

Scent Sational

Exploring the Complex
World of Fragrance

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ANILLA EDESIA BY ELECTIMUSS

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Discovering the perfect fragrance is a unique form of self-expression, an opportunity to create and share your narrative through a scent. Fragrances, primarily associated with smell, possess the ability to stimulate our other senses along with emotions and memories. Fragrance is undoubtedly potent. Various scents can transport us back to significant moments in our past, such as our first date, our first job interview, or other experiences that have shaped us. Admittedly, I impulsively bought Clinique’s Happy after spotting it in a store, as it reminded me of my high school days.

In a vast market of countless perfumes, spanning from revered classics to bespoke balms, it is important to pinpoint the aromas that resonate with your essence. The pursuit is incredibly personal, and no one understands this truth more than Olivia VanDerMillen, a fragrance connoisseur also known as Olivia Olfactory.

The expert fragrance reviewer and self-proclaimed fragrance fairy godmother acknowledges that “the allure of a fragrance often hinges on an individual’s experiences with scents, a deeply subjective realm.” What began as a hobby for VanDerMillen quickly evolved into a thriving career, as she became an integral part of a large online community, sharing her descriptive musings that are equal parts informative and entertaining. “Fragrance, an unspoken yet universally understood language, became a passion I was eager to share with the world,” she said.

The robust and all-encompassing language of perfume traces its origins back to ancient cultural history. In Mesopotamia, the first known fragrances took the form of incense, often crafted from earthly aromas like frankincense, myrrh, and cinnamon. Initially reserved exclusively for priests, these scents gradually found their way into the noble circles as trade flourished, allowing the elites to indulge themselves in perfumed luxury.

In the East, the Chinese cultures embraced fragrances not only as disinfectants, but also used them to enhance the scents of their ink, paper, and homes. Meanwhile, in India, perfumes were a significant element of Tantric rituals. Egypt, on the other hand, initially used perfumes primarily in burial ceremonies, but in 41 BC, it is said that Cleopatra herself took the game to another level by perfuming her purple sails to lure Marcus Antonius (Mark Antony). Fascinated by Cleopatra’s endeavor, scientists in 2012 attempted to recreate what they thought to be Cleopatra’s signature scent, using an exotic blend of myrrh (resin from a thorny tree), cardamom, olive oil, and cinnamon. Apart from being a beauty icon, was Cleopatra one of the pioneers of earthy fragrances?

France, in the 1400s, emerged as the ultimate global epicenter of fragrance. Although perfumes were still a luxury enjoyed by the noble and affluent classes, the late 1800s witnessed a groundbreaking moment when scientists developed their first lab-made scents, propelling the fragrance industry forward and reaching the masses. This evolution was aided by the birth of institutions such as The House of Guerlain

(1828) and the iconic Chanel No. 5 in 1921. As a result, we now have in the privilege of discerningly curating and enjoying the fragrance collections we see today.

But what factors should we consider when choosing a signature scent? VanDerMillen recommends exploring different scent families, from floral and fresh to spicy, to truly discover your favorite fragrance. “I personally base my fragrance on the character I’m trying to play that day,” she said. “In a bad mood? Not when I’m wearing a cotton candy perfume!” With her striking blonde pixie cut and tattoo-adorned neck and sleeves, VanDerMillen’s pro-tips are far from ordinary. Although she has an array of recommendations for the industry’s most popular scents, she highlights the unique experience offered by Toskovat, a fragrance house that depicts scenarios of debauchery and destruction.

As Cleopatra has taught us, the art and science of scent have always been closely associated with sensuality. “Scent, intricately linked to memory, possesses the power to both enchant and repulse,” VanDerMillen said. In her findings, she also notes that fragrances with warming properties seem to exude a captivating ‘come hither’ aura, evoking images of skin warmed by intimate moments. Ingredients like amber, vanilla, and leathers even have the ability to create an animalic allure for the wearer. But it’s vital to point out that finding the scents that enchant you can require quite a bit of trial and error. “A person’s age, gender, diet, and climate can change the impression of a fragrance greatly,” she warns, recommending experimenting with

samples before making a final choice.

There is more to the scent of a perfume than just our biology. It is the perfect combination of three layers that truly brings a fragrance to life: top notes, middle notes, and base notes. The top notes, although immediate, can often be misleading. On the other hand, it is the base notes that are the strongest part of the perfume, leaving a lingering and powerful impression. VanDerMillen uses her viral videos to describe the layers of the perfumes she reviews, reminding us to refrain from hastily judging a fragrance solely based on the initial spray.

