

THE \$10 SKINCARE
ROUTINE PURE
ENOUGH
TO EAT



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Hi. I'm Lily.

And I believe every human has the right to access and experience true, lasting wellness. That means you. No matter how much money you have.

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THE WELLNESS SECRET NOBODY WANTS YOU TO KNOW.

THE SECRET

I spend less than \$0.35 a day on a skincare regimen that's pure enough to eat, but I live in a world of television, print, and social media that tells me there's something wrong with that. Every day, companies, influencers, celebrities, and media outlets urge me to acquire a barrage of products for health, wellness, beauty, and self-care; it's nearly impossible to distinguish the necessary from the noise.

Particularly when it comes to skincare, we're on the receiving end of an avalanche of products that promise glowing skin, a reversal of aging, more even skin tone, and improved quality of life. Moreover, taking care of one's skin has been co-opted by the modern day "self-care" movement, such that applying fancy face masks and expensive serums is purportedly indicative of the degree to which you're able to take care of yourself.

But what is self-care, anyway? And what about wellness? If we look to answer these questions on social media, it would appear that self-care and wellness are byproducts of having access to face masks, exercise classes, and well-stocked bank accounts. But dig a bit deeper, and you'll see that today's wellness industry is a \$4.2 trillion dollar global market, buoyed by rampant commodification.

Over the past decade, with the rise of countless aspirational lifestyle companies, blogs, and social media accounts, wellness and self-care practices have been packaged as buyable entities. And like many other sectors wrestling with socioeconomic and racial disparities, access is a major pain point. The wellness industry has primarily used images of seemingly wealthy, heteronormative, hegemonically compliant white women to sell "self-care"—thereby suggesting that those who can't afford \$180 (or even \$10) face masks don't have the same right to wellbeing.

Here's the secret: True wellness, genuine self-care practices, and glowing skin are not commodifiable entities. But they are your birthright.

What are we really talking about when we talk about self-care, then? Do we mean face masks and yoga classes? Or are we gesturing towards the radical activism that writer Audre Lorde taught us in the '80s, born of the urgent need for black and brown bodies to claim agency and voice for their at-risk, disenfranchised selves?

“In America,” Jordan Kisner wrote in a *New Yorker* article from 2017, “full citizenship has rested on...the capacity for self-care.” Therefore the mere ability to care for oneself is, as Lorde pointed out, a political act—particularly in a world where the dominant culture doesn’t afford or allow black and brown womxn’s bodies the same freedoms and safeties.

So wait—where do face masks fit into this picture? When I think about self-care, I certainly consider what might make my body, mind, and heart feel safe, seen, and held. And yes, money is certainly needed for things like medical care, mental health, and physical maintenance. But the current assumption that practices of privilege (like being able to afford \$200 face oils) are necessary for wellness, is completely bankrupt. That’s just privilege, not self-care.

As a white, able-bodied, cis-gendered, straight woman, it’s important I use the privilege I hold to shed light on self-care practices that are available to all, regardless of socioeconomic status or identity. I’m here to champion practices that exist outside the Beauty and Wellness Industrial Complexes (see: the commodification of “wellness” and “self-care” by white celebrities and their businesses, as well as corporations worldwide).

That means offering wellness, self-care, and skincare practices to you that uphold these values of simplicity, sanity, and accessibility. Which also means that the secret is this: Doing—and buying—less.

A quick note about me: I’m 35 years old and I live in the Santa Monica Mountains outside of Los Angeles, in a wilderness called Topanga Canyon. I grew up on Maui, then moved east to study literature at Yale, and since then have lived back on Maui, and in Michigan, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. My parents were honest-to-goodness hippies who became honest-to-goodness entrepreneurs thanks to my mom’s witchy ways as an aromatherapist and herbalist, and my father’s savvy as a businessman.

In May 2017, I published my first book: Kale & Caramel: Recipes for Body, Heart, and Table with Atria/Simon & Schuster. The book features 80 vegetarian recipes, over 100 photographs, and countless stories about healing from grief and loss through the wisdom of plants.

From the time I was young, I learned that plants are our allies. My mother taught me to see the world as a place where plants and flowers offered both wisdom and healing. And she also taught me that what I use on my body should be pure enough to eat.

