

COSMOPOLITAN

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Ere Perez
 FOUNDER OF ERE PEREZ NATURAL COSMETICS

How did you get your big break? "When I shopped for groceries at health food stores, I noticed they stocked natural skincare products, but not make-up. I wanted to avoid chemicals and preservatives, and thought there would be other women like me who were after natural cosmetics that fit in with their healthy-living ethos."

How did you know your idea was a winner? "I believe people want to use cruelty-free cosmetics, and we aim to keep our products as natural as possible. We are currently trying to turn our business vegan, and have already removed the beeswax from our lipsticks to make them edible."

What makes your product stand out? "We have a clear vision of who our customer is. The packaging, products and philosophy have to project the right imagery and speak to the consumer, or they will be lost and your product will be overlooked."

Describe a typical working day. "I have a tendency to work late hours. At 6pm, when I'm meant to stop, I get my best ideas. I think, 'When everyone is gone, I can really focus.'"

Do you have any advice? "My mother started up her own business and my father did not, she just went for it. That had a really positive impact on me. I thought if she could overcome that and succeed, I would be OK. I looked at what she did and applied that to my business."

How do you deal with mistakes? "If you learn from them and make sure you never repeat that same mistake, then it becomes a positive learning experience."

Do you think men and women approach business differently? "I think women need to learn how to sell themselves and market their skills. A lot of women aren't comfortable with promoting themselves, but it is an essential skill in business."

Best beauty tip? "My secret is honey. It's an amazing product with antibacterial and moisturising properties. It can be applied as a face mask and helps heal the skin."

Ere Perez Natural Rosehip Oil Lipbar, \$19.95; Mascara, \$26.95; and Natural Tinted Rice Powder SPF 15, \$34.95 (www.ereperez.com).

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Ere Perez's top beauty secret that found in your money