



2016 BEST IN BLACK BEAUTY AWARDS

Along with more than 1,000 ESSENCE BeautyBox subscribers and ESSENCE insiders, we've voted on the hottest people, places and products that are rocking our beauty world
PHOTOGRAPHY BY BRIAN HENN

MOST SPLURGE-WORTHY BEAUTY BRAND...

IT'S A TIE! CHANEL & NARS

It was a split decision between two companies that not only offer huge color payoff for brown skin, but also pump out gorgeous collections season after season. While Chanel wows with brilliant blush compacts and lipstick formulas, Nars flourishes with foundation, color for lips and just about everything else.

NARS lipstick, lip gloss and foundation (\$26-\$48, narscosmetics.com); **CHANEL** lipshine, lip color and blush (\$36-\$70, chanel.com).

BEAUTY



WERRRKK, GIRL!

**CELEB OF THE YEAR...
TARAJI P. HENSON**

It would be a total understatement to say that Taraji is having a well-deserved moment. Between the success of *Empire* and her amazing Golden Globes win, she's on fire. Taraji continually serves up beauty and style inspiration in classic Cookie fashion, which makes us love her even more.



**FAVE MAKEUP
(& HAIR) MAVEN...
ITSMYRAYEYAYE**

The lips, the lashes, the locks and the way she skillfully shows us how to pull it all together on her YouTube channel keep us tuned in and coming back again and again.

**FRAGRANCE
THAT MADE US
SUPERFANS... AERIN**

If there's one brand with a range of scents so diverse that every gal in your crew can find her perfect match, this is it. There's something sweet, soft or sexy for every fragrance personality.

AERIN Eau de Parfum Sprays (\$110-\$155 each, aerin.com).



**BRAND
WITH THE
BEST
SHADES FOR
US... IMAN
COSMETICS**

"Iman has a solid understanding of the varying degrees of skin tones and eliminates much of the frustrating guesswork in selecting products."

**—ROSLAND MARTIN,
SNELLVILLE, GA**

IMAN COSMETICS
Second to None
Liquid Makeup (\$16
each, Walgreens).

**MOST USEFUL
BEAUTY APP...**

**MAKEUP
GENIUS**



This is the easiest way to try before you buy without having to smear on messy (and questionable) testers.



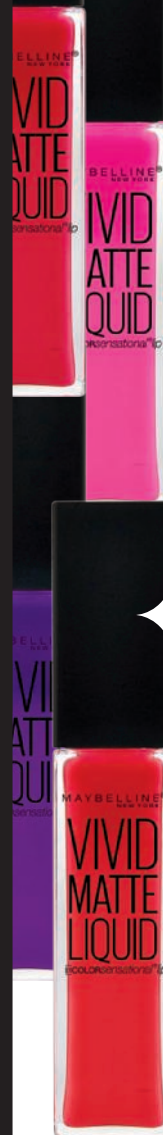
STYLE STEALS!

**BARGAIN
LINE WITH
MAJOR
COLOR
PAYOFF...**

**IT'S A TIE! NYX &
MAYBELLINE**

There's no compromising on impact with these wallet-friendly brands. If you're in need of a bold lip or vibrant blush (that works for us), start here.

NYX Ombre Blushes (\$10 each, nyxcosmetics.com); **MAYBELLINE NEW YORK** Vivid Matte Liquid Lip Colors (\$8 each, Target). ▷





MANE MARVEL

PRODUCT GAME-CHANGER...
COWASH

Our beauty gurus agree that cleansing conditioners have completely changed the game for both curly and straight girls. Moisture-rich formulas that clean without stripping or overdrying and leave behind hydrating ingredients help whip strands into the best shape (and curl pattern) ever.

DEVACURL No-Poo Conditioning Cleanser (\$20, 12 oz, devacurl.com); **R+CO** Analog Cleansing Foam Conditioner (\$29, Neiman Marcus); **ORIBE** Cleansing Crème (\$44, oribe.com); **MISS JESSIE'S** Co-Wash (\$11, 12 oz, missjessies.com).

INGREDIENT YOU LOVE
MOST FOR MOISTURE...

SHEA BUTTER

Slather your skin, lips and hair with this tried-and-true all-purpose hydrator.

SKINFIX Ultra Rich Body Butter (\$15, Target); **S.W. BASICS** Shea Butter (\$16, swbasics.com); **DRUNK ELEPHANT** Lippe Balm (\$22, Sephora).



