Natural Beauty from the Garden
more than 200 do-it-yourself beauty recipes & garden ideas
JANICE COX
author of Natural Beauty at Home and Natural Beauty for All Seasons

2nd EDITION
What do you do when you’re obsessed with beauty magazines, but you’re too young to drive to town to buy the products you read about? If you’re Janice Cox, you raid the garden, kitchen pantry and bathroom cupboards to create your own beauty concoctions. And you turn to Grandma. “My grandmother was a wealth of information, and I loved to visit her. She too made many of her own beauty products and treatments, and I was enchanted. The first time I ever had a real manicure or placed cotton pads soaked in witch hazel on my eyes was in her home. She could create a bubble bath that I wanted to stay in for hours.”

Maybe it was in Janice’s DNA to be a well-known natural beauty expert. When she’s not in her garden or whipping up a batch of Fresh Peppermint Toothpaste or Clover Honey Conditioner, you’ll find her sharing her passion with gardening and beekeeping groups, local and national media outlets, and readers like you. Her books include *Natural Beauty from the Garden, 2nd Edition*, *Natural Beauty at Home* and *Natural Beauty for All Seasons*.

Find Janice at [naturalbeautyathome.com](http://naturalbeautyathome.com), or on Twitter and Instagram at @AtHomeBeauty.
Q: When and how did you become interested in natural beauty?
A: I guess you can say I am a product of my environment. I came from a family of beauty lovers, something I think I’ve passed on to both my daughters. I’m not sure I always thought of it as natural beauty, but I've had an interest in all things beauty from a very young age — mostly because of my mother and grandmother. My father was a farmer and we lived outside of town, so I didn’t have access to a corner drugstore for skin and hair care supplies. I’ve always been a huge magazine reader, so I would spend hours in our bathroom creating all the latest treatments and potions I found inside the pages of Young Miss, Seventeen and Glamour. By the time I was in high school I had quite the collection of recipes and treatments. My mother, who was a home ec major, gave me the confidence to break down a product by its ingredients and come up with a recipe much the same way you do in cooking.

I also loved to visit my grandmother in Southern California. She was a huge influence as she loved cosmetics, beauty treatments and healthy living. She was Miss Orange growing up and had the most gorgeous complexion, even in her nineties. When I would visit her, there was always plenty of fresh fruit (both my grandfathers were citrus growers, so lots of fresh oranges, lemons and avocados were always available to us). She’d encourage my sister and me to take a nap each day using cotton pads soaked in witch hazel — something I still do today. She also never let us go to bed without properly washing our faces. I can still hear her telling us to count the splashes: We had to rinse our faces 20 times with first warm water, then cool.

Q: Did you have instant success creating your natural beauty recipes, or did you have to experiment a bit?
A: Yes and no. When you do basic treatments such as a facial mask made from a fresh egg or smashed avocados as a hair conditioner you’re successful, as you realize there’s a reason why these simple treatments have worked for so many years ... even centuries, if you think of some of the things Cleopatra did. She was the original natural beauty, in my opinion. But when it comes to making a good facial cream, it really does take a bit of practice. My first attempt at cold cream was anything but light and fluffy — in fact, it was a heavier waxy cream that has now become my go-to recipe for rough skin spots such as heels, knees and elbows. When it comes to DIY beauty it really is hard to mess up completely, especially if you use good ingredients.

Q: Where do you get inspiration for your recipes?
A: I find inspiration everywhere! I love to read about beauty and have quite the collection of books that I have found in used book stores. It is amazing how many of the recipes and treatments inside these old books still work! I have had to update a few of them, as today people really don’t want to slather petroleum jelly all over their bodies, but using coconut oil or shea butter works. I also love to travel and whether it is here in the United States or internationally. I’m always on the lookout for new products and ingredients. I love to visit local grocery stores and farmer’s markets. I’ve found jojoba oil in Arizona and camellia oil in Japan, and both are some of my favorite skin oils.

I also like to talk to people about their own favorite products, many of them homemade. I once met a beautiful older woman and her secret to glowing skin was vegetable shortening! Each night that is what she used to remove her makeup and cleanse her skin before going to bed. Not sure it’s for me, but she did look good!

(continued)
I also get a lot of inspiration from commercial products. There are a lot of really good products out there and I’ve found making my own products makes me a better consumer, as I always find myself reading labels. Many of these products, aside from scents, color and unique packaging, can be made at home with similar results and a huge cost savings. Also, you’ll see product trends that are fun to try at home. Right now natural clay is super popular and you’re seeing it used in facial masks, hair products, even toothpaste. Clay is one of the first beauty ingredients discovered, so it’s cool to see it come back around. What is that saying? There’s no such thing as new ideas, just improved upon ideas. I think this is especially true in the beauty industry.

