



A Special Report by Paula Begoun

drugstore doubles

The Best in Beauty from Chanel to Cover Girl



Those of you familiar with how I review products know that I am first and foremost concerned with formula and performance. If the ingredients in a product are beneficial for skin or hair and can live up to some degree of the claim on the label, I always rate it with a big smiling face, regardless of the cost. I may comment that the price for a state-of-the-art formulation is ridiculously high, but that doesn't negate that the formula is worthwhile and something you can consider trying. For those on a budget or for women who just resent overspending on skin-care products, it is especially noteworthy when an expensive but well-formulated product has a less pricey counterpart—whether it is sold in drugstores or by companies like Avon. In those instances, such products receive slam-dunk recommendations and I urge my readers to explore those options before considering the overpriced version because wasting money isn't beautiful.

However, there is no question that consumers are drawn to expensive makeup, skin- and hair-care products, despite the lack of evidence proving they are superior to their less expensive counterparts. In my 25+ years of researching and reviewing cosmetics, I have yet to find substantiation from any source that expensive skin-care, hair-care, or makeup products are better than less expensive ones. Despite the facts, the seductive combinations of advertising, sales presentations, opulent packaging, and clever marketing have convinced lots of consumers that “expensive” does indeed mean “better.”

Regardless of the ads and claims made in salons and at cosmetic counters, the fact remains that there are wonderfully impressive products in every category from cleansers to moisturizers, blushes, and conditioners, and at all points along the price spectrum. The list below represents some of my favorites, from cleansers and sunscreens to mascaras and styling products, regardless of price. These are some of the best options available. Whatever you decide to spend is up to you. But let me assure you, all of the inexpensive products in this list work as well as, if not better than, their pricey counterpart. If you can get past price as an indicator of excellence, your skin, hair, and appearance will be far better off because you will be making decision based on quality, not exaggerated, over-hyped claims.

Please note: For the sake of this report, I am only including recommendations from my product line when there are no other similar options available (this is particularly true for toners and salicylic acid products). While I am undeniably proud of all my products and feel they are without a doubt progressive, advanced formulations at a low price, for this report I wore exclusively my consumer reporter hat (as I always do when making product recommendations) and wanted to stay dedicated to that service.

Cleanser for Normal to Dry Skin

Neutrogena Sensitive Skin Solutions Cream Cleanser for Dry Skin (\$9 for 5.1 ounces) is excellent and very similar to the higher-priced **Trish McEvoy Gentle Cleansing Lotion** (\$55 for 6.8 ounces).

Cleanser for Normal to Oily Skin

Lancome Gel Clarte Clarifying Gel-to-Foam Cleanser (\$20 for 4.2 ounces) works beautifully to cleanse and remove makeup from normal to oily skin, but so does the nearly identical **L’Oreal Ideal Balance Foaming Gel Cleanser for Combination Skin** (\$7.99 for 6.7 ounces). Your skin won’t notice if you don’t spend more than twice as much for the Lancome product, but your pocketbook might!

Toner (All Skin Types)

DDF Aloe Toning Complex (\$24 for 8 ounces), **Estee Lauder Soft Clean Silky Hydrating Lotion** (\$18.50 for 6.7 ounces) and **Clinique Moisture Surge Face Spray** (\$19.50 for 4.2 ounces) each go beyond the average, ho-hum toner formulations so common in the cosmetics industry. Regrettably, there are no state-of-the-art toners at drug or mass-market stores to recommend. The best one was **Dove Essential Nutrients Clarifying Toner**, but, unfortunately, the product is no longer available. In this case I feel that my Paula’s Choice Final Touch Toner for Normal to Dry Skin (\$10.95 for 8 ounces), Final Touch Toner for Normal to Oily Skin (\$10.95 for 8 ounces), Skin Balancing Toner (\$12.95 for 6 ounces), and Skin Recovery Toner (\$12.95 for 6 ounces) are not only inexpensive but they are bursting with unique ingredients that even the more expensive products don’t include.

