



*Product Focus*

# HYDROLATS for FACIAL CARE



*Described variously as 'The New Aromatherapy',  
and 'A Natural Breakthrough in Skin Care'  
interest in hydrolats is growing quickly.*

*But what are hydrolats, and what  
can they do for you?*

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NATURAL SKIN CARE  
FROM OSHADHI

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## ↔ **What are hydrolats?** ↔

Essential oils are often produced by steam distillation, which involves passing steam through the plant material. The steam collects many useful compounds from the plant, and when it is cooled it turns back into a mixture of water and oil which quickly separate, the oil normally floating on the surface.

This oil is the plant's essential oil. In addition to their fascinating aromas, essential oils have found many uses in the field of healthcare and well-being.

However the water part of the mixture also contains many compounds which have marvellous benefits, and these waters are known as hydrolats (or hydrosols).

## ↔ **The magic of hydrolats** ↔

Hydrolats contain those plant compounds which are water soluble, and many people believe that hydrolats can have even more beneficial effects than essential oils. After all the human body is 60-70 per cent water.

The therapeutic value of hydrolats is undisputed, and there are a number of source materials which summarize their uses, none better than Suzanne Catty's book: *Hydrosols, the next aromatherapy* (Healing Arts Press).

Hydrolats are gentler than essential oils, and safer. Many people take them internally. They are particularly useful for children, the elderly and animals.

Furthermore, the human skin is naturally slightly acidic, having a pH value (a measure of acidity) of about 5.5. The skin can be disturbed if it is exposed to products which are alkaline, which unfortunately some man-made skin formulations are. Most hydrolats have a pH value of between 4 and 6, making them particularly suitable for skin care.

## ↔ **Everyday use of hydrolats** ↔

Use hydrolats as a facial tonic in place of your normal toner or cleanser – or add them to an existing product.

You can also use some hydrolats to flavour water (try adding a tablespoonful of Rose Hydrolat to a jug of spring water, and sip from it all day making it a great way to boost fluid intake. Use hydrolats to flavour yoghurt (Rose water is of course an important ingredient in Indian and Turkish cooking), or to freshen up linen for a romantic evening.

## → Hydrolats & skin care ←

**GERANIUM** – A marvellous skin tonic for everyone because of its balancing and adaptogenic quality, and it can be used on all skin types. It attracts moisture and holds it into the skin. Use it as a makeup remover, spray directly onto the face to refresh and rehydrate, and enjoy its cooling calming influence.

**ROSE** – The most sublime of fragrances, Rose hydrolat is cooling and suitable for normal to dry, mature, or sensitive skin. It can be added to other beauty products to enhance the aroma and add benefit.

**LAVENDER** – Suitable for all skin types and having a pH value close to the natural value for skin, it is cooling and healing. It can be used before and/or after shaving – a true His & Hers product.

**ORANGE BLOSSOMS** – For delicate and sensitive skin, Neroli is powerfully astringent, so avoid on very dry skin. Use in conjunction with Cistus for its clearing properties – an excellent blend for troubled skin.

**MYRTLE** – Best used for dry and devitalised skin, this is a great facial toner. It can be added to creams, toners, makeup removers, or used on its own before applying a moisturiser. Myrtle makes a great treatment for tired swollen red eyes. Make a compress with cotton pads soaked with hydrolat. Place directly over eye and feel the cooling effect.

**WITCH HAZEL** – One of the most important anti-ageing substances and antioxidants, very suitable for mature or damaged skin. Also very good for teenage skin.

**CISTUS (ROCK ROSE)** – A powerful anti-wrinkle treatment (but you may like to use it blended with Rose hydrolat, as the aroma is an acquired taste!)

**HELICHRYSUM** – Helichrysum (Everlasting) is a wonderful product for skin that is congested, mature or sensitive. It may help with puffiness and ingrowing hairs.

**SANDALWOOD** – Use on delicate and mature skin, and in the eye area for crepey lids.

## ↔ A word about terminology... ↔

You may also have heard of the term hydrosol and wondered what is the difference between a hydrolat and a hydrosol. There is none! These terms are completely interchangeable, and, just to confuse matters, they are sometimes inaccurately known as flower waters or floral waters. However these are not good terms to use because many hydrolats are created from parts of the plant other than the flowers...

## ↔ ...and purity ↔

A true hydrolat is the pure product of the distillation process, but please be aware that there are some mixtures on the market which may have had alcohol or other ingredients added in order to to prolong their shelf life, etc. These are not true hydrolats, and may not be suitable for the uses outlined in this guide.



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