

# The Beauty of Diversity

**Forty-one women of color share stories about diversity, inclusion, and the politics of skin color in beauty.**

Reporting by *Lindsay Van Gelder*  
and *Elizabeth Siegel*  
Photographed by  
*Patrick Demarchelier*





Left, on Dilone: Cotton top and pants by Stella McCartney. Earrings by Georgina Trevino Contemporary Jewelry and Dilone's own. Center, on Imaan Hammam: Cotton top and skirt by Sonia Rykiel. Earrings by We Who Prey and Hammam's own. Right, on Aamito Lagum: Cotton-blend top by Isabel Marant. Cotton pants by Stella McCartney. Earring by Tibi. Makeup colors, on all: Sourcil Styler brow gel in 3, Click & Glow Highlighting Skin Fluid in Lumières d'Or, and Juicy Shaker in Piece of Cake by Lancôme. These pages: Hair, Ward; makeup, Romy Soleimani; manicure, Donna D. Prop stylist: Cristina Forestieri. Fashion stylist: Laura Ferrara. Details, see Shopping Guide.

**BETHANN HARDISON,\***  
founder, **Bethann Management Co.**

"I arranged a town hall meeting in 2007. The room was packed. There were editors, stylists, model-agency owners—and I sat in front of them and talked about what I thought was inappropriate behavior. [Models of color] were being told, 'Sorry, no blacks, no ethnics.' Newspapers started writing articles about 'Is there racism in fashion?' And it changed. 'I'm sorry, no blacks, no ethnics' has never been said again."

**PADMA LAKSHMI,**  
author, actress, and executive producer, **Top Chef**

"My skin is a map of my life. Before high school, I lived in a white suburb of Los Angeles where there were so few Indians that they didn't even know the 'correct' slurs. They called me the N-word or 'Blackie.' For a long time I hated my skin color. Even in India, there's a complicated history. My grandmother discouraged us from going in the sun; she didn't want us to be dark. We were only allowed to play outside after 4:30. There was a cosmetics line called Fair & Lovely—that says it all. [And] when I started to work as a model, people would on

**"[My daughter] told me that some boy said she was white, not Indian, and shouldn't wear a bindi. I told her to tell him she's brown on the inside."**

occasion say things to me like 'You're so pretty for being an Indian.' I have a seven-year-old daughter who is very fair. Once she told me that some boy said to her she was white, not Indian, and shouldn't wear a bindi. I told her to tell him she's brown on the inside."

**MEGHAN MARKLE,**  
actress, **Suits**

"I have the most vivid memories of being seven years old and my mom picking me up from my grandmother's house. There were the three of us, a family tree in an ombré of mocha next to the caramel complexion of my mom and light-skinned, freckled me. I remember the sense of belonging, having nothing to do with the color

of my skin. It was only outside the comforts of home that the world began to challenge those ideals. I took an African-American studies class at Northwestern where we explored colorism; it was the first time I could put a name to feeling too light in the black community, too mixed in the white community. For castings, I was labeled 'ethnically ambiguous.' Was I Latina? Sephardic? 'Exotic Caucasian'? Add the freckles to the mix and it created quite the conundrum. To this day, my pet peeve is when my skin tone is changed and my freckles are airbrushed out of a photo shoot. For all my freckle-faced friends out there, I will share with you something my dad told me when I was younger: 'A face without freckles is a night without stars.'"

**ZAZIE BEETZ,**  
actress, **Atlanta** and **Slice**

"My father is German; my mother is African-American. Growing up, I visited my grandparents in Berlin a lot. I would not see any other person of color for three weeks. People would stare. They would say things like 'Oh, you look like chocolate—I want to eat you up!' I've been to gatherings where people would say, 'She has so much race in her' or would use the word 'n\*\*\*\*\*'—or the German term 'neger.' And I would be like, Who are you talking to? I feel German, I speak German, [but] I don't look German.

