

spaprofile

SEANHARRINGTON elemis

writer **Karen Fong**

With UK brand Elemis celebrating its 20th birthday this year, Managing Director Sean Harrington takes a look back at the brand's history and development, discusses their future plans for Asia and ponders what it means to be a quintessentially British brand.

in hong kong for the day to celebrate the re-opening of Hong Kong's Elemis Day Spa and out the next to return to the UK, Managing Director Sean Harrington is a man-on-the-go. But it is this very pace that makes him love his job. Spending only half his time in the UK means that Sean has the opportunity to really see how Elemis has developed worldwide.

Having been with the brand since its inception, Sean has been a driving force



behind its development from the very beginning. "We've come a long way in 20 years." He notes with pride "There's been a steady increase in consumers and products sold and it's clear that the brand has lived, learned and evolved to suit the needs of a changing society." Looking back, he remembers that quality has always been the foundation of the brand's development. "With Elemis, you are always assured the highest possible standard. We have never compromised on quality, formulations or production even when times were difficult. I think that is what has earned us our clients' loyalty today. A lot of brands make a lot of claims, but thanks to our track record, when we say something, people believe it."

Considering celebrations for the brand's 20th birthday included a special double decker "SpaBus" that is currently touring the UK, does Sean consider Elemis to be a typical British brand? "I think that Elemis encompasses the best qualities that a British brand can represent," Sean explains. "Britain to me stands for quality, integrity and the promotion of fairness and good ethics. And these are the attributes I want to be synonymous with Elemis."

Sean is particularly proud of the way Elemis has evolved to look after the needs of a clientele that leads an increasingly hectic lifestyle and profoundly believes that the wellness industry must evolve in

order to accommodate them. "Life is getting quicker all the time and the challenge today is how to provide a solution to that stress without taking up too much of a client's time. People want effective treatments with visible results, but they don't have time to spend five hours lying around to get it. They need it within an hour, and that's what our spas and treatments aim to offer."

And while other companies have floundered during the previous year's dark financial times, Elemis has thrived, posting their best results ever during the recession. "I prefer recessions," Sean says wryly. "I think if you're quality and you're good at what you do, you can absolutely dominate." He also notes, "When there is an economic downturn, people turn to the things they trust, which they believe will produce real results – and that is our very message."

His belief in the business and understanding of every nook and cranny of the company is a reflection of his long-term commitment to the brand and which he considers is part of its attraction. "The founders of Elemis still manage the business. So we're very hands on. We've allowed the brand to grow and change along the way. In the world of spa, you're very close to your clients and can get some really clear feedback as a result. I feel we've channelled this feedback into the brand to achieve great results."

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