

## New and Improved

Formulated with high-quality ingredients and sold in recyclable packaging, Stellar Spa's product line is green from the inside out

BY MIMI TOWLE



Patrick Vande Weg with Stellar Spa's new face and body care serums, moisturizers, cleansers, lotions and scrubs.

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McCartney and Juice Beauty. The result favored Dr. Bronner's and allowed it to crack down on what it called "organic cheater" companies and certifiers. "We are taking our time to figure out how to best label our products and continue with our philosophy of looking for the simplest sustainable packaging to do the job using post-consumer recycled, recyclable and biodegradable materials," says Vande Weg. "Since we launched our first body care products in 2002, things like soy-based inks and sustainable paper products have become much more available. The overall goal is not only to provide the most effective and responsible product line, but to make sure the packaging is easier and cleaner to recycle." One more item on the to-do list is to become a certified green business through the county. "Before we heard the term 'green,' we put in bamboo floors and countertops, low-flow toilets and rechargeable electric candles, because it was the right thing to do," he says, referring to Stellar's remodel a few years back. "Getting the Marin county green business status is on the top of my list," he adds. "I've already started the paperwork."

This spring Patrick and Dana Vande Weg of Stellar Spa are welcoming not only the news of their first child due this summer, but also the relaunch of their all-organic, paraben-, sulfate- and alcohol-free bath and body care line. Having already gone through the process of previously developing natural and organic skin care products, they've learned that using the term "organic" and proving the viability and earth-friendliness of a product as promoted on its label can be controversial. That's proven by a recent lawsuit pitting veteran "organic" skin care company, Dr. Bronner's Magic Soaps, against a dozen or so newcomers to the word, including giants like Hain Celestial Group (Jason, Zia Cosmetics), Estée Lauder and smaller companies like Stella