people there look like?' And she said, 'They look like the show you watch, *Full House*.' So I assumed that when I would arrive in Canada, I would turn into a white blonde. And I was horrified when I got to the airport and I was still brown. I just couldn't understand that different colors coexist. I think I've come a long way from that nine-year-old girl who wanted to trade in her brown skin for white. I love what my brown skin looks like and what it represents. And there are many times I'm fully unaware of my skin. The perfect example is I'm talking to somebody, and they would look at me and say, 'So how do they do that in India?' I say, 'I'm not sure. I'm from Pakistan. But I can Google it for you and find out.' That always creates such an awkward moment, but I think awkward moments are not bad; they push us to confront our prejudices. Uncomfortable as it is to hear 'Oh, you speak English really good for a brown lady,' it really tells me that people have these ideas but there's no healthy space to ask these things. We lack basic vocab about understanding our differences. Now I love walking into a room and I don't look like everyone else. I hope that love for my skin I've developed as an adult I can pass on to my kids."

**BALANDA ATIS,**  
manager, **L'Oréal's Global Women of Color Lab** and **U.S. Liquid Face Lab**

"Up until several years ago, the primary target for most cosmetics companies was the Caucasian consumer. But the population has changed quite a bit, and businesses have had to come up with shades for people of medium to dark skin. I was given the opportunity to measure skin tones. We noticed that there was an area of violet in darker skin tones that had not been understood in the past. We ended up incorporating ultramarine blue, which takes you deeper but not necessarily blacker. I like to say that there's a new skin tone born every day."

**SUSAN C. TAYLOR,**  
dermatologist and associate professor of dermatology at **University of Pennsylvania Perelman School of Medicine**

"We still have a ways to go in terms of skin care, which is mostly geared toward anti-aging. Women of color have more melanin than Caucasian

In the United States, if you're African-American, it can be assumed that your family has been here for generations. In Europe, colonialism is much more alive and it's assumed you're from Nigeria or Senegal. I would have these conversations like 'Where is your mother from?' 'Brooklyn.' 'No, but where is she from?' I would respond, 'We don't know,' since we can't trace our roots beyond North Carolina. Slavery has erased our ability to find our origins. We have been here as long as some of the first immigrants."

**HABIBA NOSHEEN,**  
journalist, **The Fifth Estate**

"I was born in Pakistan, and when my mother told me we were moving to Canada, I asked her, 'What do the

\*These interviews have been edited and condensed for space.

**IMAAAN HAMMAM,**  
**model**

"I'm half Moroccan, half Egyptian, and I was born in Amsterdam. I'm Muslim, and I'm superproud of my heritage and of my roots. I want to be a role model for young girls who are struggling with racism or struggling with their looks or with their skin color. I had Naomi Campbell, who I looked up to as a black powerful woman. But there aren't many Arabic models, and being an African-Arabic model, I'm trying to open doors for more Arabic girls."

Cotton nylon sweater by Zero + Maria Cornejo. Bikini top and bottom by Maryam Nassir Zadeh. Earrings by J. W. Anderson. Bracelet by Loewe. Makeup colors: Healthy Skin Liquid Makeup in Honey and Hydro Boost Hydrating Lip Treatment by Neutrogena. Details, see Shopping Guide.



women, which means we age later, and we age differently. We don't have fine lines and wrinkles so much as pigmentation; sagging rather than crow's-feet. I was very inspired by the Black Power movement of the '70s. Kathleen Cleaver and Angela Davis with their Afros were so authentic! And today, you look at Obama, Michelle, and the kids, and it makes me feel proud. I think it took companies many years to realize the economics of meeting the needs of darker-skinned women. There's no escape from America realizing that we are brown now. We can only hope that everyone realizes that we're all Americans."

***DASCHA POLANCO,***  
**actress, *Orange Is***  
***the New Black***

"It's very difficult to get foundation that matches my skin. And I'm all for the contouring stuff, but I like to look like myself. I don't have a thin nose. You can see my African features, so I like to embrace these things as opposed to covering them."