Anti-Blemish Products



There is every reason to consider **Peter Thomas Roth’s BPO Gel 5%** [5% benzoyl peroxide] (\$22 for 3 ounces) or **ProActiv’s Unblemish Treat Acne Medicated Lotion** [2.5% benzoyl peroxide] (\$40 for 1.7 ounces) except for the price. Less expensive but just as effective counterparts to these topical benzoyl peroxide disinfectants include **Oxy Balance Acne Treatment for Sensitive Skin**, **Vanishing** (\$4.99 for 1 ounce) which contains 5% benzoyl peroxide in an irritant-free base. If you prefer pre-soaked pads and a bit gentler formula, **Stridex Benzoyl Peroxide Powder Pads** (\$6.49 for 28 pads) contain a 2.5% concentration of benzoyl peroxide. Those looking for a 10% benzoyl peroxide product (which should only be considered after trying and not having much success with 2.5% or 5% versions) may consider **Clearasil Total Control Crisis Clear Up** (\$8.99 for 1 ounce).

AHA Product

Very few department-store lines are selling AHA products, likely because from a marketing perspective, they just aren’t that buzz-worthy. Some Nordstrom stores feature the Exuviance by NeoStrata line, and they are the AHA pio-

neers. If you want to spend a lot for a little but still get an excellent product, consider their **Vespera Bionic Serum** (\$55 for 1 ounce). The **Peter Thomas Roth** line has several effective, though pricey, options, including **Glycolic Acid 10% Clarifying Gel** (\$45 for 2 ounces) and **Glycolic Acid 10% Moisturizer** (\$40 for 2 ounces). At the drugstore, one of the best-selling AHA products (and for good reason) continues to be **Neutrogena Healthy Skin Face Lotion** (\$11.99 for 2.5 ounces). It contains 8% glycolic acid in a light moisturizing base and the correct pH range to exfoliate skin. Neutrogena also markets a sensitive skin version of this product, which contains 5% glycolic acid.

BHA Product

There is still a glaring lack of well-formulated beta hydroxy acid (BHA) products at drug and department stores. In addition to the multiple BHA options in my **Paula's Choice** line (each \$15.95 for 4 ounces), you can consider **Neutrogena Rapid Clear Acne Defense Face Lotion** (\$7.99 for 1.7 ounces), which contains 2% salicylic acid and a pH of 3.8. If you're looking to spend almost twice as much, **Serious Skin Care Clarifying Treatment** (\$17.50 for 2 ounces) is an OK option, but with only 0.5% salicylic acid, don't expect amazing results. I should mention that all of the other department store BHA products I recommended in my book *Don't Go to the Cosmetics Counter Without Me*, 6th Edition, have been discontinued.

Daytime Moisturizer with SPF 15

Dove Fresh Radiance Moisturizer SPF 15 (\$9.99 for 1.7 ounces) goes head-to-head with (and in some cases, bests) **Clinique Repairwear SPF 15 Intensive Cream** (\$45 for 1.7 ounces). Both are great for normal to dry



skin (with lots of interesting beneficial ingredients), and both contain an in-part zinc oxide sunscreen for sufficient UVA protection. Prefer to avoid zinc oxide? Consider **Olay Complete Defense Daily UV Moisturizer SPF 30** (\$14.99 for 2.5 ounces), which contains an in-part avobenzone sunscreen and is beautifully formulated. Looking for a great sunscreen for normal to oily skin? Consider **Estee Lauder DayWear Plus Multi-Protection Antioxidant Lotion SPF 15** (\$38 for 1.7 ounces) or, if a higher SPF number is needed, **Neutrogena UltraSheer Dry-Touch Sunblock SPF 30** (\$8.99 for 3 ounces).

Facial Moisturizer, Normal to Dry Skin

If you're looking (and you should be) for a state-of-the-art moisturizer and wish to shop for it at a drug or mass-market store, I suggest shopping at Target for **Spa Sciences Anti-Aging Moisture Day Lotion** (\$18.99 for 1.7 ounces). Although the lack of sunscreen makes it an inappropriate solo choice for daytime, this fragrance-free product can be used as a nighttime moisturizer for someone with normal to dry skin. At the department store, a comparable

product to spend more money on (though why you'd do that is another story) is **Prescriptives Intensive Rebuilding Moisturizer** (\$95 for 2 ounces). In the middle of this price spectrum is the supremely well-formulated **WhiteLight EX Extra Brightening Intensive Night Creme** (\$45 for 1 ounce) from Estee Lauder (but don't count on it to lighten skin).

