

time. You might wake up with redness or puffiness after a salty meal or too many glasses of wine the night before, or your pores might appear a little bigger at certain times of the month. Using a targeted serum can help you address, or even prevent, these changes." So if you know you're prone to breakouts a few days before your period, for example, you can strategically switch to an acne-battling serum; or if you're traveling to a dry climate, you might introduce a hydrating serum to help keep your skin from manifesting any ill (flaky, dull) effects.

Now that serums are increasingly being formulated to tackle specific issues rather than just universal signs-of-aging woes, building an à la carte menu has

"A serum is the step I say to never skip, because it makes the most meaningful changes in the skin," says Whitney Bowe, MD.

never been easier. And there's no need to make adjustments anywhere else in your routine. "A cleanser is in contact with your face for only moments," Bowe says, "and moisturizers just sit on the surface rather than really diving into skin, so you can get targeted results just by tweaking your serum—which is the real workhorse—and leaving everything else alone." Should you be tempted to cut corners, though, know

that a serum alone does not an effective skin-care regimen make. "Cleansing is key, because if you don't have a clean face, nothing you put on afterward is going to penetrate," says London-based facialist and Instagram sensation Caroline Hirons. "And you need to top everything off with a moisturizer for best results. Your serum is your underwear and outfit, but your moisturizer is the coat. It seals the deal."



THE GLOW-TOS

According to Pinterest stats, searches for luminosity-boosting "vitamin C serum" increased by 3,379 percent in 2017. But there are many more ways to glow: L'ORÉAL PARIS Age Perfect Cell Renewal Golden Serum (1), \$25, stimulates surface skin cell renewal to keep the complexion soft and reflective. SKINCEUTICALS C E Ferulic (2), \$165, is beloved by dermatologists for its ability to even out skin tone and speed healing and collagen production after laser

treatments. With two separate formulas designed to combine in every pump, CLARINS Double Serum (3), \$122, brings together 21 skin-loving plant extracts, including of-the-moment turmeric, to amplify that coveted lit-from-within effect. "If you're worried about tackling dullness that comes from pigmentation, look for products containing niacinamide," Hirons says. And for a preparty (or postflight) SOS to enliven drab skin, "just get a serum/oil hybrid and massage the bejesus out of your face."

LOVE STORY

Veteran beauty editor and serum aficionado **Emily Dougherty** has tried them all. Here, she shares how she found The One.

I love a handmade potion—all the goodness and care that each creator puts into every bottle. But I also love a clinically proven skin superhero made under the direction of scientist brainiacs who know what really works, and have the data to prove it.

Now, thanks to biochemist Jürgen Klein, PhD, the OG green skin-care genius who founded Jurlique in 1984, I can have the best of both worlds. At the lab he built on Oahu's North Shore, Klein mixes his insanely effective, greener-than-green JK7 line. After I used his neroli-and-jasmine Rejuvenating Serum, \$1,800, for just one night, my skin looked like I'd taken a weeklong Hawaiian vacation. And after seven days on the serum, my face is (almost) as smooth, soft, and glowy as my two-year-old's. This stuff works. **Mahalo, Dr. Klein.**



THE HEAVY LIFTERS

"Firming is the hardest thing to achieve once you've gone slack," Hirons says. But don't abandon hope: The latest high-tech serums provide serious lift. JUICE BEAUTY Signal Peptides Firming Serum (1), \$110, harnesses the power of all-natural sunflower-derived lipids, rice peptides, and linseed extract to redefine facial contours. CLÉ DE PEAU BEAUTÉ Firming Serum Supreme (2), \$300, increases long-term suppleness with potent botanicals while also providing an instant tightening effect

on the skin's surface. The 37 ACTIVES High Performance Anti-Aging & Firming Serum (3), \$175, packed with plant extracts (green tea, red algae, coffee seed) that protect against pollution and glycation, can do double duty as a spot treatment over makeup on areas like crow's-feet. For a fast fix, Hirons suggests "a good cleanse and a light acid peel, followed by an oil. Oil-based serums tend to give a more immediate firming effect than water-based serums do."

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ANGELINA

What She's Fighting for Now

Could the actress, director, and humanitarian
have her sights set on a political future?



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