

Scents and Sensuality

By Elisabeth Garton

Making the most of aromatherapy this Valentine's Day

Our sense of smell has been used since time immemorial to stimulate sexuality. Cleopatra used rose petals to entice Mark Anthony into her bedroom, and roses continue to be an enduring symbol of love, with millions being sent as tokens of adoration this Valentine's Day. Rose also remains the most seductive of the essential oils, with a powerful sensual effect that continues to be an effective and popular option for couples today.

As human beings, we are affected by the five senses, and one of the most subtle, invasive and evocative of them all is the sense of smell. We associate certain smells with certain things in our lives, which in turn affects the way we feel. The sense of smell is over 10,000 times more sensitive than the sense of taste, and researchers have shown how certain aromas excite the brain, activating the hypothalamus gland, the pituitary gland and the body's hormones. Aromas also stimulate the limbic system, which is the part of the brain that controls sensations of pleasure, emotions and memory, explaining why scents can have a profound effect on our moods.

According to **Quinessence Aromatherapy**, certain essential oils are believed to have a pheromone-like action, which can increase the sex drive, such as angelica, clary sage, nutmeg, sandalwood and vetiver. Other oils such as jasmine, tuberose, patchouli and ylang ylang are considered to be aphrodisiacs that can help to boost a flagging sex drive. They can be enjoyed in a bath to help your clients relax and unwind before a special evening, used in a burner, or be mixed in a base oil and used as part of an aromatherapy massage – where touch will help to bring about feelings of intimacy.

Essential Oils are obtained by distilling the flowers, leaves, skin or seeds of aromatic plants. Not only do they have active properties, they also have a perfume that has an effect on the emotions. This is why essential oils used within skincare preparations have the power to induce a state of relaxation, fight against the negative effect of stress and create a true feeling of well being and calm.

When we smell orange or lemon, our spirit is immediately lifted. When lavender hits our noses, it causes us to inhale, take a deep breath, relax and then exhale feeling rejuvenated and relaxed.

Some of the most popular oils, in addition to citrus scents, Lavender and Rose, include Eucalyptus, which is great for clearing the nasal passages and is very effective in a muscular rub. Tea Tree is a powerful antiseptic that can be used in the bath to induce sweating and is a key product in every aromatherapist's kit, whilst Ylang Ylang is a sensual oil which relaxes the body, while it's softening properties are good for both dry and oily skin.

The art of aromatherapy involves using nature's pure essential oils in various methods of application. Massages, bath, compresses and inhalations can all aid the health and well being and are easy to administer. The soothing combination of beautiful aromas, massages and aromatic baths can help to bring about a peaceful state of relaxation that can help to ease the stresses and strains of modern day living. "Aromatherapy works on a physical and an emotional level, helping to lift depression and soothe irritable nerves encouraging a state of harmony and balance between mind and body," says Sue Charles, fellow ESIPF, MIFPA from

Quinessence. "This is a gentle and natural approach, working with the forces of nature to promote a feeling of relaxation and well being which can break the vicious circle of stress that often leads to ill health."

Following treatment, clients can continue to enjoy the many benefits offered by aromatherapy at home. A great way to ensure that your retail sales stay strong is to offer hints and tips on how to apply aromatherapy techniques in every day life.

According to **Sorisa**, you should advise clients who are having trouble nodding off to scatter a few drops of lavender essential oil onto their pillow to induce a good night's sleep. Lavender can be used when pregnant to de-stress the expecting mother and is a great relaxant, whilst putting a few drops of a preferred essential oil into the bath means that your client will really receive the full benefit.

To keep clothes smelling fresh, it is a great idea to put a few drops of oil onto a cotton ball, to be placed in drawers; closets; pockets and cupboards, whilst adding a few drops of eucalyptus to the washing machine or on the filter pad of the vacuum cleaner or humidifier will help to clean and disinfect them naturally. Tea tree is perfect for skin cuts, burns, blisters and blemishes, whilst Rosemary creates mental stimulation and awareness, ideal for important exams or that big presentation at work.

With increasing pressure on society with longer working hours, more people are now seeing less of their partners than ever. However, **Eve Taylor** firmly believe that if you can't have the quantity of time, you should at least have the quality of time with your partner.

