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SKINCARE

Are lip balms the new status symbol?

Lip service.



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Lip balms used to belong in the pile of 'necessary but unsexy' beauty products. The hydrating power of old-school salves such as ChapStick, Vaseline and Aquaphor was never called into question – just their no-frills, medicinal packaging.

There was no carefully choreographed TikTok tutorial for how to apply them. You simply nudged the tube out from behind your infinitely more glamorous Mac lipstick – and slathered it on, letting the waxy formula take care of the rest.

These days the lip balm landscape looks very different. For starters, the subject has exploded on TikTok with search terms such as 'lip balm truth behind the trend' and 'this is how much lip balm is left' – a twist on empties – accumulating 90 million and 4.4 million posts respectively.

As visually pleasing as they are nourishing, lip balms have also become the beauty world's new status symbol. Many boast double-digit price tags, costing considerably more than hard-working pharmacy staples, and drum up the same viral hype previously reserved for Louis Vuitton's latest designer bag drop.

