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A Partnership With Nature

BY : EMILY BISHOP, PHOTOS COURTESY OF KARMELA BOTANICA

From soaps and lotions to aromatherapy and makeup, Karmela Botanica offers a little bit of everything. In fact, when it comes to skin care products, owner Karma Maclachlan says it's easier to ask what they *don't* make.



“We sell everything in our wheelhouse from luxury organic palm-free soaps to candles, incense, and toothpaste,” says Maclachlan.

Maclachlan started making skin care products in 2002 under the business name Mother Goose Botanicals. In 2006, the company changed its name to Karmela Botanica, in part to honor Maclachlan's Sicilian grandmother, Carmela.

Maclachlan worked as a massage therapist and noticed that several products she used on clients had chemicals in them that she wouldn't have used on herself. This inspired her to start making her own products that were more organic and created in partnership with nature.



“I work closely with nature and come up with recipes that are designed to delight the senses and be beneficial for the skin,” says Maclachlan. “And it's not just a concept about nature—we actually grow and wild harvest many of the ingredients we use.”

The first product Karmela Botanica offered was a calendula lavender face cream, and Maclachlan says that this is her favorite product. She designed a six-step skin care regime as well as chocolate and green clay masks when Karmela Botanica first started.

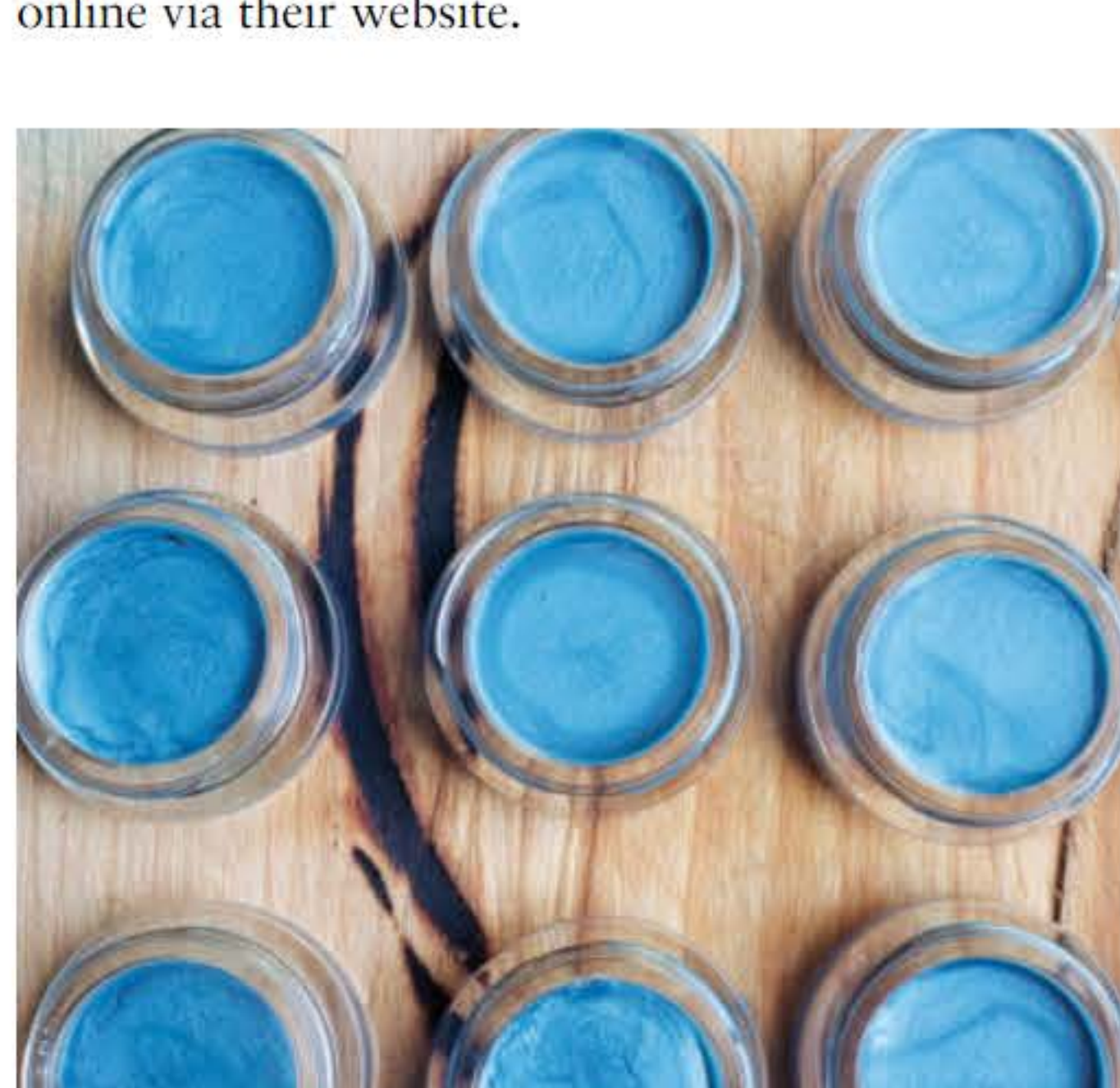


However, the products offered soon started to expand to a wider variety of options.

“I really just thought, ‘Oh, I should have three bars of soaps to go with my bath salts,’” says Maclachlan. “What keeps the business interesting to me is to always have new products. I could never just do the same old and stay satisfied.”

Maclachlan doesn't keep track of what types of products are trending or popular with other businesses; instead, she gets internal inspiration for her creations. All products are made from scratch by Maclachlan and Maggie Travis.

Karmela Botanica sets up booths at farmers markets from Bellingham to Seattle. You can also find Maclachlan and Travis selling at arts festivals. If you can't make it out to see them in person, most of Karmela Botanica's products can be purchased online via their website.



Maclachlan says the most enjoyable part of her work is the relationship she builds with customers. The happiness expressed when people tell her about how much they enjoy Karmela Botanica is what brings her joy and satisfaction.

karmelabotanica.com