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Born of a mother's love

Frustrated by the hair and skin care products on the market for her infant daughter, this Atascadero woman thought she could make a better product.

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What started out as a kitchen experiment has transformed into a multi-million dollar business for Inga Tritt.

A former stylist, Tritt teamed up with a research scientist and several chemists three years ago to create products she felt comfortable using on her young daughter's sensitive skin and scalp.

"I found the grocery store products exacerbated the eczema situation, and the natural products left Maya's hair and skin even drier," Tritt said. "I knew that there had to be something out there to be better, but there wasn't."



Tribune photo by Jayson Mellom

Inga Tritt launched The Original Little Sproute with money from the two salon businesses she sold.

So with the money from two salon businesses she had sold, Tritt began mixing her own solutions for sensitive skin. The Original Little Sprout was born.

The baby hair and skin care line is available online and in stores across the United States and internationally, and the company counts celebrities including Courteney Cox, Brooke Shields and Diane Lane among its fans.

Tritt recently spoke with The Tribune about the product line and how she balances motherhood and her business.

How do your products compare to the more traditional baby care products that parents have been using for years?

We offer a fusion of the best natural ingredients with the best clinically tested safe ingredients. We wanted to create products that we can feel good about using on our children that offer professional performance. There are ingredients in many common baby products that I don't want on my child's skin. For example, DMDM hydantoin, a commonly used preservative in baby hair and skin care, works by releasing formaldehyde. People call or write us saying that they can't believe how quickly their child's cradle cap or eczema cleared up. It's not magic. We just use good ingredients. But, our products aren't cheap. (The products range in price from \$10 to \$20.)

Why not make a more reasonably priced line?