

Aromatherapy 101: Nourishment From Nature

What Are Essential Oils?

Essential oils are pure plant essences and aromatic compounds found in the seeds, bark, stems, roots, flowers, and other parts of plants. They can be both beautifully and powerfully fragrant.

In addition to their intrinsic benefits to plants and being beautifully fragrant to people, essential oils have been used throughout history in many cultures for their medicinal and therapeutic benefits.

Carrier Oils

Sweet Almond, Grapeseed & Jojoba oils are generally regarded as the safest and best overall carrier oil for use with babies and children. Safflower, Coconut, and Apricot kernel are also good options for adults. Olive Oil can also be used, but its strong scent may detract from the blend and is the main reason it's not used very often in aromatherapy.

Dilution: General Guidelines for children

| <u>Age of Child</u> | <u>Dilution Rate of Essential Oil to 1-Ounce Carrier Oil</u> |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <i>Newborn: 2-6 months</i> | 1-3 drops essential oil / ounce |
| <i>6-12 months</i> | 1-4 drops essential oil / ounce |
| <i>1-4 years (unless very small)</i> | 5-8 drops essential oil / ounce |
| <i>6-7 years</i> | 5-10 drops essential oil / ounce |
| <i>9-12 years</i> | 5-12 drops essential oil / ounce |
| <i>12 years to young adult</i> | 10-15 drops essential oil / ounce |

DO NOT USE AN ESSENTIAL OIL NEAT (undiluted) on skin. If a child has very sensitive skin, it is important to test a small area before using a new single oil or blend. *Keep essential oils away from the eyes.*

Storage

Essential oils should be purchased and kept in dark glass bottles that have a dropper stopper. Always read the label carefully, checking that it says 100% pure essential oils. Ideally, the Latin name should be printed on the label.

Store your oils in a cool, dark place out of a humid atmosphere {bathrooms are often full of damp steam and are not a good place to keep your oils}. Put oils high up and away from the reach of inquisitive little minds and hands.

Aromatherapy Benefits of Common Essential Oils

Bergamot* — Bergamot oil is cold-pressed from the peel of the nearly ripe fruit. The aroma of bergamot oil is fresh, lively, fruity and sweet. It is an excellent deodorizer. *Aromatherapy benefits: uplifting, inspiring, confidence-building.*

Chamomile, Roman* - This oil is commonly used in perfumery. It blends well with bergamot, jasmine, neroli and clary sage, lending a warm, fresh note when added in small quantities. The aroma is not long-lasting like that of the German chamomile but it is a mild, soothing oil. *Aromatherapy benefits: relaxing, calming.*

Cinnamon Leaf - Cinnamon leaf oil is distilled from the leaves of the same tree that produces cinnamon bark oil. Use with care, cinnamon leaf can irritate the skin. *Aromatherapy benefits: refreshing, vitalizing.*

Clary Sage - Clary sage oil has a spicy, hay-like, bittersweet aroma. It combines well with coriander, cardamom, citrus oils, sandalwood, cedarwood, geranium and lavender. The aroma of clary sage is long-lasting and the oil is valued as a fixative for other scents. *Aromatherapy benefits: centering, euphoric, visualizing.*

Clove Bud - The best clove oil is distilled from the whole dried flower buds of the clove tree. Clove bud oil has a powerful, spicy-fruity, warm, sweet aroma. Clove oil is highly irritating to the skin and should be handled with caution. *Aromatherapy benefits: warming, comforting.*

Eucalyptus - Of the 300 species of eucalyptus trees in the world, Eucalyptus globulus is the best known. Eucalyptus has long been used in topical preparations in salves. *Aromatherapy benefits: purifying, invigorating.*

Frankincense* - Various species of frankincense trees grow wild throughout Western India, Northeastern Africa and Southern Saudi Arabia. The oil is distilled from the gum resin that oozes from incisions made in the bark of the trees. The oil is spicy, balsamic, green-lemon-like and peppery. It modifies the sweetness of citrus oils such as orange and bergamot. It is also the base for incense type perfumes and is important in Oriental, floral, spice and masculine scents. *Aromatherapy benefits: calming, visualizing, meditative.*

