

Formulating With Bakuchiol

Bakuchiol has taken the skin care community by storm in the last few months, as a potentially less irritating alternative to retinol. Retinols are king when it comes to antiaging, treating acne, fine lines and pigmentation, so of course, any alternatives to retinol would gain lots of attention too!

[Bakuchiol or babchi carrier oil](#) is an oil derived from the babchi plant (*Psoralea corylifolia*), native to Asia. The babchi plant has been used in Ayurvedic and Chinese practices for ages to treat skin concerns, and its active component, also called bakuchiol, has recently gained popularity in the West due to its purported antiaging benefits and as a more gentle substitute to retinol. Bakuchiol oil contains some of this active component, bakuchiol, but you can also get the pure isolated bakuchiol extract at great cost (we don't currently stock the pure extract, only the oil which contains a percentage of the active).

[Bakuchiol oil](#) contains about 3% of bakuchiol extract, which is the active component we're all interested in. 3% may not seem like a lot, but as we'll see later on, you can easily get the benefits into your formulations.

Benefits Of Bakuchiol

Studies of bakuchiol have found it to be less irritating than retinol, and it was also found to improve the skin's appearance, smoothness, radiance and have antiaging benefits over a period of 12 weeks. Although further research is required to verify, studies have found bakuchiol to have similar effects as retinol in the treatment of acne, hyperpigmentation and wrinkles. And like retinols, bakuchiol can stimulate collagen production in the skin.

It is a potent antioxidant, and is also soothing and can help stabilise retinol, keeping it effective. So it might be a nice formulation idea to combine the two!

While retinol and retinol derivatives are notorious for making the skin more sensitive to sunlight and can be irritating, bakuchiol does not have these drawbacks. It is safe to use in the day (always apply your SPF though!) and can therefore be added to day-use products, not only night-use products like other retinols.

Usage

You're looking for 0.5-2% bakuchiol extract to be effective, so when using bakuchiol carrier oil which only contains 3% of the extract, you need at least 17% of the oil in your formulas. This is quite a lot, but easily doable in oil serums and moisturisers.

Solubility

Bauchiol oil and the extract are oil soluble, so include them in oil based products or in the cool down phase of emulsions.

Ingredients That Work Well With Bakuchiol

As bakuchiol is oil soluble, it works well with all kinds of carrier oils and oil based ingredients. Since it is a high end ingredient, I recommend using other high end oils to complement it. Think [squalane](#), [rosehip](#), [red raspberry](#), [argan oil](#), [prickly_pear oil](#), etc. You can also include oil soluble actives such as [Vitamin E](#), [ascorbyl palmitate](#), bisabolol, [Co Enzyme Q10](#), etc.

If you are making an emulsion with bakuchiol, you can include water soluble ingredients and actives. And unlike with retinoids, bakuchiol is perfectly fine to be used with [Vitamin C](#) and [AHAs/BHAs](#).

Types of Products Containing Bakuchiol

Bakuchiol, like retinoids, is a high-end ingredient. You'll find it in oil serums, emulsion serums and moisturisers. Don't include it in rinse-off products as it will be wasted.

Formula Containing Bakuchiol

This night oil serum contains the ultimate mix of antiaging ingredients, antioxidants and moisturisers. I personally love including a small bit of lecithin as well - it acts as a penetration enhancer and adds a lovely velvety feel. You need just a few drops of this as it is very rich.

Bakuchiol Lux Night Oil Serum

20% [Bakuchiol oil](#)

10% [prickly_pear oil](#)

68% other oils of choice - [squalane](#), [argan](#) or [jojoba](#) are nice

0.5% [Co Enzyme Q10](#)

0.5% [Vitamin E](#)

0.5% [Vitamin A palmitate](#)

0.5% [lecithin](#)

[Beaker](#)

Scale

[Spatula](#) to stir with

[Pipette](#) or [serum pump bottle](#)

Weigh out all the ingredients into a beaker and stir well to combine. Decant into a bottle (make sure it's an amber bottle to keep light out).

To use: apply to clean skin at night after washing. Just a few drops massaged in will do the trick!