevin Raub is a travel and entertainment journalist and a contributing writer at Organic Spa Magazine. His work appears regularly in Travel+Leisure, Town & Country, American Way, Dame, and Lonely Planet, among others.