MOST
COVETED
HOT TOOL
BRAND...
CHI



Flat irons were just the beginning for this heat-styling authority. Chi's assortment of irons, dryers and products equips even hair novices with the essentials to be pros at home.

CHI Onyx Euro Shine Dryer (\$130, Ulta).



HAIRSTYLE
YOU'RE
DYING TO
TRY... **FAUX
NATURAL**

"A faux natural would allow me to keep my desired look without having to spend so much time washing and styling my own hair."

—**RO ALEXANDER-MCLENDON**, METAIRIE, LA

KURLY KLIPS Hair Extensions (\$160–\$200, curlyklips.com).



**BEST ONE-STOP
BEAUTY SHOP... ULTA**

WORTH EVERY PENNY!

SPLURGE-
WORTHY HAIR
BRAND...

IT'S A TIE!

**MOROCCANOIL
& MIZANI**

One thing's for sure, our readers know what's best for their hair. Money isn't a factor if the products work, and these brands topped the list for reliability and consistent results for both curly and straight textures.

MOROCCANOIL Treatment Original (\$44, moroccanoil.com); **MIZANI** True Textures Intense Moisture Replenish Treatment (\$18, Ulta). ▷





FIERCE FIRST LADY

STRAND SLAYER...
MICHELLE OBAMA

In this beauty election nearly half of voters agree that FLOTUS has served her country (and our "inspo" boards) well with almost eight glorious years of fierce bobs, lobs and updos.

STAY YOUNG

BEST ANTIAGING LINE... **OLAY**

Potent potions without a hefty price tag—25 percent of our beauty buffs chose this as their stay-young secret weapon.

OLAY Regenerist Micro-Sculpting Cream SPF 30 (\$34, Walmart).



FAVE IMPORTS...
DR. JART+, ERBORIAN & SK-II

These three lines that originated overseas made the grade stateside for having innovative, powerful ingredients that really do the job!

DR. JART+ Water Drop Hydrating Moisturizer (\$36, Sephora); **ERBORIAN** Bamboo Matte Lotion (\$34, Sephora); **SK-II** R.N.A. Power Essence (\$195, sephora.com).



BRAND THE WHOLE FAM LOVES...
IT'S A TIE! DOVE & VASELINE

"We all have supersensitive skin and Dove doesn't irritate it."
—ANGELA WILLIAMS, BROKEN ARROW, OK

DOVE Deep Moisture Nourishing Body Wash (\$9, dove.us).

"Vaseline is a staple we can count on to help with dry skin."
—KIMBERLEY COLEMAN-SMITH, AURORA, IL

VASELINE Intensive Care Deep Moisture Jelly Cream (\$8, Walgreens).



BEAUTY IT GIRL...
TEYANA TAYLOR

Through social media she lets us in on her rising career, dope hair moves and cool style.

COILS, REJOICE!

BEST CURL KEEPER...
LEAVE-IN CONDITIONER

When it comes to maintaining those spirals, panelists voted this as the product they can't live without.

GARNIER Whole Blends Coconut Oil & Cocoa Butter Leave-In Conditioner (\$7, CVS); **CAROL'S DAUGHTER** Almond Milk Leave-In Conditioner (\$11, Target); **INFUSIUM23** Moisture Replenisher Leave-In Treatment (\$6, 8 oz, Walmart).

DESERT ISLAND ESSENTIAL...
IT'S A TIE! CLEANSING WIPES & COCONUT OIL

"I need to stay fresh in case my rescuer is cute."

—AYANNA LASHLEY, BROOKLYN

KLEENEX Facial Cleansing Wipes (\$8, kleenex.com/facialcleansing).

"There's not much you can't do with it from hair care to moisturizing to cooking."
—CHEVON BOSTICK, YONKERS, NY

365 EVERYDAY VALUE Organic Coconut Oil (\$11, Whole Foods). ▷



BEAUTY : AWARDS



BOLD NEW FACE

MODEL OF THE YEAR... **AYA JONES**

We can't get enough of this doe-eyed, pillowy-lipped Parisian beauty. She has dominated every major runway since making her debut for Prada in 2014.



BEAT THE HEAT

MUST-HAVE PRODUCT FOR STRAIGHT HAIR... **HEAT PROTECTANT**

If flat irons and blow-dryers are part of your routine, add these scorch-shielding potions to your arsenal.

