



DIRTY GIRL

Clay, mud, ash—you try so hard to keep the darn stuff off your shoes. Now, skincare brands want you slathering it on your face. Since when did getting clean become so filthy?

Pre-bedtime rituals are spent diligently scrubbing skin, attempting to rid pores of anything they came in contact with throughout the day. One such skin-irritating substance we try to expel—dirt. So, why are beauty brands packing ingredients like mud, charcoal, and clay into their products? Washing our faces with dirt seems a bit ironic, but it turns out these straight-from-the-ground ingredients actually help to clear up skin. The two key words being that they 'draw out' toxins and impurities (thus de-clogging pores), but in a much gentler manner than most additives. Check out Mother Nature's natural cleansers that penetrate deep into the skin to remove bacteria, dirt, and oil for a cleaner, blemish-free complexion.

BLACK SOAP

Often referred to as African black soap (after where it originated), this cleanser contains ash from plants and bark (like palm tree leaves or shea tree bark) which contributes to its ebony hue and serves as a gentle exfoliant. Black soap is used to address concerns like wrinkles, uneven skin tone, and blemishes.



L'Occitane Rebalancing Black Soap, P1,350.

Cleaning up means now getting down and dirty!



Estée Lauder Nutritious Radiant Vitality 2-Step Treatment, P4,100.

Kiehl's Rare Earth Pore Minimizing Lotion, P2,370.



The Body Shop Moroccan Rhassoul Body Clay, P1,395.

CLAY

Clay—like Kaolin and Bentonite clay in particular—acts as a sponge, absorbing impurities while healing skin. "Clay comes in many different forms. Depending on the variety, it can be used for a wide range of benefits—hydration, purification, rejuvenation, or treatment of oily, acne-prone skin," according to The Aivee Institute. Many clays act as a magnet. Bentonite clay, for example, carries a negative charge that bonds to positive charges present in many toxins and impurities. Once these positive charges are 'drawn,' they also bind to the clay which is then rinsed away. Clay masks are ideal for those prone to blemishes because they soak up excess oil, mattify skin, and prevent clogged pores that lead to breakouts.

SULFUR

Sulfur may be better known for its stinky, rotten-egg smell, but it's actually very efficient at treating acne, eczema and psoriasis. That's because sulfur has anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, and anti-fungal qualities. Did you know that sulfur even exists in our bodies, mostly in hair, skin and nails? "Sulfur inhibits the growth of *P. acnes* bacterium—a mild antimicrobial. It works by making the topmost layer of our skin peel off, thereby unclogging pores and reducing oil," says Dr. Mary Jane Torres of The Zen Institute. Use products containing sulfur to 'de-congest' skin, reduce shine, treat blemishes, and minimize the appearance of pores.



The Zen Institute RSS Solution, P725.



Proactiv Refining Mask, P2,495 for a 30-day kit.



Dr. Kaufmann Medicated Sulphur Soap, P42.

MUD

More than just dirty water, mud contains minerals like calcium, which improves cell turnover, and iron, which helps distribute oxygen throughout the body. Although the benefits of mud vary depending on their chemical makeup determined by the geographical location, one thing they all have in common is their anti-inflammatory properties. If you suffer from psoriasis, rosacea, eczema or acne, try a mud-based cleanser or mask. So what's the difference between mud and clay? "Mud and clay have the same properties of detoxification of the skin. However, clay is more of a drying agent, while mud is more for hydrating," explains Dr. Torres.



Glam Glow Youthmud Mask, P3,300.



Lush Honey Bee Bath Bomb with Rhassoul Mud, P245.



Nature Republic Jeju Sparkling Mud Foam Cleanser, P415.



Nivea Deep Cleansing Mud Foam, 100 g, P154.

CHARCOAL

Like clay, charcoal also acts as a magnet, attracting or 'pulling out' dirt and other substances that don't naturally belong in skin. Its natural ability to bind itself to toxins allows pollutants to remain within the charcoal until easily rinsed away. Charcoal's detoxifying properties may be due to its ability to "absorb impurities up to 200 times its weight," says Dr. Torres. For those who love multi-purpose products that save time and money, this activated carbon acts as an exfoliant, moisturizer, and cleanser in one. Plus, it contains antibacterial properties that treat pimples without stripping the skin or leaving it dry.



Clinique Pore Refining Solutions, Charcoal Mask, P1,650.

Holika Holika Charcoal Egg Soap, P435.



Etude House Black Charcoal Chin Pack, P38.



Palmolive Flawless Clean Soap, 115 g, P39.

Origins Clear Improvement Charcoal Mask, P1,500.

VOLCANIC ASH

"Volcanic ash is commonly used in masks, facials, and foot scrubs because of its purification and cleansing properties," says The Aivee Institute. Because the ash does not dissolve in water, it makes for a really great, mild exfoliant as opposed to other scrubs containing seeds or shells with jagged edges that are so abrasive on skin. Volcanic ash also contains antibacterial, anti-viral, anti-yeast, and other disinfectant qualities.



not.a.sponge Volcanic Power Puff for Body, P650.



MAC Mineralize Volcanic Ash Thermal Mask, P100.

Holika Holika Volcanic Pore Purifying Deep Cleansing Foam, P195.