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# THE SCIENCE OF SKIN CARE

**M**ost skin-care products fall into one of two camps. Earthy-crunchy, all-natural ones occupy one end of the spectrum; medical lines laced with synthetic acids and retinoids occupy the other. Rarely do the twain meet, but Ada Polla, president and CEO of Swiss antioxidant skin care regimen Alchimie Forever, is working to change that with a concept she calls "high-tech botanicals."

"Usually, you have medical lines based on synthetic ingredients, and then you have organic lines that aren't known for anti-aging and science," Polla says. "Instead of seeing these two things as mutually exclusive, we tried to take the best of nature and enhance it with science."

Drawing on the research of her mother, cellular research scientist Dr. Barbara Polla, and the skin-care expertise of her father, cosmetic dermatologist Dr. Luigi Polla, Ada co-created the line, which combines extracts from plants such as rosemary, blueberries, green tea, oats and wild pansies. These extracts work synergistically to repair and prevent signs of aging by targeting the skin at a cellular level.

"Blueberries contain molecules that have iron chelating properties," she says. "Green tea acts as a photo-protective agent. Rosemary helps green tea work better. They also work on different parts of the cell. So together, they offer you the best therapeutic approach."

Alchemilla, apple, basil and jojoba extracts join forces in the Superpulse tightening eye contour gel to reduce puffiness and fine lines in the eye area while restoring elasticity. Specially formulated for men's skin, the gel is light in texture and absorbs quickly.

"Men have thicker skin and more sebaceous glands," she says. "That means the very small plant molecules have a hard time penetrating (their skin). The percentage of extracts of the plant ingredients tends to be a little higher (in men's skin-care products)."

The Excimer purifying facial cleanser contains papaya extract to deep-clean skin, cucumber extract to prevent it from feeling tight, and grapefruit extract, which "acts as an astringent agent and also brightens the skin," Ada Polla says.

"That cleanser is good for men, women and all skin types except the very dry," she says. "It is great in hot, humid weather. In this area, you want to feel like you are getting all that sweat off." — Missy Wilkinson

ADA POLLA IS CO-CREATOR OF ALCHIMIE FOREVER, WHICH PRODUCES SUPERPULSE TIGHTENING EYE CONTOUR GEL. \$57 AT AIDAN GILL PHOTOGRAPHY (2026 MAGAZINE ST., 587-9090; WWW.AIDANGILLFORMEN.COM).