



The science of beauty

We meet Terri Vinson, founder and formulator of Synergie Skin beauty products.

You have a background in biological science and education. What inspired the move into skin cosmetics? I was originally inspired by my passion for both science and beauty. Formulating products enables me to merge creativity and my love of education with the chemistry and biology of creating cosmeceuticals. Nothing makes me happier than to create a product and see all the stages of development from my initial concept formula to the finished product on the shelves. If I can make people feel great through improving the health of their skin, I have done my job.

I believe in educating and empowering people to make their own choices about what they put on their bodies. There needs to be more transparency and consumer education in the beauty industry. There's so much white noise, empty promises and misinformation about skincare in the media. I love to educate consumers through my articles, blogs and seminars.

Please explain how you created Synergie Skin and what inspired the brand name?

I developed Synergie after noticing a significant gap in the cosmeceutical arena. I wanted to create products that harnessed the very best of safe scientific innovations combined with safe naturally derived ingredients. As a female cosmetic chemist, I also saw the importance of offering the type of education and information through my videos and blogs that is not readily available to customers so they feel confident about their skincare choices.

The Synergie name means so much to me. It represents the synergy between the skin and products; the synergy between my makeup and my skincare; the synergy of science and nature; and the synergy of active cosmeceuticals working together in one product to produce the best possible result. You cannot see any one element on its own; all elements must work together, in synergy.

Your philosophy is "protect, change and nurture". Please share how you keep this in mind when formulating your products?

Protect: I create products that help to prevent skin damage and protect from harsh environmental conditions, which are particularly prevalent in Australia. All my UV-protective products in my skincare and minerals contain zinc oxide, titanium



dioxide and potent antioxidants such as vitamin C, lycopene and green tea to protect from free radical damage.

Change: Effective cosmeceutical skincare must create visible, perceivable change — or what's the point of creating it? My formulating philosophy is based on stable, high-grade active ingredients with effective delivery systems designed to reprogram and improve skin from within.

Nurture: All my products are formulated without harmful ingredients to nurture the skin and prevent toxic accumulation.

Why is it key for skin products to be free of toxic ingredients?

The skin absorbs, on average, over 3kg of toxins every year from beauty products. Synergie is as much about what is not included in products as what is included. All of my products are formulated without questionable ingredients such as parabens, artificial colours, synthetic fragrances, phthalates, PEGs or propylene glycol.

Does our skin need extra nourishment in winter?

Absolutely! When the climate is cooler, our blood vessels try to insulate us by becoming thinner and deeper in the skin to maintain blood temperature at around 37°C. This is why our skin looks paler in winter. With the blood vessels deeper, it's important to deliver high-quality nutrients to the skin from inside and out.

What are your top three winter tips?

Stay UV protected if outdoors for extended periods in winter, as UVA is just as strong in winter as summer.

Increase your levels of hydration, especially when using central heating. Always choose a moisturiser suited to your skin type and an active serum, applied before moisturising, that contains hydrating ingredients such as vitamin B₃ and hyaluronic acid.

If you can't handle drinking cold water in winter, opt for natural herbal teas or warm lemon-and-ginger infusions.

How do we ensure our skin stays healthy all year?

Always wear sunscreen. Even though SPF measures UVB (burning) rays, ageing and deeply penetrating UVA rays are still intense, cancer-producing and can even penetrate glass and clouds. UVA is responsible for causing skin cancers, so it's important to use a broad-spectrum sun-protection

moisturiser or mineral makeup. Preferably, choose a product with a minimum of 20 per cent zinc oxide to give optimal UV protection during the day.

Always include skin vitamins A, B and C in your daily skincare regimen. These essential ingredients are recommended for all skin types. Vitamin A (retinol) regulates skin processes, vitamin B₃ (niacinamide) maximises hydration, controls oil and pigmentation and creates a healthier skin barrier, and vitamin C (L-ascorbic acid) is the essential antioxidant to neutralise free-radical damage created by UV rays and environmental pollutants.

Consider the health of your skin in a holistic way. Adopt a healthy lifestyle of eating well and exercising daily. Your diet should consist of mostly whole unprocessed foods, avoiding added fructose and drinking plenty of water.

What's next for Synergie?

We are currently expanding distribution throughout the US, UK, NZ and Asia. I'm proud to have come so far, given that we are 100 per cent Australian made and owned and formulating and manufacturing is done entirely at our Melbourne headquarters. I truly love what I do but couldn't do it without my incredible team to fill in my shortcomings. I'm also inspired every day by my customers and know that my mission is to make them feel truly great in their skin. 🌍

