



Clockwise from left: Entrepreneur Harvey Helms; botanical Cleanse lotion (\$55), matte Touch-Up Veil (\$30), Anti-Aging moisturizer (\$55), Camera Ready primer (\$40), all at Harvey Helms Beauty, harveyhelmsbeauty.com.



# ABOUT FACE

Inspired by his clients, a veteran of the beauty industry strikes out on his own.

By Anh-Minh Le

Makeup has been a part of Harvey Helms regimen since he was an 11-year-old dealing with acne. Despite his affinity for makeup—which he calls his “first love”—the Charlotte, N.C., native’s professional interests initially lay elsewhere. “I didn’t really want to be in cosmetics,” he recalls. “I wanted to be a fashion designer.” His college’s retail merchandising program required spending a semester in a department store, and while he excelled at sales, he kept forgetting to remove the sensors from the clothing. So the store manager’s solution was to assign him to a department that had no sensors: cosmetics.

Although Helms arrived at his beauty career by accident—or rather, by absent-mindedness—it has been remarkably enduring. He went on to work at Revlon for 15 years, with the company moving him to Los Angeles and then New York. After stints with brands such as L’Oréal and Donna Karan, Helms was ready for a change. He decided to pursue fashion again, establishing himself as a stylist in Silicon Valley. The role extended to advising his female clients on their makeup, which ultimately brought him back to his cosmetics-industry roots. “I do head-to-toe,” he says. “If makeup is part of someone’s image, part of their gig, I want to help.”

Helms devoted about two years to developing formulas that “are good for their face, and also look natural and feel weightless,” he says. “Most of my women—the Harvey girls—don’t wear a lot of makeup, but want to have the right thing when they do wear makeup.” He launched Harvey Helms Beauty (harveyhelmsbeauty.com) in May 2016 with hypoallergenic products that are also paraben-, fragrance- and cruelty-free—among them, a mousse foundation, invisible blotting powder and bronzer. A gentle skincare line, Luxe Botanicals, debuted in January and includes a gel face wash, gentle exfoliator and anti-aging cream. Helms is constantly rolling out new products, like February’s moisturizing lip plumper and luxury lip gloss. He also recently released *Blur*, the second book in his trilogy; the first, *Blush*, came out in 2014.

A self-professed beauty junkie—“My bathroom looks like a warehouse!” he proclaims—Helms personally grasps the transformative quality of his cosmetics collection: He relies on the HHB mousse foundation to combat uneven skin and wears his Velvet Crush matte lipstick every day. “It’s amazing what a little bit of lipstick and concealer can do to raise anybody’s self-esteem,” he says. “Including mine.”

## HARVEY’S MUST-HAVES

The namesake, founder and president of Harvey Helms Beauty shares his picks for makeup-bag essentials.

**CAMERA READY PRIMER**  
“This gel elixir disguises pores and fine lines. Smoothed on before foundation, the formula dries to a soft matte finish.” \$40

**MOUSSE FOUNDATION**  
“Want to look flawless with minimal effort? This is a weightless dream that goes from cream to a satin matte finish in just seconds!” \$40

**INVISIBLE BLOTTING POWDER**  
“This no-coverage, totally translucent, 100 percent invisible pressed power transforms skin, disguising pores and smoothing skin texture. It’s completely weightless, removing oil and shine without cakiness during touch-ups.” \$40

**BRONZER**  
“Give your skin an instant sun-kissed glow without the harsh effects of the sun. The bronzer adds subtle, lightly shimmered warmth and can be used with or without foundation.” \$40

**EYE & LIP PRIMER**  
“Lock your shadow and lipstick in place all day! This double-duty primer keeps eye shadow from creasing and lip color from feathering. The creamy formula evens out eyelid color and lip texture for easy color application.” \$30