Facial Moisturizer, Normal to Oily/Combination Skin

Having a generous cosmetics budget means you may want to consider **Prescriptives Redness Relief Gel** (\$50 for 1 ounce) for its ultra-light texture and state-of-the-art formula. Equally state-of-the-art but without the high price tag is the fragrance-free version of **Olay Regenerist Daily Regenerating Serum** (\$18.99 for 1.7 ounces). If you happen to enjoy shopping spa lines, check out **Renee Rouleau Skin Correcting Serum** (\$38.50 for 0.5 ounce) which is an excellent sheer moisturizer for oily skin with dry areas.

Facial Moisturizer, Very Dry Skin

Renee Rouleau Phytolipid Comfort Cream (\$38.50 for 1 ounce) is wonderfully rich and ideal for very dry skin, and its price is between most department and drugstore moisturizers. Also impressive, but for more money, is **Clinique Repairwear Intensive Night Cream Very Dry Skin Formula** (\$60 for 2.5 ounces). Among lower-priced options, the elegant formulation of **Dove Fresh Radiance Anti-Aging Night Cream** (\$9.99 for 1.69 ounces) is definitely worth an audition. If the Dove product is not emollient enough for your very dry skin, try mixing it with a bit of plain olive, jojoba, or evening primrose oil (the latter two are available at most health food stores).

Body Moisturizer

If you're going to invest more money than you should for a body lotion, a great one to consider is **Clinique Water Therapy Firming Body Smoother** (\$27.50 for 6.7 ounces). It is one of the most state-of-the-art body lotions around, and makes products from Lubriderm and even Lancome seem incredibly dated (that's because, for the most part, they are). **Dove** recently introduced several body moisturizers that give Clinique's formula a run for its money, and at less than half the price. Thumbs-up ratings go to **Dove Intensive Firming Cream, Intensive Firming Lotion, Intensive Nourishing Lotion, Regenerating Night Lotion, and Cool Moisture Body Lotion** (\$5.99-\$7.99 for 6.7 ounces). If you need to make any of these body moisturizers more emollient for very dry areas, each can be mixed with a non-volatile plant oil such as antioxidant-rich olive or evening primrose oils.

Body Wash/Shower Gel

The vast majority of body washes on the market are well-formulated. All of them contain standard detergent cleansing agents (identical to those used in shampoo) and a variety of additives depending on the formula goals or label claims. It is a rare occurrence to find a body wash that contains irritants such as menthol or citrus oils, but be aware, they do exist. Companies that offer excellent body washes for reasonable prices include **Dove, Olay, Neutrogena, The Body Shop, Axe** (for men—but I refuse to vouch for the fragrance), **Ivory, Aveeno, Dial, Lever 2000, Nivea, and Jergens**. Purchasing a body wash from a department store line that sells them is an option, but most cost two to four times what you'll pay for a nearly identical product at the drugstore, and the only major differences are fancier packaging (sometimes) and fragrance.

Neither a fragrance nor packaging will get you clean, so in the end, it just makes good sense to spend less on these products.

Specialty/“Anti-Aging” Product

DDF C3 Plus Serum (\$50 for 0.5 ounce) provides skin with copious vitamin C, water-binding agents (including peptides), and other antioxidants, plus it is packaged in an opaque, airless container to keep everything potent. If vitamin C isn’t on your must-have list but you still want an elegant serum to use morning or evening, consider **Neutrogena Visibly Firm Lift Serum Active Copper** (\$18.99 for 1 ounce).

If you want to see what kind of skin lightening effect plant extracts may have on your skin, **Murad Brightening Treatment SPF 15** (\$45 for 1 ounce) combines an effective sunscreen with higher than usual levels of hydroquinone alternatives, including arbutin and uva ursi extract.

Foundation With Sunscreen

The price is a bit startling, but those with normal to oily skin will likely be impressed with **Chanel Double Perfection Crème Powder Makeup SPF 15** (\$42). It contains an in-part titanium dioxide sunscreen and despite its name, is not nearly as slick or greasy as traditional cream-to-powder makeup. For less money and a higher sun protection factor, consider **Clinique Superbalanced Compact Makeup SPF 20** (\$26.50). If you’re looking to spend even less, **Cover Girl AquaSmooth Makeup SPF 15** (\$8.99) is superb and offers plenty of real-skin shades. Almost all of Revlon’s foundations will also keep you covered in real-skin tones and great sunscreens, plus you’ll save money at the same time.

