

A MOTHER OF NATURE

OLIVIA NAIRN MEETS THE WOMAN BEHIND MOTHER EARTH BEAUTY SALON

Interviewed when I had the salon

Looking back over the past seventeen years, Rubina Latif has a great deal to be proud of. The founder of the popular Mother Earth salon recalls with passion how she first operated out of a single room in another shop on Westow Street, before achieving her dream of opening her very own salon, offering a wide range of treatments and with special focus on natural and organic products. Over the years Mother Earth has gone from strength to strength, and stepping inside it is clear that the accessible, back to basics approach of the peaceful salon is echoed throughout.

After training at the London Institute of Beauty Culture, Rubina began her career in the beauty industry with a job at the Prescriptives counter in the former Dickins & Jones department store. It was during this period that she became rather disillusioned: 'the world of make-up and in-house fashion shows was so superficial. It just wasn't me,' she says frankly. It was this experience which led her to bravely take that first step to set up on her own. Mother Earth opened in 1993, and since then Rubina has witnessed many changes to the area, yet continues to count some of those first crucial visitors among today's regular clients. She thinks of the area as a village, and sees the recent regeneration as nothing but positive. The themes of the salon accord with many local residents' ideas about nature and the environment, and consistently promote what is close to Rubina's heart. 'We just try to make everything as relaxed and friendly as possible,' she says.



Indeed, Mother Earth is miles away from the stuffy, superior atmosphere of some salons. The most popular treatments remain the facials and massages, which have proved consistent hits with mothers-to-be, seeking those all-important relaxation treatments at a stressful time.

Rubina now has a more managerial role in the salon's day-to-day business but has trained the salon's employees herself, and they are all well-versed in the ethics that Mother Earth preaches. She confesses that perhaps one day she would like to open a spa, and certainly to produce her

own branded goods. While we wait for the first Mother Earth products to hit our shelves, Rubina recommends the Matis Hydra SK4 Luxury Facial (£75 for 90 minutes) as 'the ultimate treatment': if we believe her claim that one client looks younger now than she did when she first started coming to the salon, there is certainly no time to lose.

www.motherearthbeauty.com

42 Westow Street, Crystal Palace
London SE19 3AH
020 8768 0620

Olivia Nairn