

THE DEAD SEA

BEAUTY PRODUCTS WORTH THEIR SALT

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TOP ROW: Yes To Carrots C the Difference exfoliating and soothing mask; Dermalogica Hydro-active Mineral Salts; Buta'i Hydra E Day 12H ultra-hydrating day cream.

BOTTOM ROW: Bliss Hot Salt Scrub, available at Sephora and BeautyMark; SpaRitual Instinctual Organic Bath Salts, available at Murale; Ahava Body Sorbet Caress.

A HOTBED OF RESOURCES, Israel is making its mark on the beauty and skin-care industry. Israeli companies like Ahava, a pioneer in Dead Sea products, and newer ones such as Yes To Carrots and Buta'i are all gathering a cult-like following. Meanwhile, international companies have taken note. Following suit, beauty products everywhere are beginning to harness the benefits of the mineral-dense Dead Sea, employing its water, salt, silt and algae as ingredients.

The name "Dead Sea" is actually a kinder translation of its true Hebrew meaning; Yam ha Maved literally means "killer sea". And as one of the saltiest bodies of water in the world, the Dead Sea is just that. It is too harsh an environment for almost all life; nothing but rare algae can survive such intensity of salt. But ironically enough, the water has deep detoxing, therapeutic and beautifying effects on the human body. People from all over the world flock to this part of Israel to float—the sea's salinity is so high it keeps bathers above the water—and soak in its waters. But that's no secret. For centuries, the Dead Sea has been touted as a fountain of youth because

of its minerals. According to legend, Cleopatra's essence, vitality and beauty were derived from her frequent dips in the Dead Sea.

Some 10 times saltier, and with a completely different property than ocean water, the Dead Sea is comprised of an extremely high concentration of minerals. "Minerals present in the salts are naturally present within our skin cells and are essential to maintaining healthy, supple skin and proper function," says Leslie Derderian, assistant marketing manager of Ahava. Salt from the Dead Sea is only about 10 per cent sodium and the rest is made up of over 26 minerals and trace elements such as, magnesium, bromide, iodine, sulphur, potassium and calcium and zinc.

Just how significant are these minerals to both internal and external health? Magnesium promotes quick healing of skin tissue and provides the skin's surface with anti-allergic elements. It is also essential for cell metabolism. Bromide soothes skin, relaxes body muscles and calms nerves. Iodine is important for the correct functioning of the thyroid gland and aids in the body's metabolic exchanges. Sulfur is a natural

disinfectant (constituent of certain vitamins). Known as a powerful detoxifying agent, sulphur also works closely with the liver to rid the body of toxins. Potassium helps balance moisture in the skin and body, aiding in the reduction of water retention and in the nourishment of cells. It also regulates the nervous system. Calcium is an essential mineral, known to strengthen bones and teeth. It also fortifies cell membranes and cleanses pores. Sodium relieves stiffness and muscle cramps and is also a powerful detoxifying agent, helping cells retain nourishment and expel waste. Zinc, when applied topically, is known as a natural sun protector, and also boosts the immune system. Internally, it is a key factor in enzymatic regulation of cell proliferation.

"We all start out with these minerals, but they deplete as we age, lessening the skin's ability to retain moisture," Derderian says. Products made from elements of the Dead Sea feed these minerals back into skin cells improving its overall health. No one wants early wrinkles or an overall dull appearance, so let the Dead Sea breathe life into your beauty regime. —ASB