Geranium* - This oil has a powerful, leafy-rose aroma with fruity, mint undertones. It is used in skin care products for both its fragrance and its toning, cleansing properties. *Aromatherapy benefits: soothing, mood-lifting, balancing.*

Grapefruit - This oil is cold-pressed from the peel of the common grapefruit. It has a fresh, sweet, bitter, citrus aroma. It is used to scent citrus perfumes and colognes, soaps, creams and lotions. *Aromatherapy benefits: refreshing, cheering.*

Lavender* - Lavender oil is used in baths, room sprays, perfumes, colognes, massage oils, sachets, salves, skin lotions and oils. It has a sweet, balsamic, floral aroma which combines well with many oils including citrus, clove, patchouli, rosemary, clary sage and pine. *Aromatherapy benefits: balancing, soothing, normalizing, calming, relaxing, healing.*

Lemon* - Lemon oil that is cold-pressed is a much better oil than distilled. The scent is evocative of the fresh ripe peel. Lemon oil in the bath or in massage oils should be well diluted as it can cause skin irritation. Caution: avoid using the oil in body care products when going out into the sun as it can cause redness and burning of the skin. *Aromatherapy benefits: uplifting, refreshing, cheering.*

Lemongrass - Lemongrass oil is distilled from a tropical grass native to Asia. It has a powerful, lemony, grassy aroma. It is used in insect repellents, room sprays, soaps and detergents. *Aromatherapy benefits: vitalizing, cleansing.*

Marjoram, Sweet - Sweet marjoram is distilled from the leaves and flowering tops of the same plant that produces the culinary herb. The aroma of the oil is warm and spicy, with a hint of nutmeg. It is used in masculine, Oriental, and herbal-spicy perfumes and colognes. *Aromatherapy benefits: warming, balancing.*

Neroli - Oil of neroli is distilled from the flowers of the bitter orange tree. It has a very strong, refreshing, spicy, floral aroma and is one of the most widely used flower oils in perfumery. It is an ingredient in cologne and blends well with citrus oils and floral oils. Neroli is also used in premium natural cosmetic preparations such as massage oils, skin creams and bath oils. *Aromatherapy benefits: calming, soothing, sensual.*

Orange, Sweet* - More sweet orange oil is produced than any other citrus oil. Pressed from the peels of ripe, sweet oranges, it has a lively, fruity, sweet aroma. It is used to scent fruity and eau de cologne fragrances. All citrus oils are quick to deteriorate and should be stored in a cool, dry, dark area in full containers. *Aromatherapy benefits: cheering, refreshing, uplifting.*

Oregano - Oregano has a strong, herbaceous, green-camphoraceous, medicinal top note. The middle note is spicy, medicinal. The dry out is sweet-phenolic woody, bittersweet. *Oregano essential oil is invigorating, purifying and uplifting.*

Palmarosa* - Palmarosa is distilled from a grass closely related to citronella and lemongrass. The oil has a floral-rose grassy scent. It is used extensively in perfumes and soaps to add or enhance a rose note. Palmarosa is a cleansing, astringent addition to skin care products such as bath and massage oils. *Aromatherapy benefits: refreshing.*

Patchouli - Used in countless perfumes and fragrances, patchouli is noted for its long-lasting fragrance and fixative ability. It borders on the exotic and even the name patchouli evokes images of heady aromas, dark, rich colors, candlelight, incense and intrigue. The aroma is very intense; it can be described as earthy, rich, sweet, balsamic, woody and spicy. Patchouli oil is one of the few essential oils that improve with age. *Aromatherapy benefits: romantic, soothing, sensual.*

Peppermint - Peppermint has a powerful, sweet, menthol aroma which, when inhaled undiluted, can make the eyes water and the sinuses tingle. *Aromatherapy benefits: vitalizing, refreshing, cooling.*

