

truth in beauty;)



When your beauty favorite goes bye-bye

Can't live without your beloved lipstick color? Read this!

It's sad when your favorite TV show gets canceled. But when your signature scent or perfect makeup shade is whisked off the market, it can be devastating. Although beauty companies are notorious for killing products because of lagging sales or to make room for new trends and technology, you're not totally out of luck. There's a chance that your hard-to-find favorite is just a phone call or a click away.

Your first step: Call the makeup brand's customer-service department to ask about leftover inventory.

To soften the blow for bereaved consumers, some manufacturers keep discontinued inventory for a few years, or they might make a big effort to help you find it elsewhere. "It's not a service most companies advertise because, naturally, their priority is to focus attention on their new and existing products," says Karen Grant, vice president and global industry analyst for NPD, a research company that tracks the beauty market. "Through customer service, you might even learn your favorite lives on or will be making a comeback with

an upgraded formula and/or name."

To discourage public outcry, some companies sell discontinued stock on their Web sites or send it to outlets. If your beauty product ultimately is untraceable, customer service should be able to recommend a comparable substitute; some company sites even offer a tool that picks a close match.

The first place to go to track down a much-missed favorite is the manufacturer. Here is some helpful contact information:

Estée Lauder brands

(including Estée Lauder, Clinique, Origins, Prescriptives, Bobbi Brown, Aramis, MAC, Michael Kors, and more) You can find products discontinued in the last 24 months through the company's Gone but Not Forgotten program; you can buy up to six pieces, depending on availability. Call 800-216-7173 to start your search.

Almay, Revlon & Ultima II

You can find discontinued products at www.cosmeticsandmore.com and their affiliated retail outlets (in Arizona, New York, New Jersey, and North Carolina), or call 888-882-5629 to place an order.

Lancôme, Molton Brown and Nars

These companies sell discontinued items on their sites—Lancome-usa.com, Moltonbrown.com, and Narscosmetics.com—until inventory runs dry. Some brand sites, including Benefitcosmetics.com, Clinique.com, Lancome-usa.com, and Prescriptives.com—feature online alerts, so customers have fair warning when discontinued goods are disappearing.

Here are some other sites worth checking out to find an old fave:

Discount.makeup.com

This subsidiary of Makeup.com sells discontinued beauty products from

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many brands, including Shiseido and Bare Escentuals.

Shipping fee \$5.99; free on orders over \$60.

Return policy Within 30 days only on unused and unopened products.

Beautyencounter.com

This site sells hard-to-find products from Max Factor, Neutrogena, Goldwell, Sebastian, KMS, and more.

Shipping fee \$5.95; free on orders over \$100.

Return policy Within 14 days on unused and unopened products. You must also pay a 15 percent restocking fee. Fashion accessories, skin-care, hair-care, and makeup products are not returnable.

Vermontcountrystore.com

Its niche is hard-to-find items, and customer service will track down products for which they get a lot of requests, even if the site doesn't carry them. When an item is no longer manufactured and demand is

sufficient, the site buys an original formula and reproduces it (as it has done with Evening in Paris fragrance; Gee, Your Hair Smells Terrific shampoo; and some other old favorites).

Shipping fee \$3.95 to \$19.95.

Return policy Anything at any time.

Threecustom.com

The go-to place for celebrity makeup artists, Three Custom Color specialists can replicate the exact shade and texture of just about any color cosmetic product, including blush, eyeshadow, lipstick, concealer, and foundation. The company has an archive of 9,000 makeup shades dating back to the 1930s, and it will duplicate a hue if you send a dime-size sample. Two current most-requested colors are Revlon's Naked Pink and MAC Bardot lipsticks.

Shipping fee \$7.

Return policy Accepts unused products within 10 days.

Other places to do makeup research:

Ebay.com, Amazon.com and Overstock.com

These sites can list discontinued products. Since the goods offered can come from third parties, there's the risk that a product is old or wasn't stored or shipped properly, so read the fine print carefully regarding any return policy before ordering.