If you have normal to dry skin, I’m fond of **Neutrogena Visibly Even Natural-Look Makeup SPF 20** (\$11.75). Shopping the department store cosmetic counters? Consider **Lancome Renergie Lift Lifting Makeup SPF 20** (\$37), one of the few Lancome foundations with a sunscreen that offers sufficient UVA protection.



Foundation Without Sunscreen

Clinique Perfectly Real Makeup (\$22.50) epitomizes what many women want in a foundation: a super-light texture, smooth, natural-looking matte finish and enough coverage to conceal minor flaws and redness while allowing your natural skin tone to show through. The shade selection is excellent, as it is for the pricier but better for drier skin **Prescriptives Liquid Touch Compact Makeup** (\$37). If you’re looking to spend much less for a top-notch liquid makeup, be sure to try **L’Oreal True Match Super Blendable Makeup** (\$8.99). The L’Oreal and Clinique foundations contain very subtle shimmer—not enough to be distracting but good to know for those looking to avoid any hint of shine in their makeup.

Tinted Moisturizer/Sheer Foundation with Sunscreen

Neutrogena hit a grand slam with the introduction of its **Healthy Skin Enhancer SPF 20** (\$10.99), which features great colors and an in-part titanium dioxide sunscreen with retinol and plenty of antioxidants. Those looking for greater sun protection can consider **Revlon Age Defying Light Makeup SPF 30** (\$12.99). The buck really could stop here, but for those who can't resist the lure of spending more than needed, I also highly recommend **Aveda Inner Light Tinted Moisture SPF 15** (\$25) and **Bobbi Brown SPF 15 Tinted Moisturizer** (\$36).

Concealer

Choosing **Maybelline Instant Age Rewind Under Eye Concealer** (\$6.99) rather than **Lancome Maquicomplet Complete Coverage Concealer** (\$24) will not only leave you with more money in your pocketbook, but since L'Oreal owns Lancome and Maybelline, you will find many of their makeup products are more comparable than ever. Good thing, too, because Maybelline's concealer shades have improved tremendously since L'Oreal has been in charge.

Loose Powder

With its ultra-fine texture and non-powdery appearance on skin, **M.A.C. Select Sheer Loose Powder** (\$19.50) is among the best. At nearly twice the price, **Giorgio Armani Micro-fil Loose Powder** (\$42) is also excellent—but for one-quarter of that price, your skin is likely to be just as happy with **L'Oreal Translucide Naturally Luminous Powder** (\$10.89). By the way, L'Oreal owns Giorgio Armani Cosmetics!

Pressed Powder

Stila Sheer Color Face Powder SPF 15 (\$23) not only has a gorgeous silky texture and smooth application but also provides additional sun protection, perfect for touching up your makeup to reduce shine and boosting your skin's defenses against aging UV rays. A similar but less expensive pressed powder that offers even longer sun protection is **Neutrogena Healthy Defense Protective Powder SPF 30** (\$9.99).



Looking for a superior pressed powder without sunscreen? Try **Cover Girl TruBlend Pressed Powder** (\$7.49) or, if your skin color is harder to match, consider **L'Oreal True Match Super-Blendable Powder** (\$7.99). If you prefer to try the shade at the store before making a purchase, high marks go to **Estee Lauder AeroMatte Ultralucent Pressed Powder** (\$26).

Powder Blush

Vincent Longo Day Play Duo Compact Powder Blush (\$23.50) is a wonderful option if you're feeling extravagant, but an equally impressive powder blush for those with realistic cosmetics budgets is **L'Oreal Feel Naturelle Light Softening Blush** (\$9.79). Note that with Longo's product, you get two powder blush shades in one compact.

Cream Blush

A relatively new option to consider at the department store is **Bobbi Brown Pot Rouge for Lips and Cheeks** (\$22). It is a true cream blush, meaning it's best for normal to dry skin, but does not have a greasy feel or slip all over the face during blending. Those looking to spend less for a comparable product should explore **Merle Norman Luxiva Crème Blush** (\$14.50) or, for an option that's more cream-to-powder than just creamy, **Revlon Cream Blush** (\$8.99).