Q: What are the benefits of using natural beauty products instead of commercial ones?
A: There are a lot of really good commercial products out there, so I’m not going to say natural products are better. I will say they are just as good, and if you’re trying to live a healthy lifestyle, you definitely should look at the products you’re using on your skin and hair. Our skin is our largest organ and there is a reason why birth control patches, nicotine patches and pain patches work so well through our skin into our bodies. I always say, “What goes on you goes in you.” It’s amazing how people will be so careful about what they eat but not really put much thought into their body care products. Making your own products has many benefits. When you create your own products, you’re in control and you know exactly what’s in your products. Also, you don’t have to worry about shelf life and using a lot of extra preservatives. When you purchase a commercial product, you want a safe product. When you make the same product at home you don’t have to worry about shipping or warehouse storage. You’ll also save a lot of money because you’re not paying for packaging or an expensive marketing campaign. Most of the cost of commercial products is not in the ingredients themselves but in everything else involved in bringing that product to market. It is convenient — odds are you already have everything you need in your kitchen cupboards. You will also look and feel better.

Q: Do you have a favorite ingredient to use in beauty products?
A: I love honey, as it can be used head to toe, even in the bath. I think bees are nature’s best cosmetologists. I also like using simple ingredients when it comes to cleansing my face. Oatmeal, for example, is a good replacement to soap. I use raw sugar mixed with some natural oil as a body scrub. I also cannot take a bath without adding a cup or two of Epsom salts or baking soda.

Q: Relaxation and pampering are major themes in Natural Beauty in the Garden. What would you say to readers who say they’re too busy to start a natural beauty routine?
A: I think a lot of people hear the term “pampering” or even “relaxation” and think it’s going to take a lot of time. In fact, I think it’s easy to mix in small amounts of self care and breaks throughout the day. Simply think about your everyday activities in a new way. I like to start my day outside in my yard with a cup of coffee and maybe pick a few flowers for a bit of aromatherapy. In the winter months you may not stay outside that long, but I find starting outdoors very energizing. Also, in the evening taking a relaxing bath or shower and reading a good book is a wonderful alternative to screen time or television. Nighttime is one of the best times for beauty treatments, in fact.
Q: If readers can only add a few natural beauty treatments to their routine, which ones do you suggest?
A: I’d start with facial masks. This is such a simple treatment that can be made at home from a wide range of ingredients and customized to what your skin needs at the time. A good facial mask gets your skin really clean. Clean skin retains more moisture and looks healthier. This is something men and women can do. One of my favorite masks is plain sour cream or Greek yogurt and bit of honey. I also think a good all-over sugar scrub is an easy bit of pampering that works for everyone, and again, gets your skin clean, boosts your circulation and makes you feel good. Just mix equal parts raw sugar with a natural oil such as almond or coconut oil and massage into damp skin in the tub or shower. (You may want to stand on a towel as the oil could make things a bit slippery.)

Q: You encourage readers to plant “complexion gardens,” much like some plant salsa or pizza gardens. What do you mean by a complexion garden?
A: I encourage readers to love and use their gardens and plants. I like to think of my garden as my health spa. You don’t need a large space, but by growing a few useful herbs and flowers you can create your own healthy products, drinks and a feeling of overall wellness in your home. You can plan a large garden bed full of favorite plants or just have a simple container on your back patio. If you live in an urban spot, maybe join a community garden or have a pot by your front door. A healthy complexion garden is full of plants you can use for skin and hair care. My top plants would be mint, parsley, rosemary, lavender and calendula.

Q: Any words of advice for non-gardeners who may find the idea of growing, harvesting and preserving their own plants to use in beauty products daunting?
A: I thought about this when writing Natural Beauty from the Garden. I hope people do try growing something or it sparks them to think about the plants in their yards in a new light. But the truth is, you can make all the recipes and ideas in the book and not grow a thing. Today, all the ingredients can be found at your local grocery or natural food store. Many farmer’s markets and local growers would be happy to supply you with fresh produce, herbs and flowers, too. If you’re buying ingredients, especially flowers, make sure they’re organic and not sprayed with anything. You don’t want pesticides showing up in your body care products.

Q: Are your recipes safe for children to use?
A: Yes! I have a whole chapter in Natural Beauty from the Garden for children. When it comes to products smaller bodies and systems can use, less really is more. You want to avoid heavy scents and colors. I also like the idea of kids learning to make their own products or help make them. Healthy children end up being healthy adults. Teaching them good skin and hair care basics is always a good idea. I can still hear my own mother saying, “Never go to bed with a dirty face!”

