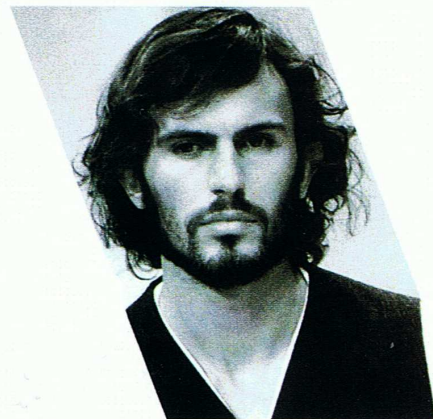




grooming



Grooming? We'd rather have a cup of tea

In a grooming market that has used unpronounceable acids, human pee and the odd shot of whale sperm to keep us looking good, it is with great relief that LF discovers that the wonder ingredient du jour is Tea. Yes, it seems that when it comes to brightening skin, calming shaving rash, and fighting ageing free-radicals, a drop of Rosie Lee is just what the dermatologist ordered. Aramis uses green tea to defend the skin from pollutants in its Lab Series Age Rescue Skin Care Therapy, an innovative anti-ageing moisturiser. Origins has incorporated green tea in its new line for sensitive skin, drawing on the calming leaves to relieve sore, fiery complexions. L'Occitane even wants us to smell like a cuppa char, with fresh Green Tea fragrances and shower gels. But it's not just the hippy brews that are in vogue. PG Tips-style leaves are also livening up our skins as well as our souls. EPure's Be Up is a grooming treatment-come-hangover cure that uses tea-derived caffeine to give the skin an invigorating alarm call. Mine's with milk and two. SH

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ORIGINS 0800 731 4039.

Groomed to imperfection

It was only six months ago that Milar grooming trend-setters were lauding the preened-to-perfection look to round off their high maintenance fashions. At the Spring/Summer shows, male models exhibited David Hasselhoff tans, hairless chins and the kind of gravity defying bouffants rarely seen outside of a Studio Line commercial. Off the runway, fashion forward boys were expected to adopt the look, and bypass the pub to sit dryer to dryer at Toni & Guy, before partaking in a dose of chemotherapy at the local tanning parlour.

However, fashion was unprepared to foresee that in a summer season of Big Brother, an English football winning streak, and Angelina Jolie toting guns, grooming would always be inexorably low on average male agenda. In real life, the fast and effective Shit, Shower, Shave regimen prevailed, and boys continued to look reassuringly like boys.

So at this season's shows, the once bitten, twice shy designers gave in to the timeless charms of the un-groomed male, and characteristically, took it several steps further. At Paul Smith, models were decidedly ruffled with shaggy dog hair and 6 o'clock shadow, while at Nicole Farhi, boys looked like they needed at best a good scrub and at worst, six weeks in rehab. Even the usually peacock-like Gucci boys looked as oblivious of the whereabouts of their local barbershop as they were to the invention of the Mach 3.

But as fashion's pendulum swings to another extreme, our prediction is that men will ignore the catwalk's whims and continue to groom in much the same way as they always have done. Showering daily, clipping monthly and manicuring whenever the kitchen scissors are handy. And women are glad of it, mostly because there's something very sexy about a slightly unkempt fella, but also because there's nothing worse than seeing a man's sticky paw prints all over your Chanel moisturiser. SH