Rose Otto* - Rose oil is one of the oldest and best known of all the essential oils. The fragrance of rose is associated with love. It is warm, intense, immensely rich and rosy. It is used in perfumes to lend beauty and depth. A drop or two in a massage, facial or bath oil is luxurious and soothing. The oil is used in skin creams, powders and lotions. *Aromatherapy benefits: romantic, supportive, gently uplifting.*

Rosemary* - Rosemary is known as the herb of remembrance. The plant produces an almost colorless essential oil with a strong, fresh, camphor aroma. It's used in many citrus colognes, forest and Oriental perfumes. Rinses for dark hair often contain rosemary, as do room deodorants, household sprays, disinfectants and soaps. *Aromatherapy benefits: clarifying, invigorating.*

Spearmint - Aromatherapists use spearmint to energize the mind and body. A few drops in bath water has a refreshing effect while a facial steam of spearmint oil helps cleanse and tighten pores. *Aromatherapy benefits: refreshing, cooling, vitalizing.*

Tangerine* - Tangerine oil is pressed from the peel of ripe fruit. It is an orange-colored oil with the vibrant fragrance of fresh tangerines. The oil is used in colognes and occasionally in perfumes. *Aromatherapy benefits: cheering, uplifting.*

Tea Tree* - The aroma of the oil is warm, spicy, medicinal and volatile. It is occasionally used to scent spicy colognes and aftershaves. It blends well with lavender, rosemary and nutmeg oils. *Aromatherapy benefits: cleansing, purifying, uplifting.*

Vanilla - The aroma is lingering sweet balsamic. *Aromatherapy benefits: calming, comforting, balancing.*

Vetiver - The aroma is rich, woody, earthy and sweet. It improves with age. *Aromatherapy benefits: supportive, grounding.*

Wintergreen - This oil was once an important perfumery and flavoring material, but has been replaced by less expensive and more reliable supplies of synthetic methyl salicylate. It is used in toothpaste and mouthwash. *Aromatherapy benefits: refreshing, bracing, invigorating.*

Ylang Ylang Extra* - Ylang ylang oil is distilled from the early morning, fresh-picked flowers of the cananga tree. The distillation process is interrupted at various points and the oil accumulates is removed. The first oil to be drawn off is the highest quality and is graded "extra." Ylang ylang extra has an intense floral, sweet, jasmine-like, almost narcotic aroma. *Aromatherapy benefits: sensual, euphoric.*

* These oils are safe to use with babies & children

Essential Oil Recipes {to get you started}...

Lavender Desk Diffusion

This all natural version of "smelling salts" is great to keep on your desk at work. The sweet and calming aromas will invite you to take a breath and refocus with ease..

¼ cup coarse sea salt

1 teaspoon dried lavender or rose petals

20 drops lavender essential oil

Directions: Mix dry ingredients into a tin or jar with tight-fitting lid

Sprinkle mixture with lavender oil and replace lid

Add more oil when scent eventually fades. **Helpful Hint:** placing the tin near the fan port on your computer will help to diffuse the aroma.

Focusing Massage Blend

Use this massage blend to facilitate creative work and to enhance concentration.

1 tablespoon grapeseed oil (or any carrier oil you choose)

3 drops clary sage

3 drops bergamot

Directions: Combine all oils. Place 1 or 2 drops of the mixture on your fingertips and gently massage your temples. Close your eyes and take a deep breath as the warm, sweet aroma of the blend settles in to relax and focus you.

Energizing Clarity Massage Blend

This blend is highly uplifting and is great for at your desk when you're needing a pick me up or trying to maintain concentration at a long meeting.

- 20 drops peppermint
- 20 drops spearmint
- 35 drops lavender
- 25 drops lemon

Directions: Mix together. Add 3 drops of the energizing clarity blend to 1 ounce of sweet almond oil (or any carrier oil you choose). Apply a few drops of this mixture to the fingertips and gently massage the temples during times of stress or confusion. Use for inhalation or in a room diffuser.