Powder Eyeshadow

Clinique has been behind the competition for years with its too sheer, too powdery eyeshadows. Not anymore, thanks to their **Colour Surge Eye Shadow Velvet**, **Soft Shimmer**, and **Eye Shadow Duo** (\$13.50-\$17.50). At the drugstore, you'll be impressed with **Revlon ColorStay 12-Hour Shadow Quad** (\$6.99). If you prefer eyeshadow singles, **Prestige Cosmetics Eyeshadow** (\$4.89) is an elegant, affordable option and there are some matte shades available.

Cream (or Cream-Like) Eyeshadows

Delux Beauty Cream Powder Eye Shadow (\$18) is one of the best in terms of color selection, easy application, and long wear with only minimal risk of creasing. A bonafide steal by comparison is **Revlon Illuminance Crème Shadow** (\$5.99) which provides four crease-proof creamy eyeshadows in one convenient compact. The Not Just Nudes quad is an ideal set of neutrals for most skin tones, though some shine is apparent.

Eyeliner

Fans of liquid liner should check out some of the newer gel options, including the affordably priced **M.A.C. Fluidline** (\$13.50). Stila and Bobbi Brown make rather unique creamy, gel eyeliners that cost a few dollars more, and as of this writing none of the drugstore cosmetic lines offer the same type of product. However, a classic liquid liner favorite remains **Prestige Cosmetics Liquid Eyeliner** (\$5.89). Prefer traditional eye pencils for lining your lashes? Cover Girl Outlast Smoothwear All Day Eyeliner (\$6.49) is ideal and does not require sharpening. Another good option from the department store side of the aisle is **Estee Lauder Artist's Mechanical Pencil** (\$23.50).

Brow Enhancer

If you're a fan of brow kits such as **Lancome Brow Expert Design Kit** (\$39.50) or **BeneFit Brow Zings** (\$26) check out the supremely inexpensive but comparable **Browser Brush-On Brow Powder** (\$3.57) from drugstore brand **N.Y.C.**



Fans of tinted brow gels should consider **Bobbi Brown Natural Brow Shaper** (\$17) because of its light formula, reliable shade selection (a clear version is available too), and long

wear. Similar products I have recommended in the past from the drugstore are no longer available, but those looking to spend less money may wish to consider my **Paula's Select Brow/Hair Tint** (\$9.95), a product I am never without and there aren't any other inexpensive versions to recommend!

Cream Lipstick

Ravishing colors and a lush texture are found with **Vincent Longo Gel-X Lipstick** (\$23) and **M.A.C. Amplified Crème Lipstick** (\$14). Not interested in spending more than \$10 for a great creamy lipstick? No problem, because just as opulent and creamy is **Rimmel Lasting Finish Lipstick** (\$5.49), available at Walgreens and Wal-Mart.

Matte Lipstick

Elizabeth Arden Color Intrigue Lipstick (\$17.50) has a creamy application and semi-matte finish, not to mention some absolutely gorgeous colors while **M.A.C. Matte Lipstick** (\$14) costs slightly less and gets you closer to a true matte finish. But neither has the long-wearing quality and smooth application of the matte lipstick I created because I could not find one I truly liked that didn't bleed into lines around the mouth. **Paula's Select Smooth Matte Lipstick** (\$8.95) is such a product, and one I absolutely love.

Lip Gloss

Chanel really does produce some marvelous lip glosses. Their **Cristalle Gloss Waterlight Lip Gloss** (\$24.50) is wonderfully light-textured and very glossy. A dramatically less expensive but truly equally appealing choice is **Revlon Super Lustrous Lip Gloss** (\$6.99).

Lipliner

My favorite lipliners are ones that do not need to be sharpened. If they are also retractable, that's an added bonus. **Prescriptives Deluxe Lip Pencil** (\$18.50) offers those features as well as a built-in lip brush for softening the line or applying lipstick. At the drugstore, I continue to applaud **Cover Girl Outlast Smoothwear Lipliner** (\$6.69), which has all the same features as the Prescriptives Lip Pencil, but for significantly less money.

Mascara

It's no secret that I and millions of women worldwide are fans of many L'Oreal and Maybelline mascaras, so I'm taking a break from singing the praises of their lash-enhancing products to brag about another worthy contender. Instead, three cheers to **Revlon**, whose **Fabulash Mascara** (\$6.99) is fabulous. There are some unquestionably wonderful mascaras at the department store too, and one that equals Fabulash's greatness for a bit more money is **Stila Mega Lash Mascara** (\$9.50). Given the wealth of brilliant mascaras that cost \$10 or less, I am leaving this list void of a truly pricey mascara (they're out there, and many are magnificent, but not more so than options that cost less money).

