

Begoun pulls no punches when it comes to cosmetics



Paula Begoun is the best-selling author of:

"Don't Go to the Cosmetics Counter Without Me"

"Blue Eyeshadow Should be Illegal"

"The Beauty Bible"

"Don't Go Shopping for Hair-Care Products Without Me"

Find more info on Paula Begoun at www.cosmeticscop.com

BY LISA JONES TOWNSEL
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If you collect beauty products, as many of us do, you're likely to find Paula Begoun's chatty reviews of cosmetics and hair products engrossing.

The Chicago native (and longtime Seattle transplant) worked in many capacities, including makeup artist and television reporter, before becoming a best-selling author.

Unswayed by fruity scents and glossy packaging, Begoun offers sometimes scathing, always frank commentary about brand-name cosmetics.

Here recently at Enhance Medical Spa (part of St. Louis Cosmetic Surgery in Chesterfield) for a book signing and to tout her Paula's Choice skin-care line and Paula's Select cosmetics line, Begoun happily discussed her life's work and the latest claims in the beauty industry — all with the same forthrightness exhibited in her books.

Will we ever see a day when prices for cosmetics are marked down?

It ain't happening. The department stores won't do it. Only in the drug-stores. And, no woman really cares.

What's the one over-the-counter product that has revolutionized the beauty market?

There's no one product. It's really been research in the skin-care industry. One thing has been the link between antioxidants, cell-communicating ingredients and ingredients that mimic the structure of skin. They make a phenomenal difference. Also, what we know about UVA damage. It's worse than UVB damage when it comes to impacting the skin long term. And, in makeup, the new pigments are better than ever. It's hard to buy a bad color foundation. And most pressed powders go on like silk.

I've read that you're excited about the plethora of anti-aging products on the

market, but that you don't believe that they're magic. Why are people willing to buy them no matter the cost?

I think it's increasingly misleading. What they do is improve the health of skin. They help to reduce that damage. Skin likes making collagen. But due to sun damage, smoking and other problems, we get in the way of that. The one thing that we know about antioxidants is that if you buy a product in a jar and use your finger to put it on — opening it to the air and light — that breaks down the ingredients in the product, in the packaging. No one should be buying unstable products.

You have your own skin-care line, Paula's Choice and Paula's Select cosmetics. Are you concerned that being a part of the industry you police might dilute your message and authority?

I'm the only cosmetics company in the world that recommends other prod-

ucts. I started writing before I started my lines. I recommend a lot of products. I wear the two hats separately and really nicely.

Is there a good reason to spend \$100 or more for an eye cream?

There's never a reason to buy an eye gel or cream at any price. They give you less, charge more and, for daytime, most don't contain a sunscreen. Every part of the body needs the same thing.

Do you really believe that blue eyeshadow should be banned as one of your book titles suggests?

I notice it keeps leaving. I don't think we get how, in the workplace, makeup and cosmetics impact how we're perceived. Women need to think how seriously powerful it can be. Besides, blue eyeshadow makes you look made up.

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What's a woman to do with her hair on hot, humid days?

Flat irons are a girl's best friend, especially the new ceramic flat irons. They just glide over the hair. Use flat irons, wash less, use styling lotions like those by got2be, Garnier Fructis, Tresemmé or Citre Shine. They're lightweight and inexpensive.

A warning to African-American women: Extensions are hard on African-American hair, especially for the hair at the front of the head because of hair loss. Also, products like shea, lanolin and cocoa butter hinder healthy function. Try using silicone serums, which are gorgeous.

What's your take on:

- **Sunscreens?**

Make sure they're UVA protecting (the label will contain one of the following: titanium dioxide, zinc oxide or avobenzone) and include antioxidants.

- **Lip plumpers?**

They don't work; they just rush blood to the lips.

- **Wrinkle reducers?**

If you're using a sunscreen, then, yes, you can improve the appearance of skin with these.

- **Teeth whiteners?**

The research is pretty amazing. The various types, including the paint-on type and strips, work extremely well. The only risk is increased sensitization.

P.S.: After our interview at St. Louis Cosmetic Surgery, Begoun got a chin lift. Of course, she spoke openly about it.

"At 51, I'm the prime candidate. The idea is to do small, least invasive (things) to reduce the impact of aging. I'm a proponent of that," Begoun said of her philosophy on plastic surgery. "I've planned out what I've had, including Derma Fillers (which fill in wrinkles around the forehead, eyes and mouth) and Botox."

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