Which brings us to this life-changing, profoundly pure, and super affordable skincare routine.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

I've had the same skincare routine for the past decade—and yes, it costs me less than \$10 a month. You'll read more about it below, but it began with me unlearning what I thought a “healthy” skincare regimen looked like. Most people assume they need an arsenal of skincare products—cleansers, serums, creams, masks, exfoliators, toners, mists, firming agents, concealers, foundations, the list goes on. And the more expensive they are, so the thinking goes, the better. But this isn't even close to true. Many people also assume a skincare routine should be complex and lengthy, and should happen morning and evening. This is also not necessarily true.

Yet again, these presumptions are a function of the Beauty Industrial Complex (fueled by patriarchal capitalism) convincing you (“you” being mostly female-identifying humans) that you need products in order to be beautiful.

In truth, our skin mostly likes to be left alone. That's because the epidermis is protected by an acid mantle, a thin film that preserves the skin's natural pH in order to prevent infection and breakouts. Most traditional, soap-based skin cleansers disrupt the skin's acid mantle, leaving the epidermis susceptible to all kinds of unwanted bacteria.

Moreover, as imbalances in the skin's levels of moisture occur, our instinct is often to overtreat, overwash, and overstimulate, via exfoliation. Yet in order for our skin to return to homeostasis, we really need to do less.

This e-book introduces five components of my skincare routine, almost all of which are pure enough to eat. There's a lot of room for customizing here, so you'll have to play with types of honey, varieties of oil, and various scents of hydrosols (more on what those are shortly).

Over the past two years, I've heard from hundreds of readers who began using this routine to transform their skin. Their results, shared with me via email, Instagram direct message, and blog comment, have been incredibly heartening. After so many years of beautiful results, I wanted to share these practices with you.



Nota bene: If you have any concerning skin conditions, please consult a dermatologist before trying a new skincare routine, including this one.

THE \$10 SKINCARE ROUTINE.

THE ROUTINE

What goes onto your skin is readily absorbed into your bloodstream, so it's time you paid heed to what you're slathering on your face and body. The good news: You can ditch pretty much every store-bought, pre-made, artificial ingredient-loaded (or just overly complicated) product in your cabinet and focus on the good stuff—pure, single-ingredient resources that you likely already own.

Here's what I use.

HONEY

Raw, unfiltered honey has five powerful properties that make it an extraordinary skin cleanser.

1. **Antibacterial:** Honey is naturally antimicrobial, and can facilitate the speedy healing of existing breakouts. This means less acne and breakouts and faster recovery when acne and breakouts do occur.
2. **Anti-Aging:** Honey's low pH (between 3 and 4.5) eliminates any pesky bacteria that would lead to cellular breakdown. In other words, honey works as a natural anti-aging compound. It's been used for millennia by Egyptian, Chinese, Greek, and Indian societies to treat illness, wounds, and scarring, as well as for youthful rejuvenation. This study from the Journal of Cosmetic Dermatology cites that the use of honey, "keeps the skin juvenile and retards wrinkle formation".
3. **Moisture Regulator:** Honey naturally draws moisture to itself. The regular application of honey will simultaneously draw moisture back into your skin.

4. pH Regulator: Honey preserves the skin's acid mantle and regulates your skin's natural pH so your skin can thrive, rather than remaining in an irritated or aggravated state.
5. Exfoliator: Different types of honey contain distinct levels of crystallization. The more crystallization, the more exfoliation. I like washing my face with a thick, unfiltered raw honey with a good bit of crystallization for mild daily exfoliation.

OAT FLOUR

Rolled oats ground into flour in a blender or spice grinder make for the perfect facial exfoliant or mask. They're incredibly gentle on the skin, but retain just enough grit to give your skin a good sloughing when it's feeling dull or grimy.

You can mix oat flour with honey, water, or oil. On days when you wear sunscreen, mixing a half teaspoon or more of oat flour in with your honey cleanser can help remove any mineral sunblock left on the surface of your skin.

HYDROSOLS

Hydrosols are water or steam distillations of plants. One common hydrosol you might be familiar with is rosewater. Other favorites include orange blossom water and lavender, but the world of hydrosols is vast, and I encourage you to explore.

These floral and plant waters can function as gentle spritzers, giving your skin a bit of hydration and freshness after cleansing, and throughout the day.

SINGLE-SOURCE OILS

Oil moisturizing may feel counterintuitive for some, particularly if you have skin that produces an excess amount of oil, or sebum. But here's where things get life-changing:

Your skin is only oily because it's not getting all the moisture it needs, and is over-producing oil to compensate.

The solution? Give your skin the oil it needs, and it will naturally return to a state of balance.

