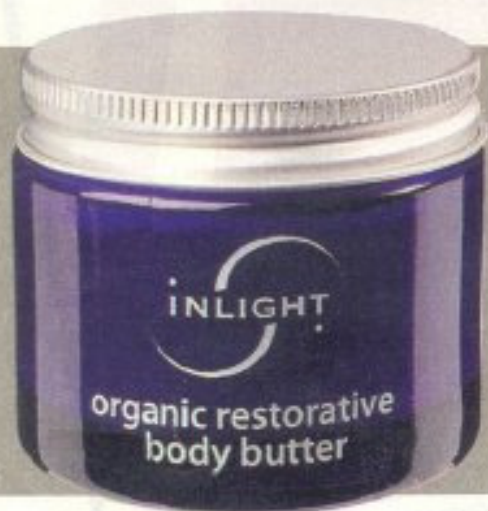


ny before you buy — so no streaks or lipstick on the back of your hand or multi-coloured shades of polish on your nails as you colour code your own beauty way through life. But it does have its advantages: for starters, it's hard to beat when it comes to stocking up on beauty basics (my lunchtime dashes to snaffle deodorant and toothpaste are now a thing of the past, thanks to the Boots website).

However, what really makes the internet such a booming beauty emporium is its power as a source of advice. Many sites have become as interested in education as in selling. The organic beauty store lovelula.com, for instance, has a comprehensive section on what it takes for a product to be certified organic, including the governing bodies that matter, not to mention an interactive element — it even invites readers to e-mail their queries on ingredients and their skin concerns. It is a tactic that glowgetter.co.uk (which boasts 90,000 hits a month) also uses. It features news snippets on treatments, spas, supplements and the niche product ranges it stocks. But more than that, its founder, Georgie Wolfenden, also believes it is important to conduct a more personal holistic consultation with new customers. She encourages them to contact her directly (despite the potential extra work this creates). "I like to know what they are eating and drinking, and about their lifestyles and stress levels," she says.

Meanwhile, some of the beauty aids sold at the new site cultbeauty.co.uk have a double stamp of approval. They come recommended by industry experts such as the hair guru Charles Worthington and the facialist Kirsty McLeod, giving extra guidance to our online navigation.

CAMERA PRESS/FREDERIC FARRE/FIGAROPHOTO.COM, FOTOFIT



Lust of the week

Created by the homeopathic doctor behind the well-known organic brand Spiezia, the new Inlight range is brimming with feelgood natural credentials. The Organic Restorative Body Butter is an oily salve that dries quickly to leave skin supple and glistening and has a wonderfully comforting scent. Rich in rosehip and evening-primrose oils, it is tough on stretch marks, but gentle enough to use during pregnancy.

£30; inlight-online.co.uk



PIGMENTATION It makes the skin around the eyes feel firmer and, after a week, dark spots begin to blur. *TNS Night Eye Repair*, £55; 020 8997 8541



DARK CIRCLES It's smooth, creamy and a little goes a long way. *Shiseido White Lucency Brightening Eye Treatment*, £37; 020 7313 4774

HOT TIP

THE WEAK DOLLAR IS ENTICING BRITS TO HEAD STATESIDE FOR COSMETIC SURGERY. AMERICAN PLASTIC SURGEONS ARE OFFERING EUROPEANS SPECIAL DEALS ON FACELIFTS FOR \$20,000 (\$11,000). IN LONDON IT WOULD COST \$15,000