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Cult beauty brand Jurlique's founder has created an anti-ageing serum that is the dearest in the market

Gold standard in skincare

IN cosmetics there's so much lying about 'natural' this and 'organic' that," laments Jurgen Klein, founder of Australian cult beauty brand Jurlique. "That was always my fight, to show Jurlique was different." Dr Klein founded Jurlique in the mid-1980s with his ex-wife Ulrike. Back then, it was revolutionary as one of the first skincare ranges using nothing but organic herbal extracts.

For Dr Klein, a child of post-war rural Germany, it was a natural step. His understanding of nature began through picking forest herbs with his grandfather as a young child. At the age of 14 he had set up his first home laboratory, experimenting with herbs and natural substances. He went on to get a PhD in chemistry, which he combined with a curiosity for Eastern medicinal philosophies, herbalism and alternative medicine and therapies.

Based on his experiences he founded Jurlique to be "the purest healthcare product on earth"; today it is sold in many stores worldwide and its products and treatments were even used on athletes in the Olympics in 1996 and 2000.

Seventeen years later he sold the company for US\$144 million to Australian billionaire father and son, Kerry and James Packer, and two of the Packers' billionaire friends from the US. It was acquired in 2011 by Japan's Pola Orbis Holdings for US\$355 million.

Although Dr Klein feels a thrill whenever he sees a Jurlique shop, running the company for 18 years was a long hard slog.

"After I sold Jurlique, I was sick and tired of it and swore I would never do cosmetics again."

But his disillusionment didn't last. With his second wife Karin, he moved from Australia to Hawaii and bought the former holiday

home of Elvis Presley on the northern shores of Oahu. They set up a seven-star, solar-powered eco-retreat called The Sullivan Estate and JK7 Spa retreat. More akin to a stunning private home than a hotel, six huge bedrooms overlook the famous surf beaches of the Pacific Ocean, and the lush green grounds stretch for acres. The estate is powered by solar roof tiles, pools and Jacuzzis are solar-heated, and sustainable practices are followed in every aspect.

Dr Klein began testing products to use in the Sullivan spa kitchen. Although it was never his intention to sell cosmetics again, the spa products were so well received that the Kleins decided to sell them under the guise of a new brand, JK7, which he launched last October.

"Karin asked, 'can you do better than Jurlique? Jurlique was great for natural skin



PHOTOS: JK7SKINCARE

maintenance, but can you put active anti-ageing performance into it, make a pure and natural product that actually reduces wrinkles?" he explains over the phone from Hawaii. "So we've spent the last seven years researching and testing to create a new product utilising solely, the purest and most high-performing herbal-based ingredients that show visible results."

Au naturel

Unsurprisingly, JK7 is much pricier than its peers. Rivalling the likes of La Prairie, La Mer and Clé de Peau on price tags, the bestselling products include a US\$980 daily face lotion, a US\$320 foaming facial wash and a US\$1,260 24-hour cream. But the brand's "gem" is its Rejuvenating Serum Lotion, which retails at US\$1,800 for 30ml, making it the most expensive skincare cream on the market and worth nearly double its weight in gold. Made with the most expensive essential oils on the planet, including myrrh, narde, jasmine, rose, chamomile, neroli, sandalwood, ylang ylang, organic healing herbs and natural-based herbal liposomes, proteins and peptides, JK7 claims it's "the perfect anti-ageing formula".

Dr Klein uses three-fold spagyric extraction, which ensures the potent force of the herbs remains intact. Plant extracts are produced through fermentation, steam distillation and natural solvents only (such as water for strong tea, essential oils and minerals of the same plant). There are no chemically derived solvents, as is often the case in today's cosmetics.

"Many product labels on cosmetics indicate the name of the plant but there is no information about how it was extracted and added to the formula," explains Dr Klein. "Most commer-

cially extracted plants are treated in hot propylene glycol and other glycols and solvents. But we guarantee that the products do not contain cheap, fake 'natural' fragrances or adulterants. This is the level of quality and luxury known by Cleopatra."

Most impressive is that JK7 herbal signature extracts have been shown to have anti-cancer properties, says Dr Klein. In particular, mangosteen pericarp – the rind of the mangosteen fruit – was tested on malignant melanoma and squamous cancer cells and found to inhibit invasion. According to Dr Klein's university-commissioned research, the invasive ability of the cancer was reduced to 4 per cent when treated with mangosteen pericarp. The extract suppresses metastasis, which is the major cause of cancer treatment failure, being responsible for 90 per cent of human cancer-related deaths.

"The response was a surprising side effect when testing that and other JK7 signature extracts on skin cells for anti-ageing properties," he says.

Dr Klein, who with Karin is what he calls "almost vegan, apart from a splash of milk in our morning cappuccino", believes that health and wellness will be the boom industry of the future.

"In the last bubble, one business that never suffered was organics. Even in bad times, people want to look after their beauty and health. Health, fitness, wellness, yoga and anti-ageing are buzzwords now. The one thing you can't buy is immortality." **W**

Billionaire is the global luxury lifestyle website and magazine for ultra high net worth and affluent individuals pursuing the good life



HEALING AGENT

Dr Klein (above) believes that health and wellness will be the boom industry of the future