

# WHY KOREAN BEAUTY IS CULT

It all started with a BB cream; the beauty balm that houses skincare benefits and therefore straddles both categories of skincare and cosmetics. This new foreign object found its way into our beauty regime and all of a sudden, our attention was cast to Asia. This single product (and subsequent CC cream) established Korea's reputation in the saturated world of beauty and gained them a whole new following. We all had to know... What other beauty arsenals do they possess? *What do they know about skincare that we don't?*

The Asian culture focuses their attention on skincare; the foundation of beauty and the key to looking well. They lead the way in skincare innovation and when a new product, treatment or ingredient makes its way to us here in the UK, you can bet it's already of cult status in Asia. The innovation of beauty in Korea for instance is overlapping all developments here in the Western world and we're lapping up these new beauty products as rapidly as they're being developed. What is so poignant in Asia's approach and outlook on beauty is that they appreciate that makeup can only cover and enhance your looks but your skin is the true foundation for beauty. And if you want to know good skin, look to Korea.

It shouldn't come as much of a surprise when you look at our approach to other areas of our lives. We're leaning further towards a holistic way of living more than ever before. There is a ritual of self-care involved, from medicine to grooming.



## The biggest beauty innovation... The Sheet Mask

After our first big introduction to Asian skincare, the BB cream, the second product which has taken the skincare and cosmetics world by storm is most definitely the sheet mask.

We all know the benefits of a face mask and these have long been hailed as a restorative and luxurious treatment but sheet masks enter a whole new realm. On first impressions a sheet mask may seem like the same concept as its aforementioned partner only the product is applied via cloth or paper but there is science and, we won't deny it, convenience applied in the application of a sheet mask.

### How do I use a sheet mask?

Scary-looking they may be sheet masks are simple to apply and use. There are handy cut-outs in the sheet for your nose, eyes and mouth so you can comfortably wear a mask without needing to hold your breath for an impossible amount of time and the cut outs also allows the sheet to fit the contours of your face.

Always follow the instructions for each individual sheet mask but you typically wear a sheet mask for 10- 15 minutes and allow all the good stuff lining the mask to sink into your skin. We love sheet masks because you're presented with the perfect amount of product to apply to your skin and there's none of the fuss rinsing product off after your pamper session as all the product should sink into your skin and if there is any excess you can massage this into the skin.

# The Beauty Expert



LIVING spoke to Korean Lifestyle and Beauty guru, Vicky Lee about what a Korean skincare regime really entails. Born and raised in Korea but now residing in London, Vicky follows and advocates a beauty routine instilled in her from a very early age. Going far beyond the generic cleanse, tone and moisturising routines that the majority promote, Vicky tells us her Korean beauty secrets on how to keep the complexion healthy, hydrated and in its best possible condition morning and night.



## The Korean **MORNING** beauty routine

### Step 1: Cleansing

First thing in the morning, cleanse your skin with water. Water removes the few impurities that settle on the face during the night, and keeps skin hydrated, too.

### Step 2: Toner

To balance the skin's pH levels, it's important to apply toner; otherwise the skin can become dry and dehydrated. Toner further helps to absorb the next products you apply.

### Step 3: Essence

Essence is a hybrid between a toner and a serum. It works perfectly to hydrate the complexion, aiding cellular turnover for a youthful appearance.

### Step 4: Ampoule

Similar to serums, ampoules actually comprise an even higher number of active ingredients to target specific skin care concerns. They're used for a finite amount of time as a booster when your skin badly needs the extra help.

### Step 5: Serum

Concentrated formulas with an unprecedented amount of active ingredients, serums target specific skin concerns like wrinkles, dark spots, and dehydration.

### Step 6: Eye Cream

Smooth a light eye cream across both the brow and socket bone moving from the inner to outer corner of the eye. Here, the skin is at its thinnest as there are no sebaceous glands to produce natural oils, so it's important to keep this area hydrated and protected all day long.

### Step 7: Moisturiser

Next apply a soothing moisturiser in a light layer across the skin for long lasting all-day hydration.

### Step 8: Sunscreen

Applying sunscreen shouldn't be reserved for the summer holidays. Protecting the skin on a daily basis from UV rays will avoid the development of dark spots, wrinkles and fine lines.



## The Korean **NIGHT TIME** beauty routine

"Korean skincare is all about layering. Toner, essence, serum, ampoule, moisturiser... 10 steps sound like a lot, but each one has its own important job to do to keep skin young, healthy, and glowing." – Vicky Lee

**Step 1: Oil-based Cleanser.** For the evening, select an oil based cleanser to start with as this will work to remove oil-based makeup and impurities from the skin.

**Step 2: Double-Cleansing.** Following the oil cleanser, use a water-based cleanser to gently remove the oil residue and water-based impurities from the day.

**Step 3: Exfoliate.** Twice a week use a gentle enzyme or bead-based exfoliator to remove the dead skin cells that can make the complexion appear lack-lustre whilst blocking pores and preventing key product ingredient absorption

**Step 4: Toner.** In the same morning manner, next apply a toner to balance the skin's pH levels.

**Step 5: Essence.** Apply your essence to hydrate the complexion...

**Step 6: Ampoule.** By applying this super charged serum at night, your skin will be able to absorb all the hydration it needs following a long day's work...

**Step 7: Serum.** Following which, the serum should then be worked into the specific areas of concern.

**Step 8: Sheet Mask.** The sheet mask is a Korean beauty favourite – a cloth saturated with skin loving ingredients! Perfect for all skin types, everyone can benefit from these masks which deliver a deeply hydrating and anti-ageing treatment.

**Step 9: Eye Cream.** Once the skin has absorbed the ingredients from the sheet mask, apply an eye cream to protect and hydrate the delicate eye area.

**Step 10: Moisturiser.** Lastly, select a night time moisturiser to keep those skin loving ingredients locked in, allowing you to wake to a beautifully rejuvenated complexion.