***GRACE LEE,***  
**Maybelline New York**  
**makeup artist**

"I was born in Korea, but I came to Canada when I was six months old. I'm Canadian. From the time I was six or seven, I was obsessed with beauty. My dolls had eyeliner and extra eyelashes. I cut all my friends' hair and did their prom makeup. When I was at university, I got a part-time job working at a M.A.C. counter. One day I did this woman's makeup, and afterward she said to me, "You must be so proud of yourself—your English is superb!" I was speechless. The other thing growing up was people asking me if I was related to Bruce Lee. Is he the only Asian person you know? More makeup artists now know how to do Asian eyes. The fake-crease thing drives me to drink. Our eyes have monolids—they're flat! Why are you trying to make us look like white people?"

***HEATHER***  
***WOOLERY-LLOYD,***  
**dermatologist and director**  
**of Ethnic Skin Care at the**  
**University of Miami Miller**  
**School of Medicine**

"I was the only black child in nearly every class from kindergarten through college. I was very academic. I cared about SAT scores. I was a bookworm. I didn't develop any major insecurities—except about swimming.

Swimsuit by Acacia Swimwear. Earrings by Marni. Makeup colors: Brow Stylist Kabuki Blender in Brunette and Voluminous Feline Noir Mascara in Blackest Noir by L'Oréal Paris. Details, see Shopping Guide.





My hair! Swim parties were not a simple thing. I went to school with the model Niki Taylor. She was an exceptionally kind person, and one day when I had won some award, she congratulated me and told me how lucky I was. I remember thinking, You are on four magazine covers this month, including the *Seventeen* magazine that's in my backpack. But I always had my identity as a student. African-Americans are really underrepresented in dermatology. I felt this huge responsibility to learn everything there was to know about women of color. Many black women who are dealing with embarrassing issues, like hair loss, do not want to come in and take off their wig for a doctor who isn't an African-American woman. During my residency, I specifically took advantage of every opportunity to learn about dermatologic conditions in skin of color, because I knew when I completed my training that patients were going to seek my expertise."

**DEWANDA WISE,**  
actress, *Shots Fired* and  
*Underground*

"Being a chocolate-black girl, there's always this conversation about what it means to live in a duality. I went to all-white schools. My differences were always really kind of celebrated. I didn't grow up teased—I was homecoming queen. I didn't hit the glass ceiling until I was starting to audition. And even then, we all have our privileges—I have a pretty face. I still found myself being in the same conversations as women who look nothing like me. What I find inspiring now is differences are being celebrated. There's this earnest exploration of what it means to be beautiful. The queen mother of chocolate girls is Viola [Davis]. In Hollywood everyone has a type. If you're blonde in your 20s, they expect you to be ditzy. And Viola was like, 'OK, this is the space that I'm placed in, but it's my job to subvert your expectations.' Between her and Kerry [Washington] opening the doors...I wouldn't be on *She's Gotta Have It* now if it weren't for those women."

**CONSTANCE WU,**  
actress, *Fresh Off the Boat*

"My family is Chinese-Taiwanese. I'm from Richmond, Virginia. The community in which I grew up was pretty white. The storybooks you got

at school featured white children and an animal, or animals. *Fresh Off the Boat* is the first television show led by [an] Asian-American [family] in over 20 years. I'd always been in the supporting role, the best friend or the assistant to the white person. And I was grateful. But once I was in the lead role and other people started making a big deal out of it, I realized I was previously blind to it."

**JEANINE DOWNIE,**  
dermatologist in Montclair,  
New Jersey

"African-Americans and Latinos lose elasticity—we sag where Caucasians wrinkle. People don't realize that skin of color needs sunscreen, and that gets on my last nerve. Bob Marley died of melanoma! Skin cancer is underdiagnosed among people of

surpass limits given to me by others.... I've always known I have beautiful skin because my dad has amazing skin and I look like him. You know, diversity in Hollywood is on its way to being embraced. But we still have a long way to go. I think there's something that happened in which it's become cool to have darker skin."

**TESSA THOMPSON,**  
actress, *Westworld* and  
*Annihilation*

"I think about the civil rights movement—you couldn't organize [with] Twitter, Instagram, and text messaging. Now we have so much access to information [and] each other. It's a wonderful time for women who [are] coming forth and

**"Hollywood has an idea of what...  
Latina looks like, and I didn't fit into that  
box, so I had to create my own box."**

color in part because people don't think it's a problem. I do think companies understand that dollars are coming from all ethnic markets, not just Caucasians, [but] we're still peripheral in ads. I'd give it a C—before I would have given them an F."