Oh, and in case you're wondering: You don't need a separate eye cream. These oils will deliver all the moisture your skin needs, even in the delicate eye area.

Here are the oils I use most commonly for my face. Note that I do not use coconut oil on my face, as it's a known comedogenic (meaning it can clog pores).

Sweet Almond Oil

Great for face and body, in scrubs and moisturizers.

Rosehip Seed Oil

A lightweight oil that's high in beta carotene and rich in omega fatty acids. Some anecdotal evidence suggests rosehip seed oil may minimize the appearance of scars and soften scar tissue. Use on face and body, and to de-frizz hair.

Jojoba Oil

A lightweight oil good for body and face, which is widely accessible in most stores. Also good for makeup removal.

MINERAL-BASED SUNSCREEN

There are many excellent, all-natural, mineral-based sunscreens available today—your selection will in part be determined by your budget. I like this affordable option from Badger.

THE \$\$ BREAKDOWN

Honey

I like the raw organic mountain honey from Trader Joe's and Whole Foods. These 16-ounce jars cost around \$5.99 and will last about 130 applications—you don't need me to do the math for you to tell you this is a very good deal (\$0.05 per application).

MONTHLY TOTAL: \$1.50

Oat Flour

I purchase organic rolled oats for about \$1.69 per pound. If I exfoliate once a week, I will use approximately 1/4 cup oat flour each month.

MONTHLY TOTAL: \$0.42

Hydrosol

I buy an 8-ounce bottle of rosewater for about \$9. This will last about six months.

MONTHLY TOTAL: \$1.50

Oil

I buy a 16-ounce bottle of organic sweet almond oil for around \$15. If I'm using this on my face alone, the bottle would last me around a year.

MONTHLY TOTAL: \$1.33

Sunscreen

I buy this Rose Chamomile facial sunscreen from Badger, which is relatively affordable, very pure, and quite absorbent despite its high mineral content. This 1.6-ounce tube will last me around three-four months, depending on my frequency of use. Higher frequency would necessitate more frequent purchasing.

MONTHLY TOTAL: \$5

TOTAL: \$9.75 / month



MORNING ROUTINE

1. Splash some water on your face and pat dry.
2. Mist your skin with your preferred hydrosol (I love orange blossom and rose waters).
3. Apply sunscreen of choice, if you'll be outside that day.
4. If desired, apply any other makeup you intend to use.

EVENING ROUTINE

1. Wet your face with warm water.
2. Remove any sunscreen or makeup using a natural oil (I like sweet almond or jojoba oil) applied to a cotton ball or cotton pad, a damp washcloth, or even just your fingertips. Gently wipe away the makeup using the oiled cotton ball, washcloth, or your fingertips.
3. Open the jar of honey and scoop out about 1/2 teaspoon of honey. You don't need to be exact. I use my hand to scoop, but you could also keep a small spoon with your jar. If your skin feels extra dirty, or layered with sunscreen, mix in some oat flour to get extra exfoliation with your cleanser.
4. Massage the honey all over your face, the same way you'd use a soap-based cleanser. (There won't be suds, and your skin won't get that "tight" feeling it gets after you use soap. This is a good thing—it means your skin's natural moisture is still intact!)
5. Wash the honey off with warm water, the same way you would with a cleanser. Make sure you wash off your hands, neck, and any run-off that went down your arms. Don't worry, you won't be sticky!
6. If you'd like to exfoliate, mix a teaspoon or so of ground oats with a bit of water, honey, aloe, yogurt, or other liquid until you have the consistency desired. Gently smooth over face, making small circular movements up and outward along the jawline, cheeks, and forehead. Rinse thoroughly with water, and pat dry.
7. Spritz your skin with hydrosol if desired (remember, you already balanced your skin's pH with the honey, so "toning" is not necessary).
8. Apply your moisturizer of choice. I like sweet almond or rosehip seed oil. I use a dime- to nickel-sized amount in the palm of my hand and massage the oil upward and outward in circular motions over my face.

DO & BUY LESS.

When in doubt, move in the direction of doing and buying less: simplify your skincare routine rather than adding more products and making things more complex. This goes for makeup, too—the less you wear, the happier your skin will be. If your skin is in distress, always seek the guidance of a qualified dermatological professional. And finally, trust that change can sometimes take time. While many people have seen radical, positive results with this routine in as little as a week, it can take time for change to occur, within and without.

Both your skin and your mind need to breathe. Doing and buying less helps. Happy skin to you. It's your birthright.

Xo,

Lily

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