BB. Repair Blow Dry Elixir (\$31, 5 oz, bumbleandbumble.com); **KÉRASTASE** Elixir Ultime Original Oil (\$58, 100 ml, kerastase-usa.com); **ALTERNA** Multi-Vitamin Heat Protection Spray (\$30, Sephora); **GHD** Heat Protect Spray (\$22, sephora.com).



FAVE E-COMMERCE BEAUTY SITE... **SEPHORA.COM**

"It has everything that you need to enhance your beauty from the comfort of home."

—**MONIQUE LATRICE**, NEW YORK CITY



EASY WHITENING FIX... **COLGATE**

Infused with the same ingredient used by some dentists, this can get your choppers white in just six weeks.

COLGATE Optic White High Impact Toothpaste (\$5, Target).



SKIN TREAT

BEST SPA BRAND... **KATE SOMERVILLE**

A line developed by an experienced aesthetician who knows how to treat some of our skin's most complex concerns, it offers the substantial effects of a spa facial at home.

KATE SOMERVILLE Goat Milk Moisturizing Cream (\$65, sephora.com).

BEST BLEMISH FIGHTER... **NEUTROGENA**

NEUTROGENA Rapid Clear Stubborn Acne Daily Leave-On Mask (\$9, neutrogena.com).



MOST COVETED CURLY HAIR BRAND... **SHEAMOISTURE**



SHEAMOISTURE Fruit Fusion Weightless Crème Rinse (\$11, ulta.com).

BEST DARK SPOT SOLVE... **AMBI**

AMBI Fade Cream (\$7, Walgreens).

BEAUTYBOX PICK

FAVE ESSENCE BEAUTYBOX ITEM... **L'OCCITANE**

"This makes your hands feel like a baby's bottom: soft and supple."

—**SHEILA MCDANIEL**, SNELLVILLE, GA

L'OCCITANE Shea Butter Hand Cream (\$12, usa.loccitane.com). ▷



JONES: VICTOR VIRGILE/GAMMA-RAPHO VIA GETTY IMAGES; PRODUCTS: COURTESY OF BRANDS.



TECH WORLD

BEST NEW TOOLS...
GAME-CHANGING GADGETS

We rounded up innovative tools that will transform the way you look at beauty and get you summer-ready from head to toe—literally. Some of our favorites include an electric foot file that can be used wet or dry, to keep your heels in order; a brush that emits steam for healthy and sleek strands; a facial shaver that spares you the pain of hair removal; a phone case that lights up to ensure the perfect selfie; an allover body shaver that banishes hair without nicks; and a vibrating flat iron that smooths strands without heat damage.

AMOPÉ Pedi Perfect Wet & Dry Foot File (\$60, Target); **JOSÉ EBER** Straightening Brush With Steam (\$165, joseeberhair.com); **DERMAFLASH** Facial Exfoliating Device (\$189, qvc.com); **TY-LITE** Protective Lighted Phone Case (\$80, ty-lite.com); **REMINGTON** Smooth & Silky Smooth Glide Shaver (\$40, Target); **BIO IONIC** 10x Pro Styling Iron (\$230, sephora.com).



FAN FAVES

HAIRSTYLIST I'D MOST WANT TO VISIT... **IT'S A TIE!**

KIM KIMBLE & LARRY SIMS

With celeb clients like Beyoncé, Lupita Nyong'o and Gabrielle Union under their belts, it's no wonder these mane masters topped wish lists.

HAIR ENVY

NATURAL HAIR CRUSH...
TRACEE ELLIS ROSS

Her curls have just as big a personality as Tracee herself, which is only one reason why we're all pretty much obsessed. She stays true to her style and continues to motivate curly girls everywhere to rock their texture loud and proud.



BEST TAMER FOR UNRULY EDGES...
ORGANIC ROOT STIMULATOR

ORS Olive Oil With Pequi Oil Smooth and Easy Edge Gel (\$5, Sally Beauty).

ONES TO WATCH...
OIDAD & MADAM C.J. WALKER

These lines are taking the industry to new heights! Between Ouidad's collection for kinky strands and Madam C.J. Walker's concoctions for all hair types, our tress troubles could be a thing of the past.

OIDAD Curl Immersion Triple Treat Deep Conditioner (\$38, ouidad.com), available June 2016;
MADAM C.J. WALKER BEAUTY CULTURE Curl Define Milk (\$26, sephora.com).