**LILLY SINGH,**  
vlogger and author, *How to Be a  
Bawse* (Random House)

"The last time someone made me feel bad about my skin would be every single comment I get about my face makeup not matching my neck. It's something I get on YouTube. Maybe if more foundation matched my skin tone, haters would slow their roll."

**EVA LONGORIA,**  
actress, *Lowriders*; director;  
producer; and activist

"I remember growing up in Texas not speaking Spanish and yet feeling as Latin as can be—kind of being a fish out of water. It was definitely hard for people to just assume you're one thing, but you're not just that one thing. That was something to navigate early on in Hollywood. Because Hollywood has an idea of what they think Latina looks like, and I didn't fit into that box, so I had to create my own box. I live my life trying to

being like, 'This is who I am,' and it's beautiful. When you're a black person in this country, some things you don't mean to be political statements become political statements. You're just saying, 'I won't allow how anyone else talks about standards for beauty to disrupt the way I want to live my life.'"

**AJA NAOMI KING,**  
actress, *How to Get Away  
With Murder*

"I was afraid of the darkness of my skin. I believed I had to be celebrated for my intelligence and my sense of humor. Those could be the beautiful things about me since my skin couldn't. I remember in junior high having a beach day with my family and going to school the next day. Someone in my class exclaimed shock at my appearance. She didn't know black people could tan. The look on her face stuck with me. For years, I wanted to avoid direct sunlight. The comments you hear as a child stick with you. [I was] afraid of photos in dark rooms because you know no one will be able to see you in the picture and [people] will make fun of you. [I feared] walking into a room that has a black wall and

hearing someone remark about how you've disappeared. You try to avoid these situations so you're not in a position to act like you don't care or [you] make fun of the darkness of your skin before someone else does so that maybe it will sting less. It has been a process of self-love to embrace the beauty of every single drop that makes up the richness that is my beautiful brown skin. If you learn anything in life, learn to love yourself. There is no amount of makeup or skin-care products that will make you love yourself."

**MISHA GREEN,**  
cocreator, writer, and  
producer, *Underground*

"My skin is a shade darker than caramel, with a speckle of chicken pox scars that I tried to pass off as freckles in middle school. Spending summers in the South growing up, I was always aware of colorism in the black community, but it wasn't really until I attended an all-white middle school that I encountered it. I remember riding the bus and one of my classmates was turned around in her seat staring at me. I asked why. She wanted to know what I was mixed with. She had never seen such a pretty black girl, so she assumed I must be mixed with something. At the time, I was too offended to answer. But since then, I have been asked what I'm mixed with too many times to count, and each time I am met with skepticism when I reply that I am black. I continue by informing the misinformed—the African diaspora comes in many hues; all of them are beautiful."

**LIU WEN,**  
model

"I have the skin of a Chinese woman. It has a healthy color and glow. My skin's beauty is a gift from my parents. As a child, I did not consider this too much, but after I started modeling internationally, people would compliment me on my skin. Only then did I appreciate this gift. It doesn't matter where you come from or who you are—always cherish yourself. Be proud of your heritage."

**KHOUDIA DIOP,**  
model and diversity and  
anti-bullying advocate

"My skin is dark and glows. It almost seems blue, and it's supersoft. I realized my color is beautiful when I

got out of my country [Senegal]. I was in Italy on vacation, and I saw my reflection in a mirror. I saw how unique my skin was and why people stop me on the street to ask about it. I started falling in love with it."

