



What lies beneath...

Words LAURA BOOTHAM Photos WILLIAM DAVENPORT

Innovative beauty therapist Rachel Robertson reveals her deep-penetrating skincare creations

There's nothing superficial about advanced skincare specialist Rachel Robertson's approach to skincare – and it shows. Scanning her epidermis for imperfections is hard work, testament to the way she treats it and wants us to treat ours. The award-winning beauty therapist has excelled in her field for the last 13 years through an innovative approach to educating the public about skincare and her renowned Thorndon 'Skin Therapy' clinic. But what makes her stand out from the plethora of beauty salons that dot our city and suburbs?

Rather than just pampering her clients for an hour she wants to empower them with knowledge and long-term results as well: "I want to push the boundaries beyond the traditional definition of what it means to be a beauty therapist. It's a new concept to put the emphasis on a scientific-based education for clients which in turn helps them to dramatically improve their skin in addition to having a relaxing experience."

Her innovation and commitment to providing the highest level of client care and surpassing their expectations has made Rachel one of New Zealand's top five beauty therapists, blurring the line between beauty therapy and dermatology via her scientific and holistic

“Honesty rather than hype is the key. My philosophy is that each ingredient must have an impact on each individual skin layer and cell.”

approach. With the introduction of therapy systems like the MTS Medical Rolling Treatment (exclusive to a few select beauty salons in the Wellington area due to their level of expertise), regarded as the best form of Collagen Induction worldwide, Rachel has established herself as a leader in advanced skincare treatment. Her own experience with eczema throughout her life was the

catalyst to becoming a beauty therapist and ultimately creating her own skincare range. Not only is Rachel a qualified beauty therapist but she has post-graduate training in skin analysis and cosmetic chemistry. This has given her the skills to effectively target skin problems including pigmentation, eczema, dermatitis and psoriasis, along with advanced anti-ageing. Such is the trust in Rachel's ability, she works in tandem with a private dermatologist to help transform people's skin and their confidence.

Not one to rest on her laurels, Rachel has just developed her own innovative skincare range. She became increasingly frustrated acting as the last point of call for people wanting help with their skin 'when we should be the first, acting as a preventative'.

"People are often given inaccurate skin analysis in shops, waste hundreds of dollars buying expensive, celebrity-endorsed products that don't produce results and then come to us on the defensive. This helped inspire me to create my own skincare range where honesty rather than hype is key. My philosophy is that each ingredient must have an impact on each individual skin layer and cell."

The result of this inspiration is Prologic: ☪



Rachel with husband Adam and daughter India

“Pro because we’re pro-education and logic due to the logic behind the science,” explains Rachel. “We are not trying to hide anything, it contains logical ingredients and it’s having a direct effect on skin cells.”

But what’s wrong with skin products from the supermarket or department store? Many boast a list of impressive sounding ingredients that claim to tighten, fade and age defy so they must be doing some good, right?

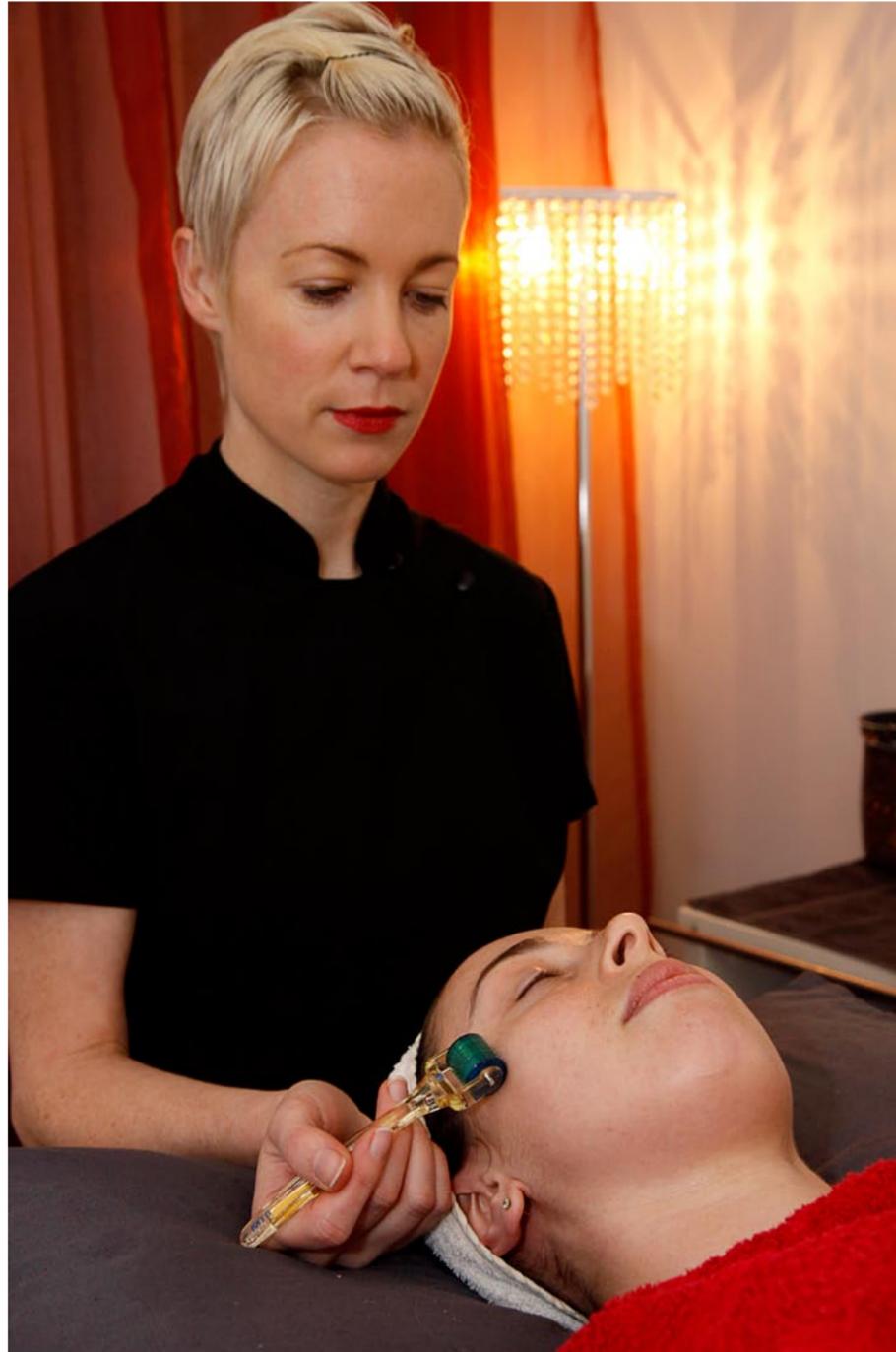
Wrong, says Rachel, who defies their high-gloss marketing claims: “Some of the marketing is so irresponsible. Through my post-graduate cosmetic chemistry study I learned many products that boast of containing high quality ingredients only had minute, ineffective percentages but their presence meant companies could market the skincare on that premise. For example, I discovered there could be 46 ingredients in a moisturiser, with only one active one that had no impact at cell level. It made me feel like I’d been duped.”

