

Having made its way from health food stores to some of the best spas across the country, **mineral makeup** is carving out an important niche in the skincare industry. Evolving into a stylish cosmetics category, microfine mineral makeup blends are now at the heart of many elegant cosmetics lines that offer a healing twist.

“Instead of being part of the problem, mineral makeup can be part of the solution for everyone who suffers from

Great Cover-Ups

By J. Elaine Spear

acne-prone skin or rosacea, or who simply wants to have a smoother, more glowing complexion,” says Jane Iredale, president of Iredale Mineral Cosmetics in Great Barrington, Massachusetts. “Because it provides proven sun protection without causing irritation, pure mineral makeup is also suitable for even the most sensitive skin.”

Photo by Brooks Ayola
Makeup photos by Dawn W Klugman



The Good Earth

Despite the amount of press that has been lavished on mineral makeup over the past few years, many consumers still believe that these cosmetics formulas are nothing more than crushed rocks in a jar, and are unaware of their healing, antiaging and camouflaging qualities. In reality, true mineral makeup contains an assortment of finely milled minerals that provide luminous coverage, sun protection and anti-inflammatory properties that help keep the skin calm and protected. For added skin-soothing benefits, nutritious seaweed extracts, botanicals and antioxidant vitamins are sometimes added.

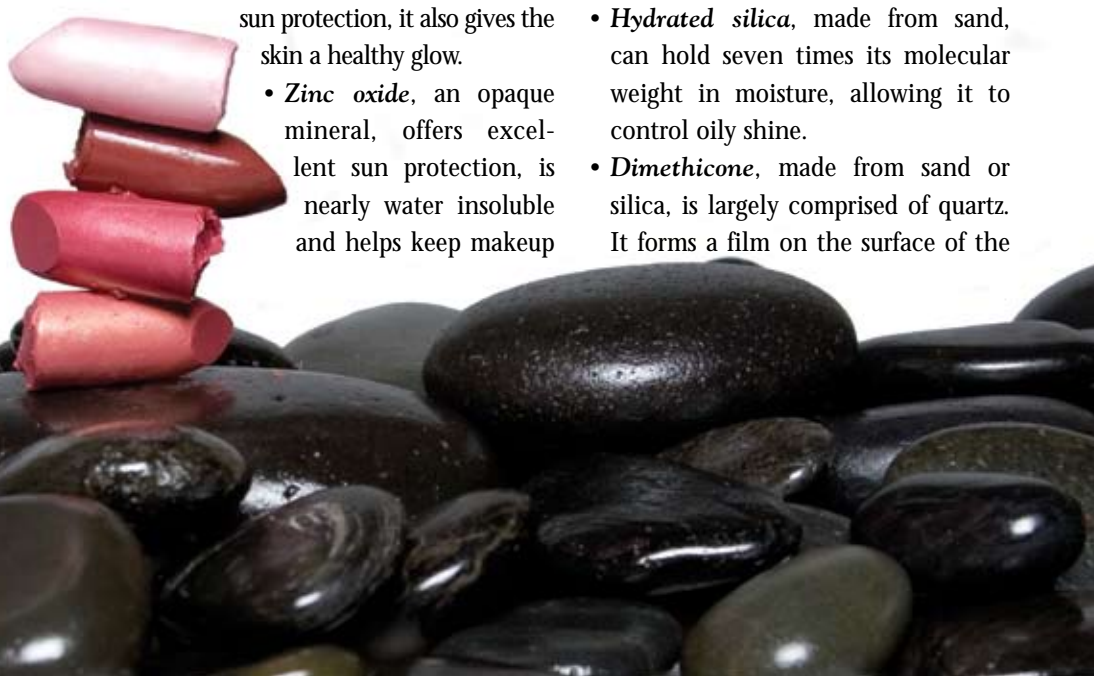
Mineral makeup ingredients are finely milled, then treated or coated with other natural pigments to create different colors and effects. They can be matte in appearance, produce a slight shimmer or can positively sparkle.

Certain minerals are used in cosmetics for different purposes:

- **Titanium dioxide** is the most widely used white pigment in the world because of its brightness and high refractive index, surpassed only by diamonds. Not only does titanium dioxide provide excellent sun protection, it also gives the skin a healthy glow.
- **Zinc oxide**, an opaque mineral, offers excellent sun protection, is nearly water insoluble and helps keep makeup

in place all day. It's also anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial and reflects light. In ointments, it's often used as an antiseptic.

- **Iron oxides** are used in mineral makeup because of the wide range of colors available, from red, yellow, orange and brown to coal black. In addition, iron oxides don't contribute to skin sensitivity.
- **Mica** is found in nature in thin, crystallized sheets and ranges in color from clear to yellow, green, brown and black. Because it can appear shiny or dull, mineral cosmetic companies use mica to control the amount of luminosity in their formulations.
- **Ultramarine blue** and **chromium oxide** produce green tones that are commonly used in mineral-based eye shadows.
- **Bismuth oxychloride**, also known as "synthetic pearl," is used to add shimmer to mineral makeup products. It provides excellent whiteness, brightness and a smooth texture to makeup formulations.
- **Boron nitride** is a white powder composed of flat, plate-like, man-made crystals that's added to cosmetics to produce a silky glide and to encourage adhesion of the makeup to the skin.
- **Hydrated silica**, made from sand, can hold seven times its molecular weight in moisture, allowing it to control oily shine.
- **Dimethicone**, made from sand or silica, is largely comprised of quartz. It forms a film on the surface of the



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Application ABCs

According to Karen Bock, president of Brushes by Karen and distributor of ColorStrokes Cosmetics, both based in Mineola, New York, the art of applying minerals differs slightly from traditional makeup. "For a picture-perfect application, always start with clean, dry skin—allow any moisturizer to completely absorb," she says. "Because mineral products are extremely concentrated, they should be used sparingly. Start with a very small amount and apply it in sheer layers until you reach the desired coverage. Because it takes a few seconds for the minerals to warm up to your skin, wait between layers to avoid applying too much; two layers are usually sufficient."

skin, helping to slow down moisture loss and to smooth fine, dry lines.

