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Vancouver Island's Seaweed Lady

Known throughout Vancouver Island as the Seaweed Lady, Diane Bernard of Outer Coast Seaweeds creates Seaflora Wild Organic Seaweed Skincare, a line of body care products made from hand-harvested wild seaweeds, for selected resorts, restaurants, and spas throughout Vancouver. "As a third generation seaweed character living in coastal communities on both the Atlantic and Pacific coast, I've been exposed to seaweeds all of my life," says Bernard. "My family used seaweeds as an edible food source. Through this, I became aware of the high vitamin and mineral content of seaweeds, and how they are soothing and calming to the skin. Throughout the years, we never used anything on the children's skin unless you could eat it. For generations we've made our own soaps, shampoos, and creams, so this is a way of life for me." Bernard's organic seaweeds are responsibly gathered to protect Vancouver Island's marine environment. "My favorite seaweed," she says, "is called *Iridaea cordata*, known locally as the "Rainbow" seaweed, prominently used in our Seaflora facial products. It's elegant, gleaming with iridescent purple, blue, red, and black, and is loaded with vitamins and minerals such as beta-carotene, and vitamins A, E, and C, all of which are important nutrients in maintaining and promoting healthy skin." From May through September, Bernard offers themed seaweed excursions out of Whiffen Spit in Sooke, located 45 minutes west of Victoria. After exploring the coastline during the Thalasso Therapy Seaweed Tour, participants are treated to a thalasso therapy spa treatment that includes a seaweed wrap, seaweed mask, and seaweed bath. There's also a two-hour Wild Seaweed Tour, and a four-hour long Wild Seaweed Culinary Tour and Dinner, during which those taking part learn about and sample healthy, edible seaweed delicacies. For more information visit www.outercoastseaweeds.com.

—D.B