Waterproof Mascara

Two of my favorites at the department store are **Laura Mercier Waterproof Mascara** (\$19) and **Estee Lauder Illusionist Waterproof Curling Mascara** (\$21). Another department store option that is significantly less expensive but just as impressive is **M.A.C. Splashproof Lash Waterproof Mascara** (\$9.50). At the drugstore, consider **Maybelline Volum' Express Waterproof Mascara** (\$5.99).

Shampoo for All Hair Types

Whether you wash with the practically-free **Suave Daily Clarifying Shampoo, for Normal to Oily Hair** (\$1.29 for 15 ounces) or use **White Rain Extra Body Shampoo** (\$1.32 for 15 ounces), your hair won't know you didn't spend several more dollars for **Frederic Fekkai Technician Shampoo for Normal Hair** (\$18.50 for 8 ounces). All of these shampoos will cleanse hair and scalp beautifully and do not cause buildup. They're also great for removing excess buildup from conditioning shampoos and styling products.

Shampoo with Conditioning Agents

L'Oreal Vive Color-Care Shampoo for Dry, Color-Treated, or Highlighted Hair (\$4.49 for 13 ounces) is every bit as impressive as fashion magazine favorite and L'Oreal owned Kerastase. It may surprise you to learn that the formula for **Kerastase Nutritive Bain Satin 3, Shampoo for Very Dry, Damaged Hair** (\$24 for 8.4 ounces) is nearly identical to the Vive product. (Matrix, ARTec, Garnier Fructis, SoftSheen Carson, Kiehl's, Redken, and Mizani are all hair-care lines owned by L'Oreal.)

Conditioner for Normal to Fine Hair

Alberto VO5 Balsam & Protein Conditioner (\$1.29 for 15 ounces) isn't too far removed (except in price) from **Paul Mitchell Smoothing Condition Super Skinny Daily Treatment** (\$10.99 for 10.1 ounces). Both are great conditioners for normal to fine hair that is normal to slightly dry.

Conditioner for Normal to Slightly Thick or Coarse Hair

Bumble and bumble Super Rich Conditioner (\$17 for 8 ounces) works well for this hair type, at least if you have the budget for it. If not, no worries—**Garnier Fructis Fortifying Cream Conditioner, Color-Treated or Permed Hair** (\$7.29 for 25.4 ounces) provides twice as much product for less than half the price, and the results between the two are indistinguishable.

Conditioner for Dry to Very Dry Hair that is Normal to Fine

You can't go wrong with **Pantene Classic Care Conditioner** (\$4.99 for 13.5 ounces). Few conditioners make hair feel as silky as this product, and Pantene's **Full & Thick Conditioner** (\$4.79 for 13.5 ounces) is equally outstanding. For those looking to spend more money, **Joico Moisturizer Intensive Moisture Treatment, Extra Conditioning** (\$14 for 10.5 ounces) is also worth considering.

Conditioner for Dry to Very Dry Hair that is Normal to Thick or Coarse

People with this hair type tend to be most picky about their conditioner, because they believe (rightly so) that their hair has special needs, meaning not just any conditioner will do. Whether you want to spend practically or like your married name is Trump, you can't go wrong with **Neutrogena Triple Moisture Daily Deep Conditioner** (\$5.99 for 8.45 ounces) or **Pureology Superstraight Condition** (\$22 for 10.1 ounces).

Styling Gel Light Hold

Sebastian Collection Wet, Liquid Gel Form-Fitting Hold (\$7.50 for 8.5 ounces) has been a staple of the Sebastian line for years,

and for good reason—it works to provide soft, brushable hold without stickiness. Those looking to spend more (though there is no need to) may wish to consider **Garren New York Holding & Molding Gel** (\$20 for 4 ounces).

Styling Gel Firm Hold

Matrix TufTrix Strong Twisted Gel (\$16.95 for 5.1 ounces) can help you achieve complex hairstyles that last all day, but for significantly less money so can **L’Oreal Studio Line Grab, Mega Hold Texture Gel** (\$3.99 for 4 ounces).

