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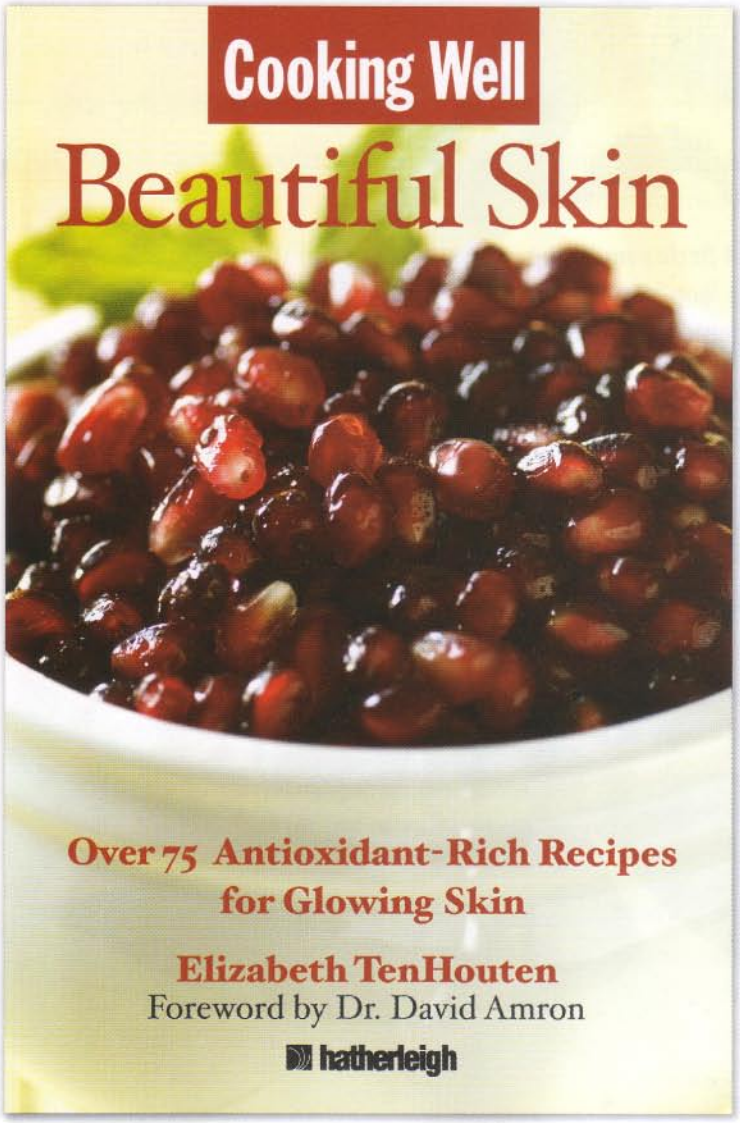
A RECIPE FOR Beauty

