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Eight French Pharmacy Finds Worth a Seven-Hour Plane Ride

Or just head to your neighborhood drug store.

By Jamie Ducharme | Hub Health | May 6, 2015 4:14 p.m.

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BRING THE FRENCH PHARMACY TO YOU. PHOTO BY OLGA KHVAN

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Eight Famed French Pharmacy Products Available in Boston

Besides croissants and the Eiffel Tower, there are few Parisian standbys as iconic as the French pharmacy—and for good reason. Think about it: There's got to be a reason French women always look so flawless.

After living in Paris for three months, I can safely say these pharmacies put our local drugstores to shame. The shelves are packed with high-quality skin care products and cosmetics, and the prices, while not bargain-basement low, are a steal compared to what the French brands cost here.

Exhibit A: La Roche-Posay's Toleriane cleanser and Anthelios sunscreen (both pictured) sell for the equivalent of roughly \$13 and \$17, respectively, in France; at my local CVS, they go for \$24 and \$36.

More importantly, French pharmacy products actually work, and work well. I don't think I had a blemish the entire time I was there, which is all the proof I need. If you'd rather take an expert's word for it, Dr. Emmy Graber, an assistant professor of dermatology at Boston University School of Medicine, confirms that French products often contain different ingredients than American alternatives, namely thermal water and micelle technology.

"The thermal water really has high mineral content, so that's been thought to have some antioxidant effects on the skin, and perhaps even some anti-inflammatory effects on the skin," Graber explains.

"The micelle technology is a great way to gently remove makeup or dirt from the skin."

Looking to embrace your inner—and outer—Francophile? Here are eight French pharmacy finds worth seeking out:

1. Bioderma Créaline: A true French classic, Créaline does a little bit of everything: It can be a no-rinse face wash, a toner or an eye makeup remover.

Buy it locally: amazon.com (\$15.89).

2. Klorane dry shampoo: One of the better-known French products stateside, Klorane's dry shampoo is a favorite of stylists everywhere. Its great performance is attributed to a not-so-secret ingredient: oat milk.

Buy it locally: Sephora (\$20), Urban Outfitters (\$20), kloraneusa.com (\$19.50), amazon.com (\$15.56).

3. La Roche-Posay Toleriane cleanser: Like many French products, Toleriane is multi-purpose. The ultra-gentle formula can be used as a facial cleanser or eye makeup remover that won't irritate sensitive skin.

Buy it locally: CVS (\$24), Ulta (\$24), laroche-posay.us (\$24).

4. La Roche-Posay Lipikar hand cream: An excellent choice for chronic dry skin, this thick hand cream should be a Boston wintertime staple.

Buy it locally: amazon.com (\$20 for a two-pack).

5. Nuxe Huile Prodigieuse: A dry oil made with only six botanicals, Nuxe's signature product promises to soften and replenish the hair, skin, and face.

Buy it locally: us.nuxe.com (\$45), amazon.com (\$45).

6. Topicrem CICA Repair Cream: Consider this your go-to for spot treating extremely dry or irritated skin. The hypoallergenic formula is also gentle enough to use on babies, children, or adults.



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7. La Roche-Posay Anthelios sunscreen: This sunscreen, which comes in a range of SPFs, is known for its light, smooth finish that won't clog pores or cause breakouts.

Buy it locally: CVS (\$36), Ulta (\$37), laroche-posay.us (\$36), amazon.com (\$22).

8. Avène Thermal Spring Water: Cleansing waters like this one are all the rage in France despite the fact that the only ingredient is water. Nonetheless, the legendary product is said to soothe ailments ranging from sunburn and post-exercise redness to blemishes, and it can also be used to set makeup.

Buy it locally: A full list of Boston retailers that stock the product can be found here.

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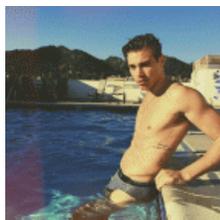
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