Q: You advocate getting children involved in the garden. How do you approach this?
A: I think it’s so important for kids to know how important plants are to our world and where their food comes from. I was lucky to visit Grow Pittsburgh. Its mission is to have gardens in all Pittsburgh elementary schools, and a lot of other communities are doing the same. I love simple and fun ideas to get kids outdoors, and I think it’s a nice idea to give kids their own large container or garden space. My girls enjoyed our garden growing up, and each year we’d try different ideas such as sunflower houses, growing cucumbers in bottles, or simply a new type of tomato or edible flower.
Q: While a person’s beauty regimen is personal, you include ways to share these treatments with others throughout the book. What are your favorite ways to do this?
A: I love to make and give beauty products as gifts. We all know homemade gifts really are from the heart and sharing a bit of wellness with someone is a real treat. I’m currently working on updating *Natural Beauty for All Seasons*, and the theme of that book is all about gift-giving because so many of my readers enjoy doing this.

This past fall I taught a workshop to a bunch of beekeepers and this holiday season I got a really nice note from them saying they had all met again and put together several gift baskets for the holidays. One woman bought all the baskets, ribbon and wrapping supplies, and they met up for an afternoon of creating. Many of them brought other items they make such as beeswax candles. They paid for the supplies they used, and these eight women ended up making 40 baskets in an afternoon!

I also like to host beauty parties. When *Natural Beauty from the Garden* first came out I had a party at my favorite local nursery. I set up a DIY bath salt bar full of different salts, herbs and essential oils. I had empty jars and each guest had fun creating their own personal bath salts to take home. We also walked around the gardens, had some simple treats and all agreed to do it again.
GROW YOUR GLOW: TURN TO YOUR GARDEN FOR HEAD-TO-TOE BEAUTY
New book shares more than 200 recipes for natural beauty products plus gardening tips

TOPEKA, Kan. – If you could forego chemical-laden bath and beauty products for natural alternatives without breaking the bank, would you? Then turn to your garden for a healthy glow from head to toe.

In *Natural Beauty from the Garden: More than 200 do-it-yourself beauty recipes and garden ideas, 2nd Edition*, Janice Cox adds to her favorite recipes for hair care, facial care and treatments, mouth care, hand and foot care, bath products, body care products and treatments, massage and relaxation, fragrance products, and children’s bath products, using ingredients readers can grow themselves. Most of the recipes use five or fewer ingredients.

In addition, Cox offers tips for growing and preserving the herbs, vegetables and flowers used in the recipes, and provides vegetarian and gluten-free substitutes for relevant ingredients. For readers without a garden, they can find most of the ingredients in local grocery stores.

“I believe that if you can read a recipe, you can create your own products,” says Cox. “With my recipes, many of the procedures involve simply mixing together a few ingredients in the right proportions and pouring them into a clean container – no expensive equipment needed, either.”

*Natural Beauty from the Garden* sells for $24.95 at [MotherEarthNews.com](http://www.motherearthnews.com) and [Grit.com](http://www.grit.com), or by calling 800-234-3368 or 866-803-7096.

About Ogden Publications
Ogden Publications Inc. ([OgdenPubs.com](http://www.OgdenPubs.com)) is the leading information resource serving the sustainable living, rural lifestyle, farm memorabilia and classic motorcycle communities. Key brands include *Mother Earth News*, *Mother Earth Living*, *Utne Reader* and *Grit*. Ogden Publications also provides insurance and financial services through its Capper’s Insurance Service division.

# # #

*Natural Beauty from the Garden*
ISBN 987-1-948734-00-4
320 p.
$24.95
Softcover

Available at [MotherEarthNews.com/store](http://www.motherearthnews.com/store) or 800-234-3368 and [Grit.com/store](http://www.grit.com/store) or 866-803-7096
Are you looking to save money on your body care products or eliminate harsh chemicals from your beauty routine? Then turn to your garden! Whether you have a country plot, a single container or a grocery store nearby, you can create low-cost, luxurious treatments using common flowers, vegetables and herbs.

In *Natural Beauty from the Garden*, Janice Cox shares more than 200 easy-to-make recipes to clean, moisturize and protect hair and skin from head to toe. Plus, gardeners will find hundreds of tips to get the most from their patch. More of a brown thumb? Never fear! Non-gardeners can find their ingredients at local grocery or natural food stores and farmers’ markets.