



THE STOCK LIST

Beauty Import: Turning Japanese

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As far as skincare is concerned, the women of a Japan have a long-standing history of knowing the secrets to a flawless complexion (geishas, anyone?). And if you've ever been to a drugstore in Tokyo, you know there is no shortage of adventurous beauty products lining the shelves—from dual-purpose patches that promise softer nipples and lips (yes, these are a real thing and are sold like Chapstick at the checkout) to a bevy of paper face masks that do everything from lighten dark spots to increase blood circulation. So when Hada Labo (one of the most popular brands in Asia—its Clear Liquid Hydrator is sold every two seconds) recently made its way stateside, I was ready and willing to get on board. After all, I feel like here in the U.S., we're always a few steps behind the East in terms of skincare innovation (i.e., the BB and CC cream craze didn't hit our shores until long after it was standard practice in places like South Korea and Japan).

Although there are 45 products in the range in Asia, the company is scaling it back to five for American consumers (and adding "Tokyo" to the end of Hada Labo to convey the line's international origins). The initial lineup will consist of a facial cleanser, a protecting day lotion, an antiaging moisturizer, a gel cream, and a replenishing hydrator. All of the formulas—with the exception of the cleanser that contains hyaluronic acid and a special HA complex—boast the brand's signature ingredient, Super Hyaluronic Acid (SHA), a proprietary combo of three types of hyaluronic acid at different molecular weights: macro (seals in moisture on the surface), HA plus (water and oil soluble, it merges with the skin), and micro (penetrates to deeper levels of the epidermis). SHA provides an intense dose of hydration that lasts—without feeling greasy or heavy.

In fact, my go-to product in the line, the Replenishing Hydrator (the equivalent to the bottle that sells every two seconds), is so lightweight that it feels like patting plain water on your face, but softens just as well as a thick lotion. For more intense moisture, the Skin Plumping Gel Cream—a serum and cream hybrid—is your best bet and contains the highest concentration of SHA, with fine line-plumping effects lasting up to eight hours. Hada Labo's brand motto in its native Japan is "Happy Surprise," and I'd say getting my hands on these products (minus the 14-plus-hour flight) is one happy surprise indeed.

Available now at [Ulta.com](#).

—Amber Kallor