**SASHEER ZAMADA**  
comedian and *Saturday Night Live* cast member

"When I was younger, a lot of older black people would tell me, 'Don't go outside for too long because you don't want to get darker.' When I got older, I realized it was passed-down colorism. What the black community has experienced has been absorbed. We kind of police each other. My mom grew up in Arkansas during the civil rights movement. She's one of seven kids, and she's one of the darker-skinned kids in her family. She said that her mom would treat the lighter-skinned kids better. My grandma absorbed whatever messages she was getting in the world: 'If you are light as a paper bag or if you have straighter hair, you will get treated better.' Thankfully, my mom didn't pass any of that energy to me. [Being on *Saturday Night Live*,] I've gotten some really nice comments from other black people who say, 'It's so nice to see a woman of color who looks like me on TV.' I am darker than a lot of women who are on TV, and my hair is natural. To a lot of people, it's important to see me on TV, and I'm so happy to be there and do that."

**JESSICA ALBA,**  
actress and founder of  
the *Honest Company* and  
*Honest Beauty*

"It's important for [my daughters] to know that beauty comes in all shapes and sizes and colors, to celebrate diversity and point out people who have [a] different tone, or they're covered in beautiful freckles, or they have tight curls or long waves. All of it's beautiful. Girls who choose to wear boys' clothes, who don't want to put on a face of makeup, who want to shave their heads—that's beautiful. What makes someone beautiful is the power of owning who they are, and confidence, being kind, having compassion. Those types of themes are what I really try to nail into my girls' heads. The only way that any of us is going to advance is if we have a generation of people who aren't living with prejudices about standards of beauty. I think an African-American president and First Lady really helped. [And] having more women have a seat

at the table has opened up the dialogue on inclusion and diversity. We all should be celebrated. We all deserve a seat at the table."

**HANNAH BRONFMAN,**  
DJ and founder of *HBFIT TV*,  
a beauty and fitness website

"My mother is an African-American from the South Side of Chicago who married a white guy in 1978. She was hyperaware of racism and made me aware of that. I went to a private girls' school where I was one out of five girls in the class who looked like me. I really first encountered it when I went to dance class at Alvin Ailey with girls who were a lot darker. They'd tease me that I didn't have rhythm. When I was 12, I had a falling out with a friend. She called me the N-word. The fact is that stuff is taught. African-Americans are still underserved by cosmetics. I've been using a line called Wander, by Lindsay Ellingson—a blue-eyed white girl. Their colors are great."

**TAMIKA MALLORY,**  
activist, national cochair  
of the *Women's March on Washington*, and founder  
of *Mallory Consulting*

"When I was in elementary school, I lived in a community that was predominantly black and Latino. The light skin–dark skin issue was very prevalent. The Latino [kids were] the cool kids, while the black kids were sort of looked down on. It definitely created insecurities. Today, I am 100 percent comfortable in my skin. Each one of us has to be comfortable in our skin. That's what will change the world. There is some young girl who is watching, who has darker skin, who is going to be encouraged by your confidence, your ability to walk in your skin. [The *Women's March*] was a great display of what this country really looks like. Now we are going to have to be committed to resistance. Resistance looks like the National Park Service tweeting about climate change regardless of whether somebody is going to lose their job. Resistance looks like not accepting 'alternative facts.' Resistance looks like registering to vote. If you woke up after the election feeling disparaged, threatened, welcome to the reality that black people have been dealing with





**DILONE,**  
**model**

"I don't think people realize just how much Latinas vary in skin tone. I have Colombian and Dominican friends who are superdark and others who have blonde hair and blue eyes. We are kind of stepping away from thinking this is what someone Latin should look like, with a light skin tone and big butts. It's celebrated more now than in the past, just how different Latin women are. My role model growing up was Selena. I love her music, what she represented, her sexiness. And just being herself. She wasn't trying to conform to something else."

Viscose-blend top by Balmain.  
Bikini top by Jade Swim. Bikini bottom by Maryam Nassir Zadeh.  
Necklace (worn as belt) by Hervé Van Der Straeten. Sunglasses, Dilone's own. Details, see Shopping Guide.

for a long time. If people of good conscience are to see a real healing, it's going to have to start with fighting for the most oppressed."

**PIA WURTZBACH,**  
**Miss Universe 2015**

"It took a while for people to accept me as a representative of [the Philippines]. Usually, the representatives we send to the Miss Universe competition have dark skin. I'm on the fair side, and it took them a while to see if I could be an accurate representative of the Philippines. I went through a lot of experiments. The first year I put on some tanning lotion, and I didn't win. My second year, I went and tanned [and didn't win]. And on my third attempt, I didn't go three shades darker. I won."

