

TO THE SEA (C)

Summer has always been beauty's sexy season – smooth legs and bronzed skin. But today's beauty consumer is no longer satisfied with simply achieving a tan. She's chasing the glow: sun-protected, healthy, radiant skin that reflects wellness. Based on a June 2026 survey of 5,147 U.S. female beauty buyers, this Beauty by the Numbers maps the new terrain at the intersection of SPF and post-skin recovery, showcasing the rising power of brightening and ocean-inspired ingredients.

4 out of 5 surveyed say their #1 summer skin goal is healthy and glowing skin

Summer Skin State of Mind

- **68%** focus more on sun protection during the summer
- **67%** want lightweight beauty products for summer
- **62%** spend more time outdoors
- **50%** simplify her skincare routine
- **47%** wear less makeup and focus more on skincare
- **45%** pay more attention to body skincare

Her Pre-Summer Primer - Prep, Set, Glow!

- **64%** skin exfoliation
- **61%** hydrating
- **60%** hair removal
- **48%** brightening treatments/ Vitamin C products
- **46%** glow oils/shimmers/illuminators

85% associate Vitamin C with brightening and evening skin tone benefits

Glow Up! What Summer Glow & Beach Beauty Mean to Her

- **75%** healthy-looking skin
- **69%** sun-kissed skin
- **68%** glowing skin
- **65%** hydrated skin
- **60%** minimal make-up/ natural look

Benefit Breakdown: What She Seeks in Summer Skincare

- **87%** hydration
- **81%** SPF protection
- **74%** anti-aging
- **60%** glow/brightening
- **57%** reduction in sunspots/dark spots

Fade to Bright

- **3 out of 4** say it's important that summer skincare contain brightening ingredients
- **71%** say premature aging is their #1 long-term concern
- **65%** rank dark spots and sunspots #2 in her list of concerns

Getting that Glow: [Vitamin] C the Difference

79% of those who currently use Vitamin C, apply Vitamin C products at least once daily, with 31% using it twice daily

Associated benefits:

- **84%** brightening
- **61%** glow/radiance
- **51%** dark spot reduction

Skincare Claims that Count

1. Protects against sun damage
2. Hydrates skin
3. Has a lightweight feel
4. Non-greasy/sticky finish
5. Water/sweat-resistant

Seventy-three percent (73%) of survey respondents are interested in trying Vitamin C products this summer. The appetite for Vitamin C is proven and the habit is daily; the brand that owns Vitamin C as a summer glow ritual (not just a winter serum) wins a category she's already sold on.

Beyond the Burn

Consumers no longer think of sunscreen as seasonal damage control—they've fully embraced it as a daily anti-aging tool and beauty essential.

- **96%** agree SPF is a weapon against aging
- **94%** agree SPF is a beauty routine essential – not just a beach product
- **94%** want easier formats to make reapplication effortless
- **50%** use SPF products year-round, daily

BRAND OPPORTUNITY

What's In Her SPF Rotation

- **73%** facial sunscreen
- **65%** moisturizer with SPF
- **61%** body sunscreen
- **48%** SPF in makeup
- **48%** lip SPF

Building a Better SPF

Her top SPF gripes: greasy feel (66%), white cast (60%) and sticky finish (49%). She's clear on the improvements that would drive greater use and reapplication. The brands that close that gap won't just own the white space—they'll create a brighter future for their brand.

What she wants from an SPF:

- **48%** invisible finish/no white cast
- **46%** multi-benefit formulas (SPF + skincare)
- **43%** better texture/feel on skin
- **35%** longer-lasting protection
- **32%** easy application formats

The SPF-Hybrid Appeal

- **77%** SPF + anti-aging
- **77%** SPF + hydration
- **58%** SPF + barrier repair
- **56%** SPF + peptides

Her Interest in Sun Protection Innovation

- **70%** SPF intensity that adapts to sun exposure
- **52%** UV-reactive formulas
- **45%** scalp SPF and treatment hybrids
- **45%** color-changing UV indicators
- **35%** wearable UV trackers paired with sunscreen

A Sea of Possibilities Marine ingredients are the next wave of beauty innovation.

What ingredients she'd like to try:

- **67%** coral-derived ingredients
- **64%** plankton extract
- **60%** sea kelp
- **55%** sea minerals/PDRN (tied)
- **52%** marine collagen

Benefits she associates with these ingredients:

- **63%** hydration
- **60%** skin nourishment
- **51%** rich in antioxidants
- **46%** skin repair

Selling the Sea Responsibly – Concerns about Ocean Ingredients

- **42%** are concerned about harm to ocean animals or organisms
- **38%** overfishing or ecosystem damage
- **34%** sustainability concerns
- **32%** ethical sourcing

No brand has yet planted a flag as the trusted name in marine-based beauty. Lead with proof — traceable, lab-grown or sustainably harvested sourcing — and you own a category before it becomes saturated.

BRAND OPPORTUNITY

Coastal Cravings: Scents that Transport her to the Beach

- **70%** coconut
- **60%** tropical fruit
- **59%** saltwater/ocean breeze
- **55%** fresh/clean
- **54%** cocoa butter

93% find beach-inspired fragrances appealing

Products She'd Love in a "Beachy-scent"

- **90%** body lotions/creams
- **82%** body spray
- **81%** hair care products

Ocean-Inspired Products Make Her Feel...

- **68%** relaxed
- **63%** refreshed
- **41%** rejuvenated
- **40%** energized
- **38%** uplifted

Top 10 Brands She Most Often Associates with Summer and Beach Beauty

- #1 Sol de Janeiro
- #2 Vacation
- #3 Sun Bum

- #4 Coppertone
- #5 Hawaiian Tropic
- #6 Banana Boat
- #7 Bath & Body Works

- #8 Supergoop!
- #9 Neutrogena
- #10 Kopari

Ready for Great Claims Like These in 2026? You Need Them!

Contact The Benchmarking Company to learn about consumer in-home use testing (IHUT) for marketing claims and risk mitigation.

93% said it is "perfect for my skin tone"

Results
91% agree does not leave a white cast
90% agrees it absorbs easily into skin
87% feels weightless on skin

88% agree "looks invisible on skin"

Interested in customized beauty consumer research for your brand? Call 703.871.5300 or visit [benchmarkingcompany.com](https://www.benchmarkingcompany.com) or info@benchmarkingcompany.com for information on Beauty/Personal Care Product Testing and specialized consumer research.

theBenchmarkingCompany

Beauty & Personal Care Consumer Research