

business.community.life.

naturalfoods merchandiser

December 2008

Volume XXIX • Number 12 • \$18
naturalfoodsmerchandiser.com

NATURAL
PRODUCTS
EXPO

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF
NATURAL PRODUCTS EXPO

Soak it up

Pull the plug on boring baths

It's been used for thousands of years to soothe the nervous system. It washes away the day's dirt and purifies skin. And in tough economic times it can provide a relaxing, inexpensive indulgence.

It's a bath.

But because a soak is such a treat in our time-starved world, customers are increasingly particular about bathing products, scrutinizing labels for questionable chemicals like parabens and sodium lauryl sulfate.

"Our consumers are constantly seeking out the most pure, natural and organic bath products available," says Tom Havran, aromatherapy product specialist at personal care company Aura Cacia, based in Urbana, Iowa.

Even if the ingredient list passes muster, a customer will want to select the best bath products for his or her dermatological needs and emotional state. Providing individualized advice makes the sale.

Story by Lara Shinn, continued on page 24

Private label gets good looking

With new private label personal care lines debuting in Whole Foods Markets and Earth Fare stores, the idea of store-brand, natural or organic cosmetics and creams doesn't seem so far-fetched anymore. After all, private label supplements and grocery items have been staples on natural food store shelves for years. Why not extend that marketing strategy to your personal care aisles as well?

*Story by Vicky Uhland,
continued on page 10*

Tis' the season

Shoppers heading to parties? Stock these host gifts that they can bring along.

"My aching head"

Discover five supplements that you can offer shoppers for headache relief and prevention.

C is for cookie

Bite into the take-and-eat and take-and-bake natural cookie category.

Pull the plug on boring baths

It's been used for thousands of years to soothe the nervous system. It washes away the day's dirt and purifies skin. And in tough economic times it can provide a relaxing, inexpensive indulgence.

It's a bath.

But because a soak is such a treat in our time-starved world, customers are increasingly particular about bathing products, scrutinizing labels for questionable chemicals like parabens and sodium lauryl sulfate.

"Our consumers are constantly seeking out the most pure, natural and organic bath products available," says Tom Havran, aromatherapy product specialist at personal care company Aura Cacia, based in Urbana, Iowa.

Even if the ingredient list passes muster, a customer will want to select the best bath products for his or her dermatological needs and emotional state. Providing individualized advice makes the sale.

Story by Lora Shinn, continued on page 24

Scentsational essences

Most bath products are combined with single essential oils or a proprietary blend. **"Essential oils turn a chore into an indulgence, and a routine into therapy," says Aura Cacia's Havran.**

Aesthetician Merrill says essential oils are absorbed in two ways: through the skin and through scent. "They're antibacterial, antiseptic, anti-inflammatory," she says. "And as you inhale it, you trigger a response in the brain and lymphatic system."

Blah-beating baths are a smart sell in winter. "Stimulating essential oils work well as they awaken the psyche, increase circulation and energize the body," Tourles says. Turn to warming citrus scents like lemon, orange, grapefruit and tangerine; or holiday favorites like peppermint, spearmint, eucalyptus, juniper and pine.

To detoxify, Merrill suggests bath products with ingredients like kelp, grapefruit, coriander, ginger or lemongrass. Blevins recommends frankincense for restoring youthful glow to skin.

Too much holiday fun—or stress? Suggest calming mixtures to customers. "Try chamomile and lavender for relaxation," Blevins says.

No matter which bath products or scents you emphasize, make sure your merchandising draws attention to the simple luxury of bathing with super-soft sustainable towels or washcloths made of bamboo or organic cotton. Or point out the fun for kids—bisphenol A-free rubber duckies are hard to turn down.

Merrill says she's always encouraging her clients to hop in their tubs. "You're extending private time and blocking out the world."

Lora Shinn is a Seattle-based freelance writer.