

FROM ABOVE: The sun sets over Borgo Santo Pietro's freshwater infinity pool; lie back in the relaxing spa; the hotel's rose walk; Seed to Skin The Cure is formulated with advanced molecular science. £166. libertylondon.com

BEAUTY

UNDER THE TUSCAN SUN

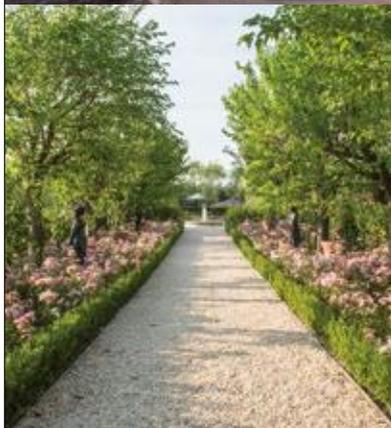
Mariella Tandy visits the idyllic Italian home of Seed to Skin

A sense of calm permeates the large stone pillars of Borgo Santo Pietro, a serene hotel and spa nestled in the Tuscan hills near Siena. From its level of polish and charm, you would never know that its owners, Jeanette and Claus Thottrup, have had a busy 15-year journey from London urbanites to creating this A-list retreat, also home to the skincare range Seed to Skin.

The country house property was originally destined to be the Thottrup family holiday home. However, the Danish couple soon realised the implausibility of this due to the huge amount of everyday maintenance the property required. Instead, they set about transforming the land and buildings into a hotel and spa. The original estate dates back to 1129 and used to be a sanctuary of healing for medieval pilgrims. The pilgrims and villagers had a long history of concocting potions from ingredients found on the estate. For Jeanette, who had always harboured a desire to create a skincare line, these tales were a starting point in the creation of Seed to Skin.

From the very beginning Jeanette had a clear vision about how she wanted to introduce a skincare brand created from ingredients grown on site. As sustainability and the concept of 'farm to fork' were a key part of the hotel's offering, 'farm to face' was a logical next step. Plus, the hotel's spa provided the ideal testing ground for all her new potions.

The Thottrups acquired several plots of land, totalling more than 270 acres, around the villa, which is where many of Seed to Skin's products are grown. Calendula plants (otherwise known as marigolds) are one of the brand's hero ingredients, and were planted



there on a man-made hill that gives the flowers optimum levels of water and sunlight.

Seed to Skin is built around the concept of green molecular science – the use of natural ingredients combined with the results-driven efficacy of advanced science. Its products utilise a molecular delivery system to penetrate the deepest layers of the skin, and deliver moisture and enable cell regeneration where it's most needed. There

are no short cuts

here; every single product is backed up by clinical studies carried out by Merieux NutriSciences, a specialist laboratory based in Chicago.

The brand's 19-strong skincare collection has already won several awards. Everything is shipped in eco-conscious packaging directly from the estate, as well as sold through key sites such as Net-a-Porter. What to choose from the range? If you are a cleanse, tone and moisturise kind of person,

Jeanette explains that a good starting point is to 'prep skin with the Clarity Cleanse, a facial cleanser that is formulated with active enzymes and natural acids to break down dead skin cells and minimize the appearance of pores.' Next up, The Alche'Mist is Seed to Skin's potent toner that combines the feel of a spray with the efficiency of a powerful serum. Follow these with The Cure, a lightweight yet effective moisturiser

enriched with probiotics, hyaluronic acid and vitamins to balance skin's pH levels and lock in moisture. 'But that's only if I really have to narrow it down,' adds Jeanette. 'Each [product] is really spectacular in its own way.'

Of course, the Thottrups aren't stopping there. Expect 2020 to bring new additions to the skincare brand, and at Borgo Santo Pietro there's a new, bigger spa arriving, and a new swimming pool. A trip to Tuscany has never seemed so necessary. seedtoskin.com ■