A few years ago Eve Taylor decided to introduce two specially formulated aromatherapy diffuser blends called Romance, which contains the pure essential oils of Patchouli, Ylang Ylang and Damiana- which means aphrodisiac- and Hug in a Bottle, which contains the essential oils of Rosewood, Rose Otto, Sandalwood, and Lavender and Geranium, alongside its range of essential oil diffusers and nebulisers.

In addition, Eve Taylor is also able to offer a complete range of aromatherapy pre-blended massage oils for both professional use and retail use.

Alternatively, **Quinessence** offer a range of products to help out your clients this Valentines Day, to ensure that they can face their dates with a smile! These include Antiseptic Lotion, which uses tea tree and lavender to attack blemishes head on, as both oils have renowned powerful and natural antiseptic properties. In addition, Problem Skin Lotion is perfect if your clients suffer from red, sensitised skin or skin conditions such as psoriasis or eczema. It uses chamomile roman, bergamot and lavender to encourage a healthy complexion.

Rose Facial Lotion is perfect for more mature skins, and uses the gorgeously scented rose oil, which can help reduce the appearance of fine lines and protect against moisture loss.

The perfect kit for any budding aromatherapist is the gorgeous gift set from Quinessence. Contained within a beautifully crafted six-hole box produced from sustainable Alder wood, are six essential oils to start building the kit with.

In addition, Quinessence also do a fine range of aromatherapy skincare products, where the complexion can benefit as much as the body. The aroma botanicals range

unites the therapeutic benefits of organic essential oils with the beautifying qualities of botanical extracts.

Quinessence prides itself on its reputation of providing chemical-free skincare products – a fact that helped seal its position in the 'Best All-natural Range' category in the Natural Beauty Awards 2006. There are no harmful ingredients, colours, fragrances or preservatives to be found in the range. Instead it is all about natural, pure ingredients that care for your client's skin from head to toe.

Artiscent essential oils, which are available from **Sorisa**, are blended from concentrated oils as opposed to oils of essence. They are then blended for ease of use in your salon or spa. Artiscent's range of essential oils include Botanical Citrus, Botanical tea, Ylang Ylang and Herbal, to name a few. All are blended with the ideal recipe for your clients to enjoy, either in the salon or spa or at home in between treatments.

The blend is of the utmost importance since essential oils release different neurochemical transmitters in our brain that tell us to experience different things, such as serotonin, a natural body chemical known for its relaxing and calming properties on the body, mind and spirit. All Artiscent oils gently activate the body's natural healing energy infusing via the blood stream.

Artiscent includes many essential oils in its pre-blended aroma massage oils, including Aroma Massage Botanical Tea, which blends Green tea, Jasmine, and Thai herbs, is relaxing and soothing, and can be used as part of several treatments, including Indian Head massage and Spa Manicure and Pedicure.

Another option is uplifting anti-depressant Citrus Aroma Massage Oil, whilst Floral oil, which blends Ylang Ylang, Jasmine and Oil of Emerald, is both calming and an aphrodisiac.

Another option is **Alqvimia's** Relaxing Lavender Body Oil, which has recently been voted Best Natural Product 2006 in Instyle Magazine in Spain. Other lavender products in the Spanish range include Lemon and Lavender Bath Gel, Lavender Eau de Toilette and Lavender Essential Oil.

The proved efficiency of the product, the use of 100% natural and of first quality raw materials, and the respect of the environment during all the production process have been the key elements of this new and prestigious reward to the trademark.

Relaxing Lavender Body Oil contains lavender essential oil to ease and relax both body and mind. The ingredients include almond oil and essential oils of lavender, lemon, orange and rosemary.

The oil's properties mean that emotions are balanced, hyperactivity is relaxed, skin is protected and emotions are rebalanced. In addition, the product is also great for those who have lost or are separated from a loved one, as well as for work problems, tired legs, and liquid retention deriving from excess Yang. The product is an excellent massage medium for therapists, and retails well for home care.

The Real Aromatherapy Experience from **Aromatherapy Associates** is a full body massage treatment, which combines the power of pure essential oils with specialised massage techniques drawn from the very best traditions of both East and West. With a choice of ten Aromatherapy Associates essential oil massage blends, and

techniques, which concentrate on the back, scalp, face, neck, shoulders and feet, the treatment works on many levels to restore harmony to body, mind and spirit.