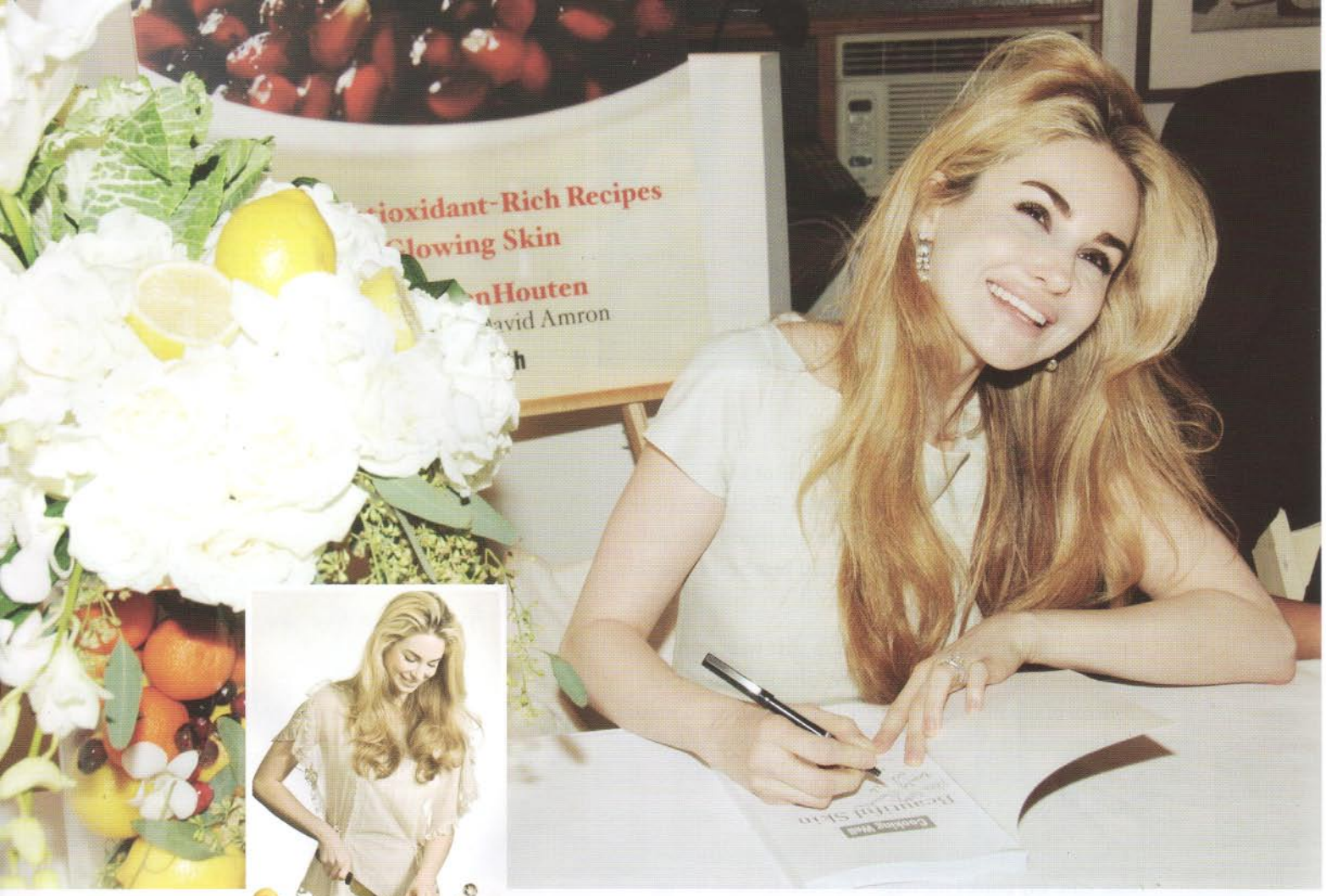


Cookbook author Elizabeth TenHouten shares her passion for using natural ingredients to achieve beauty from the inside out

Everywhere Elizabeth TenHouten turns, she sees beauty. Inspired by the power of nature's own ingredients to create beauty, she has combined her passion for healthy cooking and her understanding of the beauty industry into a business that embraces both.

Elizabeth's cookbook, *Cooking Well: Beautiful Skin* (Hatherleigh Press, 2009), celebrates the connection between what we eat and how we look and feel. Raised by parents who instilled in her a love and appreciation of healthy foods, the family's snacks and treats ran along the line of tomatoes and persimmons from a tree in their backyard. Ice cream was a once-a-year treat. This family dynamic helped Elizabeth develop her talents as a natural chef passionate about healthy foods and combine that with her experience as a beauty consultant to create recipes that are nutritious, tasty and easy to make.

As a former model, makeup artist and skin-care analyst, Elizabeth has always appreciated the value of outer



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Book signing on the Red Carpet at the Duncan Miller Art Gallery in Venice, Calif.

beauty but knows it is achieved from the inside out. "For me, beauty and health are synonymous and there is a direct link between the intake of nutrients and beautiful skin. It only makes sense that what you put in your body affects your outer appearance," she said.

