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## SPA SNAPSHOT:

# Elina Organics

By Marisa Sobotka

Elina Organics' owner, Elina Fedotova, has created the modern definition for a holistic, clinical skin care spa. The industry vet with over 25 years of experience in esthetics and holistic skin care formulation, has laid the foundation for natural skin care practitioners everywhere. Fedotova grew up in Russia and moved to the states in 1991. She brought with her an holistic approach that was untapped by many and a mission to create high-performance products and treatments using food-grade ingredients. After opening her first Elina Organics location in Michigan in 1998, she quickly launched her in-house skin care brand and founded the Association of Holistic Skin Care Practitioners to spread the message of clean spas/skin care. Now with another location in Illinois, Fedotova runs her successful spas with help from her staff that have completed training that is above the "average" esthetic education. They work together to provide their clients with a one-of-a-kind experience that incorporates healing, energy reading, "therapy" and holistic services and products. Fedotova sat down with *Skin Inc.* to discuss how to truly be a organic spa, the ins and outs of natural product formulation, and how to create an environment that draws in clients interested in holistic services.

# SPA SNAPSHOT



Elina Organics treatment room.

**Skin Inc. (SI):** How did you get started in the industry?

**Elina Fedotova (EF):** I was always fascinated with herbology, and in Russia, I learned about herbal preparations. It stems from my family because my mother is a patented attorney who worked for a big chemical company. I wanted to create very sophisticated and high-performance formulations made from food-grade ingredients. While working on my English, I started to formulate products for a plastic surgeon's office in Mississippi. I soon realized how difficult it was to find natural and organic ingredients. Some would make fun of me to create products with an "old fashion" approach. By 1998, I developed my first skin care collection, composed of five corrective, natural and even edible products. I moved to Michigan in 1998 with a genuine desire to implement my vision and philosophy 100%. I opened Elina Herbal Skin Care Clinic in Kalamazoo, Michigan, in 1998. I wanted to draw the line between conventional beauty treatments and clean beauty services, which benefit the skin and the entire body. In 2007, I organized the Association of Holistic Skin Care practitioners, which allowed me to share this approach with other estheticians.

**SI:** What made you decide to open an organic spa/skin care business?

**EF:** When I moved from the South (Texas/Mississippi) to Michigan in 1998, I decided I had a clear vision of a truly holistic, clinical skin care spa. I started to formulate organic products a long time before they became trendy. I was not taken seriously by other cosmetic chemists during professional meetings

because I talked about sourcing clean, natural ingredients. Although my approach was not a popular trend when I came to the U.S., I have remained true to myself by only working with natural ingredients and offering services that work in harmony with the entire body. After I opened my first skin clinic, and finally launched my Elina Organics skin care line. Beauty is more than skin deep; a person is much more than a physical body. As a holistic practitioner, I believe that we grow through our choices and experiences with the ultimate goal to achieve unconditional love and balance. We agree that beautiful skin can appear only on a healthy body, but a healthy body requires mental clarity, positive emotions, whole food and a clean environment.

**SI:** How is a running organic/natural spa different from a traditional spa?

**EF:** I have never have run a traditional spa. Still, I think the difference is that all people who work in an organic spa should support the holistic approach to skin and life generally and be cautious of the content of the products to make sure their ingredients are pure and healthy. Usually, in a conventional spa, they are trained on featured ingredients but cannot comment on any other components. Holistic estheticians should be able to explain most ingredients. Holistic estheticians will not review your skin separately from your entire lifestyle and try to understand your stress level, exercise, food preferences, etc. Also, people in an organic spa usually pay attention to a vibrational aspect of their entire facility. They are familiar with reiki and other energizing balancing techniques because they tend to be more spiritual and often share the belief that most health and balances start from energy imbalances.

**SI:** How did you create your spa menu?

**EF:** As a spa owner, my goal was to create holistic and clinical spa services—this vs. a medspa, which is sometimes associated with beauty treatments that are not necessarily healthy. I wanted to deliver the same results but by using holistic therapies. In this industry, you must update products and services to stay current with the latest research. Therefore, I adjust all of my formulations according to the seasons. Expertise and corrective results offered with positivity, compassion, and professionalism are what I believe sets the best clinics apart from the rest. I have been an esthetician for over 25 years. During this time,

I created several holistic methods, techniques, and specialty formulations to naturally correct the most challenging skin care issues such as acne, rosacea, hyperpigmentation, and different challenges of aging complexions. Based on that, the Elina Organics skin care menu offers unique signature holistic clinical services. For example, the Complete Corrective Herbal Facial, Crushed Amber Facial, Tender Beam Facial, Bio Response Face Firming Anti-Wrinkle Treatment performed with Advanced Scenar and Cosmodic technology. Every service is customized by a highly trained Elina Organics esthetician/holistic skin care practitioner for each unique complexion. I also incorporate cutting-edge skin care equipment, which has been examined and recommended by holistic skin care experts and physicians.