Styling Cream for Normal to Fine Hair

A value-conscious but beautifully effective option is **Garnier Fructis Smoothing Milk Instant Smoothing & Frizz Control** (\$2.64 for 5.1 ounces). Equally commendable but for more money is **Redken Lush Whip 04 Styling Cream** (\$14.95 for 5.3 ounces).

Styling Cream for Normal to Thick or Coarse Hair

John Frieda Frizz Ease Secret Weapon, Flawless Finishing Cream (\$4.99 for 4 ounces) has long been a favorite (and remains one of the most sensibly formulated styling creams in any price range) but if you find yourself perusing the shelves at your favorite salon, **KMS Curl Up Control Creme** (\$15.95 for 5.1 ounces) is no slouch either, and is not limited to those with curly hair.

Water-Soluble Pomade

A water-soluble pomade differs from traditional pomade because it goes on lighter, is less greasy, and much easier to shampoo out. A superior inexpensive choice is **TRESemme Hy-**

drology Smoothing Moisture Pomade (\$4.39 for 3.5 ounces). Looking to spend more to add shine and texture to your hair? Consider **Aveda Purefume Brilliant Humectant Pomade** (\$18 for 2.6 ounces).

Traditional Pomade

The options below are modern interpretations of classic pomades, but they share the same traits of being able to provide hair with a smooth, groomed look and medium shine, provided they are used sparingly. A best buy at the drugstore is **Soft & Beautiful Pro-Line Comb-Thru Greaseless Gel Pomade** (\$3.75 for 2.99 ounces). At the salon, consider **TIGI Bed Head Manipulator, A Funky Gunk That Rocks!** (\$16.95 for 2 ounces).

Styling Wax

Those looking for enhanced (but heavier) texture with shine should consider **L.A. Looks Piece It Look Wax Stick** (\$3.29 for 2.5 ounces) or **Bumble and bumble Sumowax** (\$19 for 1.5 ounces). Use both products sparingly for best results!

Non-Aerosol Hairspray, Light Hold

Despite its name, **thermaSilk Firm Hold Hairspray, Non-Aerosol** (\$3.99 for 8.5 ounces) leaves hair feeling soft with its light hold. A pricier option would be **Nexus Comb-Thru Natural Hold Design and Finishing Sprae** (\$10 for 10.6 ounces).

Non-Aerosol Hairspray, Firm Hold

Shopping at the drugstore for a non-aerosol hairspray with firm hold? You won’t be disappointed by **Aussie Sprunch Spray, Non-Aerosol** (\$3.69 for 12 ounces). Shopping at sa-

lons or specialty stores? Consider **Goldwell Trendline Finish Spray Strong (Non-Aerosol)** (*\$12.50 for 6.7 ounces*).

Aerosol Hairspray, Light Hold

TREsemme European Tres Two Hair Spray, Ultra-Fine Mist (*\$3.99 for 11 ounces*) is an outstanding inexpensive choice. If you simply must spend in the double digits for hairspray, your money will go farthest with **Kenra Design Spray, Light Hold Styling Spray 9** (*\$13 for 12 ounces*).

Aerosol Hairspray, Firm Hold

Suave Hairspray Maximum Hold (*\$1.20 for 6.5 ounces*) is the price/performance product to beat, and is widely available. At the salon, it's hard to compete with industry favorite **Sebastian Shaper Plus Hair Spray** (*\$12.50 for 10.6 ounces*). With either product, hair will hold its shape and be relatively easy to comb through.

Silicone Spray

Here is a category where it truly does not make sense to spend more than ten dollars for a single product. Options abound at the salon, but among the drugstore brands (or any brand for that matter) **Jheri Redding Reflections Spray-On Shine** (*\$5.95 for 4 ounces*) or **got2b Dazzling Shine Spray Pump** (*\$5.49 for 6 ounces*) are brilliant options. A similar but more expensive choice is **Redken Vinyl Glam 02 Mega Shine Spray** (*\$13.95 for 4 ounces*).

Silicone Serum

got2b Glossy Anti-Frizz Shine Serum (*\$5.49 for 4 ounces*) is, ounce for ounce, one of the best drugstore hair-care values you'll find. If you're feeling the sales pressure at your salon and can't say no to your hair stylist, **Paul Mitchell Smoothing Condition Super Skinny Serum** (*\$16.99 for 5.1 ounces*) or **Frederic Fekkai Finishing Polish** (*\$20 for 1.7 ounces*) are excellent albeit pricey alternatives.

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