Makeupalley.com

You can find in-depth information on tons of products, including discontinued ones, at this social community of beauty-product consumers. You can post a product request on the Swap Board; if another member owns the item, you can negotiate a trade.

The Fragrance Foundation

For detailed information on just about any fragrance that's ever existed, go to www.fragrancefoundation.org and click on Fragrance Directory.

Stocking up safely

If you can find an old beauty favorite, your instinct is to hoard it. But once opened, many cosmetics can go bad fast as bacteria moves in, so be very careful about hanging on to old products. Mascara, for example, lasts about four months, and eyeliner about three months. You can keep lipstick around for two years. But unopened beauty products and fragrances can last for several years, according to John Bailey, Ph.D., chief scientist for the Personal Care Products Council and former director of the Food and Drug Administration's Office of Cosmetics and Colors.

"Typically when unopened items, including makeup, skin care, fragrance, hair care and hair color, are stored properly," says Bailey, "the packaging and preservatives provide sufficient protection to maintain product stability for at least three years and maybe

longer. Proper storage involves keeping products in a dark, cool place like a dry closet, safe from exposure to heat, cold, moisture, or sunlight. The exception is products with an expiration date, such as some acne products and sunscreens, as these have ingredients that might be compromised over time."

Before using an item you've kept squirreled away, check that the packaging is still intact and the color, consistency, and scent seem up to par. Toss it immediately if it smells or looks funny. "It's not that using an old product is a health problem, but if some ingredients, such as vitamin C and retinol, are exposed to sunlight or oxygen, the formula might not perform as well," Bailey says. "Sprays and pumps are more effective at protecting a product than pour containers, so they last longer."

QUICK CONSULT



with Jessica J. Krant, M.D., M.P.H., a dermatologist in Scarsdale, N.Y., and

clinical assistant professor of dermatology at SUNY Downstate Medical Center in New York.

Q I've heard laser resurfacing is a good antiwrinkle treatment. But is it too risky?

A It's a good way to treat fine lines, dark patches, broken blood vessels, sagging skin, and other signs of aging. Costs can range from a few hundred dollars to a few thousand. Your dermatologist might also recommend Botox, chemical peels, creams, or fillers. Newer resurfacing devices are far less likely than older models to cause problems such as scarring, infection, redness, and loss of pigmentation. Some use technology that leaves more skin intact to help healing and speed recovery, which could last one day to a few weeks compared with as long as a couple of months. Other devices have similar healing times and use plasma heating to remodel and tighten underlying skin.

To cut your risk of scarring and other problems, find a well-trained dermatologist. (You can check with the American Academy of Dermatology; go to www.aad.org/findaderm and use the scroll-down menu to select "laser procedures.") Find out how much experience the doctor has with laser resurfacing, and ask which device is approved by the Food and Drug Administration for your particular issue.

OLD FAITHFULS

Beauty products and fragrances can come and go within a few months, but some best sellers go strong for decades. Skin cleanser/makeup remover Pond's Cold Cream has been around since 1914. Here are some other beauty icons.

c. 1889 ChapStick

It's been so popular for so many years that its name is a household word.



Chanel No. 5

This prestige fragrance has been the best-selling fragrance worldwide since the late 1920s.

1921



1953

This shade, one of the most requested lip and nail colors of all time, is still going strong.



Olay Beauty Fluid

Recently renamed Active Hydrating Beauty Fluid, this product is still a top seller.

1959



Maybelline Great Lash Mascara

According to the company, a tube is sold every 1.6 seconds in the U.S. alone.

1971

1968

Clinique's three-step skin-care system Clinique's promotion of Soap, Clarifying Lotion, and Moisturizer for 3 minutes twice a day kicked off the cleansing, exfoliating, and moisturizing beauty routine women still use today.

Estée Lauder Beautiful

It's one of the best-selling women's fragrances in American department stores.



1985

1981

Stetson for Men Since its introduction it has been one of the best-selling men's fragrances in the U.S.

