

Local couple takes aim at cosmetic industry

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By **Kathy Michaels**

Tucked into a little shop in West Kelowna, a young couple is concocting mixtures aimed at taking a bite out of the giant cosmetic corporations.

No small feat really, but Scott and Jen MacDougall say the mineral makeup they blend at their business Earth Lab Cosmetics offers women the type of product they deserve.

Made from finely milled natural minerals like titanium dioxide and zinc, mineral makeups like theirs are being touted as the healthy alternative to finishes that cause acne and allergic reactions.

But not all blends are made equal, explained MacDougall.

“We are a handmade mineral line which is really unique,” she explained. “Our products have no additive fillers or preservatives in the minerals.”

Similar products out of the larger cosmetic corporations have a heavy dose of fillers— such as mica bismuth and oxychloride—binders and dyes, and for those who have skin issues it’s is just as bothersome as bargain basement foundation.

“My mum is in her 60s, and she suffered from rosacea. She couldn’t wear makeup because everything irritated her skin,” she said.

“She tried other mineral lines and she still couldn’t wear it, skin would get red irritated and itchy, what we found is that it was because of the fillers.”

When the MacDougalls started making their own cosmetic line, Jen’s mother was once again able to wear the makeup.

So they went into business and so far things have been a great success, though Jen admits the recent birth of her two children has made it tough to manage a fledgling business.

When they have a time to get out and sell their wares the biggest challenge is teaching people that less is more.

Minerals are micronized, or finely ground, so they act like millions of tiny mirrors, reflecting light off the skin to give it the trademark luminescent glow. Without talc and other fillers, colours are also more concentrated, making just a skiff of powder versatile as cover-up, foundation, powder and sunscreen.

“Because it’s a handmade line, our mineral foundation and eye powders also don’t completely absorb into women’s skins so they use less,” she said.

“And 90 per cent of those who try our product buy it because there’s no residue buildup, no talc or powders— someone 15 can wear it and it won’t go into their pores and someone who has sensitive skin can wear it too.”

Jen said it sets automatically, and no touchups are needed all day.

“I have women calling me after a demonstration saying they want to buy some, that’s the kind of success rate we have,” she



The MacDougalls are bringing their mineral makeup to the Okanagan with Earthlab Cosmetics

said.

For the time being the MacDougalls will sell their product if you contact them through jen@earthlabcosmetics, but their ultimate goal is to find a health conscious retailer to sell their product.

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