



SKINCARE

Why 'couture skincare' is having a moment

Inside the rise of the £300 moisturiser (and if they deliver).



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Like most people, I want beauty products that make my skin look like it has won the lottery. Without, of course, spending jackpot-size sums on skincare for that expensive-looking gleam.

And yet, the cost of my routine has snowballed of late. What really boggles the mind is how easily I've racked up a dizzying £742 (and 50p, if we're being picky) spend on cleanser, face mist, serums to counter different skin concerns, eye cream, day cream and night cream.

I know mine is an extreme example. I'm also in a very privileged position, as some of these products have been sent to me to test as part of my job. But still... *ouch*.

Despite being a beauty editor, I'm not exactly drowning in skincare products (I'm not the Imelda Marcos of vitamin C serums, promise) so this isn't about excess in that sense of the word. But big-ticket products have snuck into the space where a 50ml bottle of Advanced Night Repair used to suffice.

'Couture skincare' – a.k.a. serums and creams that cost triple figures – is booming, and it isn't just the preserve of the high-spending Harrods shopper anymore. These products are readily available at Sephora, where Sisley's L'Intégral Anti-Age Fresh Gel Cream is one of the store's bestsellers. And you can just as easily find a £520 pot of Clé de Peau's La Crème sidling up next to to a £6 CeraVe moisturiser at Cult Beauty.

"Just as a well-curated wardrobe blends high-end pieces with everyday staples, a balanced skincare routine can often seamlessly combine luxury products with accessible essentials," says Hannah Grimes, a buyer at Cult Beauty.

"An affordable cleanser, which is used frequently may not justify a higher price tag," she continues. "But you might find the same person is willing to invest in a serum that claims to be 'Botox in a Bottle'."

