

WWD FRIDAY

The Beauty Report

Bare Escentuals Works the Night Shift

NEW YORK — Leslie Blodgett wants to start a nighttime beauty revolution.

Blodgett, the president and chief executive officer of Bare Escentuals, hopes women will “stop wearing their husbands’ T-shirts to bed and [instead] buy beautiful lingerie and high thread-count sheets.” She suggests they can stop slathering on heavy creams and adopt her new skin regimen called RareMinerals Skin Revival Treatment Night. She’s even donned a silky negligee at a press party heralding the debut of RareMinerals to hammer home her point.

An offshoot of her company’s successful BareMinerals, a mineral makeup line, RareMinerals is applied before going to sleep and is said to deliver smoother, brighter and healthier skin overnight. “And it makes you more attractive when you go to bed. My husband is happy,” quipped Blodgett.

RareMinerals was a pet project of Blodgett, who, in her quest for innovative products, discovered the beauty benefits of soil from organic farms.

The organic soil mineral concentrate was formulated to be absorbed deep within the skin to promote exfoliation and cell turnover, while reducing the effects of acne, redness from rosacea and hyperpigmentation. In addition to the organic soil mineral concentrate, RareMinerals includes vitamins C and A, antioxidants and anti-inflammatory factors. “We like to say you wake up with the skin you were born with,” said Blodgett. Additional benefits, she added, are the reduction of fine lines and wrinkles,

Critical Mass By Faye Brookman

an increase in skin firmness and elasticity, increased skin hydration, a reduction in the appearance of pigmentation spots or imperfections and fresher, brighter skin.

In a controlled independent laboratory study with women ages 30 to 46, nearly 84 percent of the sample said the product made their skin feel softer, smoother and refreshed after three weeks. More than 80 percent claimed to have clearer skin, fewer visible imperfections and less discoloration. Nearly 90 percent said their skin was less dry.

Another unusual component of Rare Minerals is a patented pillow puff applicator. The puff helps users apply just the right amount of powder. There is even a mirror on the top of the container so it can be applied at bedside.

RareMinerals will bow next April exclusively in Sephora. In May it will roll out to Bare Escentuals boutiques, QVC and other retailers stocking Bare Escentuals. The suggested retail price is \$60 and there are four shades — clear, light, medium and dark. Blodgett said RareMinerals can be used with other nighttime products or alone. She isn’t ruling out expanding the franchise to include other night products, perhaps for men.

Blodgett said RareMinerals was a logical step for her firm since so many women love the fact that BareMinerals



Leslie Blodgett

can be worn to bed. The franchise is riding high, with total sales exceeding \$200 million in 2005, according to industry estimates.

BareMinerals is often the best-selling beauty line on QVC, a partner that Blodgett credits with helping her company rev up sales with her first appearance in 1997. Staying awake at night trying to figure out how to get Bare Escentuals products into shoppers’ hands, Blodgett be-



RareMinerals Skin Revival Treatment Night

came a TV shopping junkie. Her segments on QVC have attracted a cult following. She personally answers e-mails and names products after customers. Blodgett appeared last month on QVC's Today's Special Value segment and sold 166,170 units in one day, a new beauty

record, according to QVC.

Bare Escentuals' sales at its own retail boutiques and specialty stores such as Sephora are flourishing. There are currently 29 boutiques that Blodgett feels help build the brand without cannibalizing from sales at Sephora, Ulta

or QVC. "This brand is all about word of mouth. People see me on TV and go to a store where they can get the full experience and learn how to swirl, tap and brush. In our boutiques, we send people to other stores that might have a bigger selection of what they want," explained Blodgett. She hopes to open between 10 to 20 stores next year and has intentions of giving them a fresh look that could include a wall of customers' pictures.

Her relationships with fans have been a hallmark to Bare Escentuals' growth; items are often named after users. Blodgett also has taken note of inquiries from women with lupus who use the products to even out their skin tones and she hopes to work on a beauty kit especially for the 1.5 million Americans suffering from the disease. Bare Escentuals is expanding in foreign markets, particularly in Japan, where it is a hit on the local QVC. The growth frenzy of the brand is enough to make Blodgett tired...but at least she'll go to sleep looking beautiful.