



CANNES DO

When you're in the French Riviera, overindulging is expected—but your skin doesn't have to show it.

By JULIA SEIDL

WHENEVER I'M IN France, I try to abide by local customs—that means sinking my teeth into as much cheese as possible, drinking an extra glass (or three) of red wine and catching a few rays of sun. (After all, it was Coco Chanel who popularized the tan.) I embrace these experiences in the moment, but they often reveal themselves on my skin at a later date, whether in the form of breakouts, bouts of redness or a general dullness that plagues my complexion. And it all seems to be getting worse the older I get. I guess what happens in France does not stay in France.

It's fitting, then, that on a trip to Cannes, I find myself inside Biotherm's physical representation of the fountain of youth. In French Riviera-speak, that means a hyper-modern ocean-view villa complete with an indoor waterfall. As if to mimic the smoothness of a youthful complexion, the architectural style is minimalism at its finest—all clean lines and bare walls. Essentially, it's a symbol for skin that hasn't been subjected to the realities of 21st-century life, like UV rays, pollution, sleep deprivation and a poor diet (which in my case includes a serious brie fetish)—all considered sources of free radicals. It's

our exposure to them that causes oxidative stress in our skin, which leads to accelerated aging and inflammation, says Caroline Negre, Biotherm's international scientific director. Skin cells, it turns out, cannot defend themselves against these stressors and regenerate at the same time. They are not adept at multi-tasking.

Enter Biotherm's new Life Plankton Elixir. Its aim is to play both defence, by protecting against these aforementioned daily aggressors, and offence, by helping skin cells renew. The superhero ingredient charged with these tasks is Life Plankton. Originally sourced from thermal springs in the French Pyrenees, it's a micro-organism so delicate that a dedicated team of six guardians is on call 24-7 in case anything goes wrong in the 90-day fermentation process. When a 5-percent concentration of Life Plankton is combined with hyaluronic acids, the recipe yields strong antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties, says Negre.



Biotherm Life Plankton Elixir (\$94). For details, see Shopping Guide.

When I try the elixir, I'm struck by its weightless texture and how quickly it dissolves into my skin. A few weeks after daily use, I catch my reflection while passing a mirror and pause. I'm not exactly radiant, but my skin looks fresher and less dull and there's not a hint of redness in sight. *Plus de fromage, s'il vous plaît.* ♦