This sales ploy made Rachel even more determined to create an ‘honest’ range. “It will not be available in department stores where someone can just pull it off the shelves – it can only be sold in beauty therapy clinics or advanced skin care clinics,” she says emphatically.

After her Omega 3 Treatment Oil was launched it was an immediate success and encouraged her to take a leap of faith and incorporate it into her Prologic range. She’s just released a pre-cleanse oil that’s suitable for all skin types, a gel cleanser and soon to be released pigment cleanser and cream cleanser for drier skins, using only natural cleansing agents. She’s already received great feedback, but getting to this point was no easy feat.

Having a dream is one thing but the reality drew on all her tenacity and determination to get what she wanted. Even choosing a lab to trial the product was a challenge. Finding out how companies take shortcuts to develop a product that cuts costs and quality was an eye-opener: “There are only two pharmaceutical registered laboratories in New Zealand. One mainstream lab offered to knock out a range of 20 products in three months at only 28 cents per pottle, creating huge profit margins. It was standard to use food or industrial grade ingredients. They thought the timescale and low-cost ingredients would be attractive to me as a business proposition. I was shocked to find it’s the norm. That’s why we are so keen to educate and enlighten both the public and other therapists.”

Rachel was adamant there was to be no compromising: After a year perfecting the formulas for Prologic at the PCCA registered lab, she’s now ready to deliver the goods. Due for release is her radical three-step moisturiser range, ideal for people who have skin concerns like eczema and dermatitis. With each step you prepare your skin for the next tube and its higher dosage of ingredients. The first tube strengthens your skin, you then up the ‘anti’ with a strong anti-ageing moisturiser, while the third is the most potent and advanced, with anti-ageing peptides, anti-oxidants and vitamins. Although local clients are already eagerly



anticipating the release of her new products, Rachel will be distributing them as a wholesaler both here and internationally to beauty therapy and advanced skin care clinics. Department stores need not apply...

In addition to this, Rachel deftly juggles her clinic demands with those made by her two-year-old daughter India, work as the Wellington Representative for the Association of Registered Beauty Therapists NZ and finding quality time with supportive husband Adam Bradley, a digital artist at Weta Digital... I think she deserves an award on that basis alone!

Having already gained a spot as one of NZ’s top five therapists for 2009/10, Rachel has again entered the

Association’s competitive bi-yearly awards for NZ’s Best Therapist and Best Clinic, and there’s no reason to doubt her optimism: “I believe we can take out the top prize for both ‘Best Therapist’ and ‘Best Clinic’.” Both Rachel and her manager Helen Daly have been named in the top five therapists in NZ for this year’s awards, with Skin Therapy also being named in the top five clinics in the country. “We have developed within the clinic a level of service and experience that I don’t believe is available anywhere else,” says Rachel. To demonstrate this she submitted a 540-page document containing 12 skin therapy case studies explaining her work in healing grafted skin through to treating

advanced skin pigmentation as well as endorsements from leading industry figures.

Why the investment of time and energy? “It’s held in high regard by both the industry and clients. New clients who have looked at my website often say ‘I saw on your website you’re one of the top therapists in NZ’. It jumps out at you, so yes, it’s an important marketing tool and recognition of your abilities.”

The award winners will be announced in July at a black tie event in Auckland hosted by celebrity John Hawkesby. Event organizer Maria Robins had this to say about the awards: “This year set a precedent for a record number of entries across all categories. Judges commented that the calibre of entries was exceptionally high and to make it to the short-list against such stiff competition is a significant achievement in itself.”

Providing service that’s flawless in its professionalism and skincare that’s not just skin deep, Rachel Robertson is helping redefine the country’s beauty industry and our skin in the process.

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“Pro because we are pro-education and logic due to the logical ingredients.”



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