**LORA ARELLANO,**  
**makeup artist and founder of Melt Cosmetics**

"When I started working in makeup, some people would immediately think I didn't know how to work with their skin tone. I constantly heard, 'Oh, I saw this Hispanic girl, and I didn't know if she could match my skin tone.' I usually sit them down, like, 'Trust me. I got you.' Once they see the finished product, they won't question you again. Now the majority of my clients are African-American. I used to try to buy makeup for darker skin tones, and it was hard. I had to use eye shadow to contour. Now there's a brand, AJ Crimson, that [has] one of the darkest colors in foundation."

**JESSICA MATTEN,**  
**actress, Frontier**

"The indigenous part of me is Métis, and my family hails from a very racist part of Canada. Growing up, my mother was taught: 'Keep it hush. You're light-skinned, so you can get away with people not thinking you're native.' She wanted better for her children, so I didn't grow up on a reserve. In the city, there was still a lot of racism toward native people. I was always trying to overcompensate for what I was by being the best on the sports team, joining the photography club, the drama club. I was trying to prove the color of my skin didn't make me less than as a human being. When I was 14, a boy called me a drunk squaw, a very derogatory term. My mom and I started holding workshops for other

aboriginal women about self-esteem. At a young age, I was able to do some deep soul searching. When I finally had the courage to look in the mirror and say, 'I love you,' I began to love the color of my skin and all parts of me."

**BECKY G.,**  
**singer and actress, Power Rangers**

"When my brother was in a [baseball] tournament, I'll never forget the coach on the other team saying, 'You people' because we won. My little brother is Mexican and a lot of his team [mates] were African-American. That really opened my eyes—'Wow, this still exists?' I've never let the color of my skin or the fact that I'm a woman stop me from anything. It was a big, big deal when I got cast [as Trini in *Power Rangers*]. She's Latina! This is the next generation—it's moving forward."

**ALBA RAMOS,**  
**a.k.a. Sunkissalba, vlogger**

"Being Dominican, I think a lot of us have struggled with our skin color. We either absolutely love our skin color and we're proud of it or—in my case—there was no reassurance for me that my skin color was beautiful.... [Then I went from] school in an area

They said, 'Louis [C.K.] wants to come and speak with you.' I hadn't met him yet, and he said, 'Hey, I'm Louis. We've been looking for you for a long time. We finally found you.' Wow."

**HUDA KATTAN,**  
**CEO of Huda Beauty**

"Growing up, my family and I would travel to [the] Middle East to visit our relatives, and they would always favor lighter skin and comment on my dark skin. I always knew I was darker than most of my friends and relatives, but I loved it. What's important is that you never let your skin color define you. Skin color is special because it's yours."

**VERONICA WEBB,**  
**model, founder of webbontheffly.com, and first woman of color to have a major cosmetics contract (with Revlon in 1990)**

"Every time there's a big idea or a different idea, there's going to be controversy; there are going to be detractors. There were people who were offended that a black person would have a Revlon contract. Some of them even went into threats. Then

**"I think I've come a long way from that nine-year-old girl who wanted to trade in her brown skin for white."**

that was 99 percent Hispanic to a high school that was more diverse. The fact that I was able to surround myself with different people helped a lot on how I see myself. Today, I am superproud of my color. Every day there's at least one comment on social media or my YouTube [from someone who] specifies they feel much more accepting of themselves because they see me."

**SUSAN KELECHI WATSON,**

**actress, *This Is Us* and *Louie***

"I'd been watching *Louie* and knew that his children [on the show] were blonde, blue-eyed kids. I went into the audition room, and I said, 'I know I'm not going to play the wife, because have you seen the kids?' The people casting looked at me and said, 'We're gonna press record.' I would have never thought that I would have been considered for something like that.

there were other detractors who felt I wasn't black enough. So too black, not black enough. The point is that the world is also full of smart, kind people, and that's why things move forward."