**SI:** What is the spa experience that you have created for your clients?

**EF:** While clients might initially be attracted to a beautiful facility, they will not return unless the professionals there can make them feel and look better after each treatment. People are attracted to spas with professionals who can listen and not dump their problems on clients; when clients are on the treatment table, it is their time to be heard! I will answer this by quoting my clients, and I have listened to words like “I used to go to therapy, and it never worked. Now that I am coming here, I feel much better about my life, and I also have fantastic skin.” This quote helps a lot because many places help with the appearance of someone’s skin, but we work to bring more balance to someone’s life. We achieve this by truly loving and listening to our clients and using all holistic knowledge and techniques to reduce the stress of their lives to make them feel more balanced.

**SI:** How do you train your staff?

**EF:** I train estheticians how to adjust products to individual complexions. I have learned a lot about finding and connecting with the right team of people who can work together with love and compassion instead of being competitive. It has been the most challenging thing in my career to maintain a balanced work environment and find holistically-minded people who work together as true friends. Most of my estheticians have worked with me for over 20 years. The training and experience are an essential part of my business, and I noticed through the hiring process how unprepared estheticians could be after coming from

school. They tend only to have basic knowledge and not many good skills. That is why I realized that I needed to start providing serious holistic skin care education for professionals outside of my business to successfully distribute my products to other spas that I do not own. I felt a strong desire to create an educational forum for estheticians who are serious about learning more about caring for their client’s skin in this holistic way. AHSCP offers training and information about the newest research on natural ingredients and non-invasive methods for corrective skin care treatments.

**SI:** How do you market your spa and products?

**EF:** Since the beginning, when I only had five products in 1998, I started to get approached by estheticians and spa owners in Michigan asking to carry my products and get trained on them. These



Owner of Elina Organics, Elina Fedotova.

## FIRST COVID IN-HOUSE TREATMENT WITH ELINA ORGANICS

By the time I was on my way to Elina Organics for a facial treatment, I had an extreme amount of anticipation, for more reasons than one. Not only was this my first treatment as an editor for *Skin Inc.*, but it was also my first facial treatment in over a year due to COVID. The minute I walked through the door I was transported to a relaxing sanctuary, with the gentle sound of a fountain running and the smells of essential oils instantly greeting my nose. I was met by Elina and her fellow estheticians to enjoy some herbal tea, silver-infused water and to chat about my skin care goals. After our discussion and a skin examination, it was decided that I have combination skin with an oily t-zone. Treating clogged pores, oil and dead skin from my previous trip to Florida would be Elina's main focus heading into my treatment. I took another sip of tea, slipped into my robe and let Elina guide me in a meditation that encouraged me to disconnect from my



delightfully awakened to a facial massage that exfoliated away my dead skin with their Activated Honey Peel. Gemstone facial rollers quickly followed, and you can bet I was excited. The rollers gently pulled the peel on my sticky face and a deep detoxifying mask was added. While letting the mask penetrate my skin, she aided the process with a Violet Blue Tender Beam Low Level Laser.

To hydrate and calm my skin, Elina applied herbal compressions that were steeping in a coffee pot for use, freshly brewed with an infusion of calendula, sage, chamomile and arnica. I was officially at peak relaxation, so I might have missed a step or two in my slumber. Next, she revived my dry vacation skin with a gentle massage from fresh Aloe Vera leaves, which were grown in-house. After, the Enzyme Gel mixed with the Treatment Peptide Gel was quickly applied and reinforced with a Bio-Feedback Micro-Current Treatment with Scenar. My facial was sadly coming to an end, even though I wished I could spend the rest of the day under those warm blankets and listening to the most tranquil, soft melodies. Elina gave me another facial massage with the Crushed Copper Purifying Mask. A bio-field balancing treatment was then performed and the mask was removed. Lastly, she applied the Oil Control Formula over my T-Zone, Emerald Eye Elixir on my eye area, Cleopatra over my neck area, Omega Serum all over my face and the Mermaid Elixir as my face moisturizer on top. Elina of course, didn't forget to apply their Sun Shelter to protect my freshly treated skin. I left my treatment feeling completely renewed and at ease. Not only was my skin glowing, but my worries were a thing of the past and I felt truly centered.



worries and focus solely on relaxation.

To begin my facial, Elina thoroughly cleansed with a botanical cleanser and performed a steam and vacuuming of the skin. She used a gentle hydro vacuum to detail/dry vacuum around my t-zone, pores and extractions. Next, she explained that she was doing the essential step of sanitizing my face with the High Frequency and Natural Salicylic Acid Peel with Willow bark. This was the first of many products used that incorporate organic and food-grade ingredients. At this point, I was drifting into a relaxing dreamland and I was



Elina using equipment for a facial treatment.

years, I never had sales reps and was able to grow my line by inviting them to training events in Michigan or Chicago. We provide constant ongoing online training with our professional ZOOM room, which has moving cameras around the room to show you every detail of the face. For years, I have been presenting at professional skin care conferences and have been teaching and contribute articles and TV segments about corrective holistic skin care methods. I have been featured on TV to educate people on using plants, fruits, and herbs for home beauty treatments to avoid unnecessary chemicals in conventional products.