"As the word continues to spread, more and more consumers are purchasing mineral makeup because it's natural, longer lasting, antimicrobial and actually good for the skin," says Pauline Youngblood Soli, president and founder of Youngblood Mineral Cosmetics in Simi Valley, California. "It also provides fabulous coverage for scars, tattoos and even post-surgical redness without looking mask-like."

"Because minerals scatter light when applied to the skin, they act like hundreds of thousands of tiny mirrors that reflect light back at the observer and obscure imperfections in the skin," adds Iredale. "The crystals are noncomedogenic, water resistant and so light that when applied over clean, moisturized skin, the surface tension allows them to adhere to the skin for hours. When I take a red-eye flight to Europe, for instance, I can walk off the plane and into a meeting the next morning without worrying about reapplying my makeup."

While mineral makeup's coverage has been highly touted, the formulations have become most recognized in the mainstream for their protective qualities. "The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has yet to finalize a rating system for broad-spectrum protection, and mineral makeup actually provides broad-spectrum

sun protection that goes well beyond the current SPF system, which only accounts for exposure to UVB rays," says Kathy Krakora, president of Scōsh Skin Care and Mineral Makeup in Phoenix. Scōsh's Pressed Mineral Foundation powder carries an SPF 8, while Iredale's Amazing Base loose foundation has an SPF 20. Because the new Protective Collection from TRUE Cosmetics, San Francisco, also contains the super-antioxidant idebenone, it claims an epidermal protection factor (EPF) rating of 95, as well as an SPF 17.

Making Choices

According to Iredale, mineral makeup can also be defined by what *isn't* included in its composition. "Quality mineral formulas are typically a simple combination of four or five ingredients that don't contain fragrances, chemical dyes or chemical preservatives. They're also devoid of certain fillers. One base ubiquitous in standard makeup that's typically missing from mineral makeup is talc, a finely powdered magnesium silicate."

Colorlab's custom makeup system, which allows the artist to add texture modifiers and special effects such as a soft, smoky touch to eye shadows or a natural glow using gemstone luminescence, has also eliminated talc from its formulas. "Like most quality mineral makeup lines, our product is talc free," says Lisa Ryan,





director of education for Colorlab in Rockford, Illinois. "This is important because talc can create a chalky, ashy look on the skin, particularly on darker skin tones. Mineral makeup allows people of all ethnicities to wear a protective base that invisibly enhances the beauty of their complexions."

Particle size and blending techniques can also affect a mineral cosmetic product's quality, says Iredale. "All minerals come triple milled from the factory, but it's what cosmetics companies do with them after they're in their possession that can affect the consistency of the makeup, as well as how it looks and how well it stays on the skin. We blend boron nitride into some of our formulations, for instance, because it's really silky and feels like a liquid form of powder. We also have a proprietary process that reduces our minerals to a fine, consistent particle size."

Variations between individual product lines can make choosing a line for your spa a challenge, and looking at the labels doesn't always make the choice easier. "One of the most confusing ways of shopping for a mineral makeup line is to look at the ingredient deck," says Youngblood. "So many mineral makeup products seem similar, yet act dramatically different on the skin: Some have a lot of shine, while others offer a natural glow. Some will last all day, while others fade in a couple of hours. Because mineral cosmetic formulations with the same ingredient lists can differ widely in terms of performance, it's important to thoroughly test any mineral makeup line you're considering carrying before introducing it to your spa clientele."

Pure mineral makeup should ...

- list minerals at the top of the ingredient deck.
- be long wearing.
- cover imperfections without making

the skin look coated.

- feel weightless on the skin.
- remain creaseless, even along smile lines and in the crease of the eyelids.
- appear luminous and feel silky.
- be nonirritating to even sensitive skin.
- be free of chemical preservatives, fragrances and artificial dyes.

The Art of Sales

Although many estheticians are hesitant to get too deeply involved with makeup, product pros stress that a quick application ensures a positive, often dramatic introduction to mineral makeup, while increasing product sales and even boosting client retention. "When someone looks in the mirror and sees nothing but blemishes, redness or wrinkles, it's hard to believe that something as light as a loose mineral foundation can actually camouflage her imperfections and make her skin look absolutely flawless and radiant," says Alphonse Wiebelt, vice president of development and education for TRUE Cosmetics. "A quick mineral makeup application can put these doubts to rest."

To make the introduction of mineral cosmetics a truly pleasurable event, TRUE Cosmetics recently developed the Soft Brush Massage protocol at the end of every facial. It takes less than two minutes to complete and offers a beautiful, protective finish to every skincare treatment. During this service enhancement, three rhythmic, dual-brush movements are used to complete a facial, and serve as an application of the company's mineral foundation.

"The simple act of a quick application of skin-protective minerals can also boost client retention," says Iredale. "In fact, studies have shown that when clients buy just one retail product, the retention rate increases by