**BEVERLY JOHNSON,**  
**first African-American model to be on the cover of *Vogue* and author, *The Face That Changed It All* (Atria Books)**

"I didn't know I was going to be on the cover. My agent called and told me, and I couldn't put on my jeans fast enough to run down to the magazine store. I didn't know it was a first. It was a different time, and it wasn't a topic that they never had anyone black on the cover of *Vogue*. My whole life was defined by that moment—I realized the responsibility I had taken on."

## **AAMITO LAGUM, model**

"Growing up in Uganda, I did not fit into the ideal. I was too dark. I was too tall. But I didn't really notice I was black until I came to the U.S. Here I'm black, whereas I was just a person in Uganda. [Last year, there was a close-up of Lagum's lips on the M.A.C. Instagram feed that triggered racist remarks in the comments section.] It wasn't that big a deal to me—haters gonna hate—and I was able to brush it off. I posted back, 'My lips are giving you sleepless nights.' I grew up loved by my family. That love enabled me to love what I saw in the mirror. I learned to love my skin too much to fit someone else's script. It is the same love that keeps me safe from comments that would otherwise offend me."

This page: Cotton top by Alexander Wang. Linen shorts by Jil Sander. Necklace by Leigh Miller. Makeup colors: Lash Domination Volumizing Mascara, Brow Master Brow Gel in Universal Taupe, and Invisible Glow Powder Highlighter in Dark to Deep by BareMinerals. Opposite page, from left: Swimsuit by Alix. Swimsuit by Mikoh. Earrings by Loewe. Details, see Shopping Guide.

Check out Hammam, Dilone, and Lagum's messages to the world of beauty and fashion at [allure.com/beauty-diversity](https://www.allure.com/beauty-diversity).





**ALICIA MACHADO,**  
actress, activist, and  
Miss Universe 1996

"I'm trying to put all my attention on positive things—all the races are beautiful. We need to be stronger than we've ever been before. No more competition between us, the powerful women's community. We need to teach that to the next generation."

**DEMI LOVATO,**  
Singer, songwriter, and actress,  
*Smurfs: The Lost Village*

"I've been having makeup applied to my skin for as long as I can remember. While I love to play around in makeup, I didn't like it when makeup artists would apply it so heavy. I always felt like it wasn't letting my skin breathe, so I was extremely diligent about washing my skin. Beauty is more than skin deep. Skin care isn't entirely about vanity. Something as simple as washing your face is a way of treating yourself with respect. I'll sometimes post pictures on social media of me caring for my own skin because I want to be a good example for my fans and create awareness of skin care and self-care."



**JOAN SMALLS,**  
Estée Lauder spokeswoman

"My skin is a caramel color with olive undertones. My mother's complexion is golden and olive. All my family members have a variation of skin tones and color, and not once have we ever mentioned it or compared it. One thing I miss the most about living in Puerto Rico: My color was darker, and my ancestry was more noticeable—my Latina and African side. When I first started modeling in Europe, the makeup artists asked me if I brought my own foundation. I was taken aback—this is a professional? It's sad that they hadn't worked with more people with my skin tone."

**SAMIRA WILEY,**  
actress, *Orange Is the New Black* and  
*The Handmaid's Tale*

"In the African-American community, they had something called the brown-bag test. If you are lighter than the bag, you're OK. There are a lot of parts I read in scripts and think, Why are they sending me this? This is for a beautiful white girl. Not

only is that in other people's minds, but now it's permeated my mind as well. I encourage anyone who's reading this to be whoever they are. I want to be an example of someone who is trying to do that every day."

**PRIYANKA CHOPRA,**  
actress, *Quantico*

"[My skin] is as complicated as I am. When I was growing up, I didn't see anyone on television who looked like me. Initially companies didn't have colors that matched Asian or Indian skin. Because I'm darker, I had issues as a teenager—society pressure that a girl is prettier if she's lighter. Pressures exist, and it's on us to make those pressures not seem important to girls. I've achieved what I've achieved, and skin color has nothing to do with it—in fact it might have been an asset. I like the color of my skin very much. It's so primitive to me that people are judged on the basis of the color of their skin. I mean, it's skin. We all have it."