

'Inspired by Dartmoor'



Dartmoor Skincare products

Dartmoor has long been a source of creative inspiration – from poetry to painting, its craggy landscape has given rise to a kaleidoscope of fascinating work. In recent years, this trend has taken a more practical turn – a move away from mass-manufacture towards local, independent businesses – as demonstrated in the recent success of two new beauty companies. The Dartmoor Skincare Company, founded by Tara Leader in April 2017, and the Dartmoor Soap Company, run by Sophie Goodwin-Hughes in Belstone, are both grounded in the surrounding landscape, with many of the ingredients coming straight from the heart of the moor.

The Dartmoor Skincare Company is based in Yelverton, where business founder and beauty therapist Tara Leader handcrafts each cream in her parents' kitchen. Tara's ethos is made clear through her tagline 'Inspired By Nature', driving her to source her ingredients fresh from the Devonshire landscape. Previously based in East London, Tara missed the 'great

outdoors' and admits that the draw of the city had been 'wearing thin'. It was on her move back to Devon that her passion for skincare, coupled with 15 years' experience as a beauty therapist, gave the tools necessary to set up the business. 'I come from an entrepreneurial family – my Dad is a business mentor for The Prince's Trust – so the idea of developing my business further seemed like a logical step. This led me back to my first love, skincare, and in the autumn of 2016 the idea for what has become The Dartmoor Skincare Company was born.'

Tara began making the creams using a book that her aunt bought for her, adding her own experiences of working with beauty products and battles with her children's eczema. This led to a few months of experimentation (including a small incident which, according to her children, resulted in her kitchen smelling 'like a zoo!'). Luckily her other business, Tara's Treatments, provided plenty of willing testers. She finally decided on five products with which to launch her range: cleanser, toner, moisturiser, hand

Nicola Elson looks at local companies making the most of the moor's natural resources



The Dartmoor Soap Company – 'Spirit of the Moor'

PHOTOGRAPH THE DARTMOOR SOAP COMPANY



PHOTOGRAPHS NICOLA ELSON

A 'practice' stall for a fair, showcasing all Tara's products

cream and body cream.

Tara says that 'the wild, natural beauty of Dartmoor has always had a very special place in my heart'. This link is enhanced by the water used in her products, which is supplied by local, family-run company Pure Dartmoor Water. Dartmoor's granite-filtered, mineral-enriched water adds a purity to Tara's creams which cannot be replicated in chain-store products. Tara says, 'There is nothing more natural than crystal-clear water drawn from deep under Dartmoor.' Furthermore, it brings the business closer to home, an aspect about which Tara feels very strongly. The creams are made, bottled, and labelled in her parents' house, and then tested by her family and clients. Although a young company, Tara hopes that Dartmoor will assist her expansion, as she begins to venture into the production of shampoos and deodorants – all natural, local, and fresh.

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Tara with her mum Anne and daughter Anna