The Real Aromatherapy Experience uses carefully applied spinal pressures and foot reflex sequences to target the nervous system easing away the day's stresses and strains, and restoring balance to body and mind.

In addition, Swedish and neuromuscular techniques support healthy circulation and soothe aches and pains in muscles and joints after exercise, while drainage movements encourage effective elimination.

Essential oils are absorbed through the skin, working at a physical level, while the aromatic effects of each blend balance the mind and emotions through the sense of smell.

The Aromatherapy Associates massage is the traditional aromatherapy experience - the culmination of over 30 years hands-on experience from Aromatherapy Associates experts who have developed the treatment from traditional techniques, whilst incorporating modern influences to meet the needs of today's men and women.

Alternatively, **Guinot** has launched Aromatic Body, which includes two new hands-on treatments to firm, tone and revitalise the body.

The first of these, Aromatic Body Minceur, is an anti-cellulite treatment that uses lymph draining massage with detoxing essential oils and acupuncture techniques to break down and soften hardened cellulite, improving the texture and appearance of the skin.

To specifically target cellulite-prone areas, such as the thighs, abdomen and buttocks, Guinot has created an innovative peel-off mineral clay, green tea and algae 'Saunamask' that goes on warm and gradually cools to help stimulate circulation and drain toxins. The mask polymerises and easily peels away to reveal refined and firmed skin. The treatment concludes with the application of the appropriate anti-cellulite body care product.

The second treatment, namely Aromatic Body Bien Etre, is a relaxing, skin-softening and re-hydrating treatment. Unique to Aromatic Body Bien Etre is the sugar-kiwi body scrub, a natural exfoliant that contains four exfoliating particles – white and brown sugar, salt and kiwi seeds, plus nourishing and softening shea butter. The different-sized exfoliating granules give a thorough full-body polish. The de-stressing massage uses an energising blend of essential oils including lemon, orange and grapefruit. Petrissage movements revive lethargic limbs and kneading and effleurage movements on the back and shoulders release tension.

The salon products used in the treatments are easy to work with, as the fresh fragrances of the cypress and citrus essential oils contribute to the atmosphere of relaxation in the treatment room.

The Aromatic Essentiel Facial has been created by **Pier Augé** to suit all skin types. This includes dry, devitalised skin, skins irritated through exposure to pollution and sun, mature aged skins through to acne and problem skins, bringing balance and harmony whilst the aroma induces relaxation.

By choosing the correct essential oil complex and treatment mask, the therapist can offer an individual facial to suit all her clients. All Pier Augé facials start with the

correct cleanser, toner and exfoliator to suit the individual skin type, before moving into the aromatic facial massage using the aromatic Essentiel Complex that works on the lymph, helping to drain excess fluids and toxins. The aromatic massage is completed by a finger pressure massage to realign and rebalance energies. Before the treatment mask is applied, the therapist completes the massage section using her own, personalised relaxation massage.

The treatment mask is chosen from a group of four professional masks that contain highly active ingredients to ensure maximum benefits are obtained from the facial. All the treatment masks are mixed with cool water and dry to a rubbery consistency, and the active Essentiel Complex on the skin is forced into the skin by the occlusive action of the mask.

The **Penny Price Academy** offers Diploma level aromatherapy and post-graduate courses in aromatherapy.

The Academy has won awards for excellence in training and for student support and has gained accreditation for its Complementary Health Courses from many leading bodies, including the IFPA, Beauty Guild, ITEC and IFA.

Everyone is always welcome to come and browse around the shop, look around the Academy and meet the tutors and staff who are always happy to introduce people to the wonderful world of aromatherapy.

Contact:

Alqvimia	01904 785557
Aromatherapy Associates	020 8569 7030
Eve Taylor	01733 260161
Guinot	01344 873 123
Penny Price Academy	01455 251020
Pier Augé	01372 729 629
Quinessence Aromatherapy	01530 835918
Sorisa	0161 976 4614

Always mention Guild News when calling, as special offers may be available.

First published in Guild News February 2007. © Guild Press Ltd 2007.