**SI:** How do you keep competitive with other spas in the area?

**EF:** I am not afraid of competition because truly holistic practitioners do not believe in it. There is enough business for everyone if you can bring the best, healthiest, and most effective products and procedures to your clients. We are dedicated and highly trained professionals who work daily to deliver the best and safest skin care to our clients. I believe you have to be above the competition by providing a different level of treatment in your practice. I can prove that statement by offering you to visit our Holistic skin care practitioners conferences. You will see how open and friendly estheticians share their knowledge without withholding any secrets.

**SI:** What is your most unique treatment?

**EF:** This is hard for to say, but I am always into my latest treatment and they are Tender Beam, Bio Response Neurofeedback and Complete Corrective

Herbal Facial. Tender Beam Low-Level Laser Therapy Treatments offer noninvasive skin-restoring and anti-aging benefits and Bio Response Neurofeedback is a hydra cupping technique that purifies skin.

**SI:** What do you think is the most important thing for running a successful spa?

**EF:** I believe it is the people who work for you. If you do not have the right people who are genuinely loving healers, you will not succeed. As a leader, you have to provide an environment where people feel loved, cared for and protected. You have to trust that the people



Elina performing a facial cupping technique.



Elina using equipment during a body treatment.

behind your back are doing the same thing without you. Finding the right staff can take time and years of mistakes, and you learn through the process. If you create an environment where your workers are happy in all aspects, they will never leave you. Keeping your staff comfortable is my advice to all business owners, not only spa owners.

**SI:** Can you describe the ambiance/interior design of your spa?

**EF:** When they come into Elina Organics, all of our customers feel a soothing, welcoming and calming vibe. As an energy-sensitive holistic practitioner, I create the space for my home or business using furniture made from clean, environmentally-friendly and recyclable materials. When clients walk in, they hear relaxing sounds of water from my waterfall and see fairy gardens, enhancing the environment. I use

the principle of Fung Shui to keep all essential elements in balance. The spa's energy is crucial to the business's success. The energy comes from the space itself, which includes furniture, plants, and the emotional and spiritual state of the employees and everyone who works there, along with customers, who can also affect the energy. We need to ensure that our clients, no matter how stressed they are with their life outside of the spa, still bring them to emotional balance and a sense of happiness, which is essential for them to personally, us as a business, and the entire planet as a whole.

**SI:** What made you decide to launch your in-house brand of products?

**EF:** Growing up in Russia, I struggled with an oily and acne-prone complexion. It was challenging to find solutions while avoiding oral antibiotics or other topical medications. Probiotics and compresses from herbal



extracts of calendula, burdock root, and chamomile helped me to achieve the level of skin balance that I was satisfied with. It was an incredible relief to improve my skin holistically, and it inspired me to learn more about herbs and phytotherapy. I realized I needed to create a retail channel and wholesale prices for my products so that salon professionals could start to work with my line.

**SI:** What advice would you give to a spa/brand looking into organic beauty?

**EF:** If we are talking about a spa, they need to choose a skin care product line by carefully reading the label. If they do not understand it all, they can always research to find the technical data. Does this line cover all aspects of their skin care needs? This is important because it is not good to mix products from different brands during one facial treatment. After all, you do not know how they will combine. After choosing the line, I would suggest looking into their educational events to make sure they can correctly use the line. They would also benefit from more holistic education from other sources. They can also look into the types of materials they use to make sure they are environmentally friendly. It is essential to make sure the company you are interested in has your best interest in mind and is there to help you grow for success and not just care about a large opening order.



Elina Organics' Cranberry Rose Skin Refiner.

## THE RUNDOWN:

# Elina Organics



**Address:** 100 E Walton Suite #600E, Chicago, IL 60611  
and 4205 S Westnedge Ave Kalamazoo, MI 49008

**Web:** [www.elinaorganics.com](http://www.elinaorganics.com)

**Telephone:** 312-722-8122

**Social Accounts:** @elinaorganics on Facebook  
and Instagram

**Hours:** 10am-6pm Monday-Friday and 10am-2pm  
Saturday

**Staff:** 8 estheticians in Michigan and 2 estheticians in  
Chicago. 1 Nail practitioner and 1 Microblading artist.

**Treatment Rooms:** 5 Treatment Rooms in Michigan and  
a nail station and 3 treatment rooms in Chicago.

**Skin/Body Care Lines:** Elina Organics

**Unique Features:** Elina Organics