Passionate about recognizing the inherent natural beauty within oneself and nourishing yourself in every capacity, the creation of Elizabeth's unique beauty cookbook was an organic process. Thousands of skincare products out there promise beautiful skin but, she realized, an understanding of what foods one should eat to promote skin health from within was not being addressed. Once she understood this, the light bulb flashed and the notion for the book began.

THE POWER OF PR

After signing her book deal, Elizabeth wanted to take her career to the next level and looked to hire a professional publicist to help achieve that goal.

"I saw it as a business opportunity to market myself as a brand in relation to my book, so that my business would have a future beyond my first book," said Elizabeth. "The phenomenal press garnered from my publicists' hard work has lead to massive exposure that not only successfully branded me as a natural beauty expert, but has also helped with my book sales, and is key for the longevity of my career and business."

RESEARCH IS KEY

With her idea in tow, Elizabeth immersed herself into the writing and development of her book proposal. "Research is my forte. I pride myself on thriving on research as the backbone for all of my projects," she said.

Complete with a unique section of color, glossy recipe photos produced by professional food stylists, an investment she said gave her proposal a little something extra, Elizabeth's final book proposal was ready to be sent out.

Almost immediately Elizabeth was signed by a top literary agent and her proposal was sent to 15 top publishing houses. It wasn't long before houses began displaying their interest and Elizabeth starting booking meetings in New York.

Elizabeth at the KTLA Studio in Los Angeles.

At her first meeting, an executive editor at a major publishing house showed interest in Elizabeth's book, but wanted her to remove the philosophical content at the beginning so the book would just be a collection of recipes.

"I was inspired to talk about things that were important to me and knew I needed to be in complete and total control of my message in order to remain true to myself and my mission" Elizabeth revealed, which is why she stood her ground saying she wanted to preserve the integrity of her vision.

"I didn't want to give up my freedom or let someone else 'edit' my book's message." So even though things didn't work out with that particular publishing house, soon another came along that fully embraced Elizabeth's vision and within three months she had a book deal with Hatherleigh Press, a division of Random House.

Elizabeth's hard work, passion and intense research are definitely to credit for her quick success in the publishing world. Her advice for others is: "Your passion is primary. Stay true to that and your commitment to your idea will sell itself."

POETIC INSPIRATION

The entrepreneurial spirit was instilled in Elizabeth when she was just a child. Both her mother, a clinical psychologist with her own private practice, and her stepfather, an attorney with his own law firm, set entrepreneurial examples for Elizabeth. In an effort to teach the value of hard work, her stepfather, Bill, would pay Elizabeth to memorize and interpret poems. Encouraging her enthusiasm for this creative activity, Bill welcomed each and every poetry session, allowing Elizabeth to call the shots on when, where, how many and which poems she would tackle. Earning a dollar for each line memorized, one for literal interpretation and one for metaphorical interpretation, Elizabeth's little "poetic business" kept her coin purse filled with singles.

FIVE LESSONS FROM ELIZABETH

1. *Stay true to yourself and what you believe in.*
2. *Know when to say "no."*
3. *Hold out for something that feels right.*
4. *Take time to relax and find time for yourself.*
5. *Surround yourself with positive people, who support your dream.*

Her family has remained supportive, encouraging Elizabeth to plan her venture and follow her dream. Her brother gave her books to use as research material on healthy living and the value of antioxidants, and embraced her concept early on. Elizabeth, who is a recent newlywed, met her husband, Chris, when she had only an incomplete, rough manuscript. Even before their first date, he said over the phone, "Let's go! Get this book published!"

Pulling inspiration from her travels with her husband, Elizabeth is now hard at work on her second book and the further development of her natural beauty company, Quidditas, which will soon begin to offer natural beauty products created from nature's finest ingredients. In her most recent trip to Antigua, Elizabeth was enchanted by the medicinal and hydrating powers of the tiny flower blossoms of the Neem Tree, so she created a Beauty Byte recipe for a do-it-yourself beauty treatment to be featured in her next cookbook that was inspired by the experience.

"I want to continue growing and evolving my original inspiration while simultaneously inspiring others," she said. BY SHARON W. HOUSE AND KRISTEN POELMA