

## ECO LOGIC

# Hair-care formula started with nettle and chamomile

**ERIN KOBAYASHI**  
FASHION AND BEAUTY WRITER

Nana Essence is a Canadian hair-care line developed by Nana Korolev, a Russian competitive swimmer during the '80s and '90s.

Korolev's hair became so damaged from the harsh chlorine in the pools that she started collecting local hair-care recipes when she travelled to swim meets throughout Russia.

"I just started washing with nettle and chamomile. Nettle grows on the streets in Russia so you just take it home and boil it," she says of her early experiments with homemade treatments.

"In Russia, everything is based on recipes. Things aren't as readily available in pharmacies."

In 1991, Korolev immigrated to Canada with her son and she gave birth to her daughter nine years ago. After her second pregnancy, Korolev noticed significant hair loss and decided to recreate the Russian hair formulae to treat her scalp.

"I bought ingredients at health food stores and boiled them and made a mask for myself," she says.

She also started bottling the hair masks for her girlfriends to try.

Their positive reaction and the demand for more products encouraged her to mass-produce her homemade hair products.

With the assistance of Sigan Industries Inc., an independent lab that tested the products, Korolev created her line. The shampoo, conditioner and hair mask incorporate certified organ-

ic ingredients like rosemary, white oak, nettle, birch leaf, chamomile and marshmallow. She eventually released the product in 2004.

For best results, Korolev advises users to saturate and massage their scalp with the Nana Essence hair mask, spray dry ends with the mask and sleep with it on overnight. In the morning, rinse and use only a teaspoon of Nana Essence shampoo and conditioner.

When I tried it, allowing my hair to naturally air dry, I had smooth and soft results.

"Back in Russia, people wash their hair once a week, while people here wash their hair every day," Korolev says.

"They eventually wash all of the essential oils from their hair."

Korolev recommends people wash their hair once every four or five days.

Her hair-care instructions are atypical for a company that sells

shampoo and conditioner; most directions found on bottles of shampoo and conditioner encourage consumers to "rinse and repeat if necessary" so they will use as

much product as possible in one washing.

Best of all, when Nana Essence is finished (Korolev says the shampoo and conditioner last up to one month for people with short hair), the bottles can be recycled.

Nana Essence is available in health food stores across Ontario for \$10.99.

For a store near you, call 905-726-3463 or email [info@donmar.ca](mailto:info@donmar.ca).