Commuter's Aromatherapy Spritzer

This recipe contains oils that are both relaxing and refreshing, thereby producing an overall balancing benefit that will serve to diffuse stress on the road.

- 2 ounces of water
- 6 drops lavender
- 2 drops clary sage
- 2 drops geranium
- 2 drops peppermint

Directions: Combine together in a spray bottle. Shake vigorously before applying 2 to 3 sprays to the interior of your car.

Uplifting Lemon Blend

This balanced blend of inspiring and relaxing oils can have a gently uplifting effect on the emotions.

- 20 drops lemon
- 20 drops tangerine
- 25 drops neroli
- 35 drops lavender

Directions: Combine oils. Place a few drops on a handkerchief or cotton ball and inhale deeply whenever a little boost is needed. Or use the blend in an aromatherapy lamp or diffuser.

Love Potion Mist

Make your own all-natural body mist to spritz your face (remember to close your eyes), your hands and arms, your feet, etc to evoke the mood you desire.

- 6 drops ylang ylang
- 5 drops rose otto
- 1 drop clove bud

Directions: Add essential oils to a cup of water in a non plastic mister. Essential oils float on water, so don't forget to shake well before each use.

Mineral Bath Soak

Try this recipe for creating an emotionally uplifting and skin-soothing citrus & herbal scented bath.

- 4 tablespoons sea salt
- 2 tablespoons baking soda
- 8 drops tangerine
- 8 drops lavender
- 8 drops chamomile

Directions: Mix dry ingredients, sprinkle with oils and mix until fully incorporated. Add desired amount to bath water. Add one cup whole milk to enhance skin nourishing.

Freshening Window Cleaner

Utilize the cleaning and disinfecting benefits of essential oils AND enjoy a pure aromatherapy experience.

- 4 tablespoons vinegar
- 12 drops lemon essential oil

Directions: Mix vinegar and essential oil in a 22 to 32 ounce bottle. Fill with water and use as window cleaner. Tip: Shake bottle before spraying.

Scrapes & Cuts Blend :

A great healing blend for minor wounds.

Directions: Mix equal parts of **Lavender and Tea Tree oil**. Use this blend in the water used for cleaning wounds, and apply a few drops to the gauze of a bandage – do not apply directly to the skin as it will be unnecessarily irritating. On the bandage, however, it will be soothing and accelerate the healing process.

Essential Oils Bug Repellant: {not for babies under 1}

1. Fill spray bottle (I used 8 ounce) 1/2 full with distilled or boiled water
2. Add witch hazel to fill almost to the top
3. Add 1/2 tsp vegetable glycerin if using
4. Add 30-50 drops of essential oils to desired scent. The more oils you use, the stronger the spray will be. My personal favorite mix is: Rosemary, Clove, Lavender, Cinnamon and Eucalyptus.

Essential Oils Companies You May Want to Explore

Aura Cacia:

- auracacia.com
- easy to buy locally at Whole Foods & Good Foods CoOp

Eden's Garden

- edensgarden.com
- affordable prices

Rocky Mountain Oils

- rockymountainoils.com
- therapeutic grade, GC/MS externally 3rd party tested for purity

Where to Begin?

Top 7 to buy {first}: lavender, chamomile, a citrus (like sweet orange or lemon), tea tree, peppermint, geranium, rosemary

Safety & Disclaimer

These statements have not been evaluated by the Food & Drug Administration. Essential Oils and/or techniques mentioned are not intended to diagnose treat or prevent any disease.

Angelica and all citrus oils make the skin more sensitive to ultraviolet light. Avoid going out into the sun with these oils on your skin. Sweet fennel, hyssop, sage and rosemary should not be used by anyone with epilepsy. People with high blood pressure should avoid hyssop, rosemary, sage and thyme.

The information provided is for educational purposes only and is not intended as diagnosis, treatment or prescription for any disease. The decision to use, or not use, any of this information is the sole responsibility of the reader.