Understanding your preferred fragrance family can help you determine which notes to prioritize. “Fragrance families serve to group like-fragrances together,” explains VanDerMillen, who highlights the four main families: floral, oriental, woody, and fresh. “Take the floral category for example—it can range vastly, from the intense aromatic rose to the watery, powdery scent of violet.” If you’re seeking a more down-to-earth aroma, VanDerMillen’s extensive review collection dissects scents that cater to every taste, mood, and budget. “Another example is woody fragrances. Sandalwood can almost add a milky quality to a scent, whereas cedar can come off super dry and nearly herbal.”

As easy to apply as a spritz, yet as complex as its notes, a perfume has the power to defy both age and gender, while also defining a moment in culture. And if ever uncertain about the scent that best communicates your personal story, simply ask your fragrance fairy godmother. We promise you she knows best.

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Passion Bottled: *The Hottest* Fragrances Every Seducer Needs

By Olivia VanDerMillen,
Fragrance Fairy Godmother @oliviaolfactory



From sweet vanilla scents to earthy and sensual blends, Olfactory unveils the creme de la creme of seductive fragrances.

- 1 THE NOIR 29 BY LE LABO:**
An earthy blend of charred tobacco sweetened by ripe fig. It is the ultimate marker of effortlessly cool androgyny.
- 2 BLANCHE BÊTE BY LIQUIDES IMAGINAIRES:**
This perfume is a portrait of sophisticated femininity. Robust white florals sweetened by a creamy powderiness, reminiscent of vintage cosmetics.
- 3 GUIDANCE BY AMOUGE:**
This scent features the note of olibanum, a sweet and spicy tree resin that when warmed by the wearer creates a truly intoxicating trail of scent behind.
- 4 DOUBLE ATTACK BY MIND GAMES:**
Who knew a chocolate fragrance could feel so sophisticated? Bitter dark chocolate brightened by the spice of an unusual combination of pink pepper and pimento makes for a gourmand, yet statement experience.
- 5 YLANG IN GOLD BY MICALLEF:**
A refined take on a summertime fragrance. Buttery smooth, rich coconut and vanilla perfectly balanced by the delicate floral scent of ylang ylang.
- 6 LOVER BY THE MAKER:**
A sumptuous blend of creamy sandalwood that embodies the embrace of infatuated lovers.
- 7 BLACK OPIUM LE PARFUM BY YSL:**
A vanilla bomb. Although seen as too straight forward for some, it is an incredibly effective note.
- 8 VANILLA EDESIA BY ELECTIMUSS:**
This fragrance highlights the note of cumin, which to some can mimic the scent of body odor in the best, most feral way possible.
- 9 PAVILLION BY ANDREA MAACK:**
This scent exudes utter confidence with a bold blend of rose and saffron.
- 10 LUST BY CHRIS COLLINS:**
A creamy, rich take on a chocolate fragrance, this is a gourmand scent for those looking for something both edible and opulent.

Scent Spotlight

Connected intricately to our biology, various aromas trigger distinct feelings. The primary five scents frequently found in perfumes consist of lavender, sandalwood, vanilla, jasmine, and ylangylang.



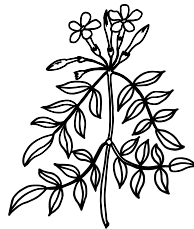
LAVENDER: Lavender is recognized for its ability to calm and soothe the body and mind, while also being associated with attraction and creating a sense of closeness.



VANILLA: This scent has been known to elicit feelings of comfort, warmth, joy, and purity. Its gradual diffusion also aids in relaxation over a period of time, promoting a general sense of happiness and well-being.



SANDALWOOD: Known for its robust woody and earthy undertones, this fragrance is frequently utilized as the foundation in perfumes. It boasts one of the most potent aromas associated with the power of attraction, triggering the production of oxytocin, a hormone that communicates with the brain.



JASMINE: Floral essence acts as a powerful stimulator for the body's hormone receptors, leading to mood elevation, increased alertness, and emotional stimulation. This sought-after flower has been linked to sexuality since ancient times, boosting libido and aiding in anxiety relief.



YLANG YLANG: This scent is one of the most potent triggers of attraction and desire. With its sweet and spicy aroma, it acts as a strong aphrodisiac, creating a sense of harmony between the body, mind, and soul.