

Scented saviours for winter wellbeing

In the first of a new series, European Spa asks aromatherapist Laura Broady, founder of Scented Saviours, how essential oils can boost the resilience of spa professionals and guests

Essential oils have become so ubiquitous and integrated into spa treatments and products that it is often easy to forget just how supportive these plant powerhouses can be for everyone, especially spa teams, who work so hard to deliver wellbeing to others. Simply breathing in their scent can shift your mood or tease your imagination. You can be enveloped in a perfumed present moment or transported on a soul-soaring fragrant fantasy where spices inspire, resins ground, fruits refresh, flowers hug or herbs heal.

Much has been documented about the natural ability of essential oils to improve everyday ailments, but the subtle boost that these concentrated essences can offer to the mental and emotional wellbeing of your spa therapists, as well as your guests, is equally impressive.

That is why aromatherapy expert Laura Broady has created Scented Saviours – a website where both the

public and professional therapists can access well researched information and expert guidance on the safe and effective use of essential oils, with a particular focus on cancer care.

“There is a lot of misinformation out there and I hope to be able to bust some myths along the way,” says Broady.

Making a real difference

A cancer survivor herself, it was while working for Made for Life Organics as the brand prepared to roll out its Cancer Touch Therapy training that she decided her expertise could really make a difference to people’s lives. “I spent the next two years helping to train over 2,000 therapists how to safely treat guests living with or recovering from cancer,” Broady recalls.

“Then in 2020 my cancer returned, and I had to give up work while I dealt with the treatment for that. This eventually led to me setting up Scented Saviours as a website for therapists and





▷ the public to refer to on how to safely use oils. I wanted to share my experience of how essential oils can help those living with a cancer diagnosis – it has been a slow work in progress but it's something I am deeply passionate about."

In the first of this new series, Broady shares her essential-oil tips for spa professionals and suggests some scents that can provide guests with the most powerful and rejuvenating wellness experience at this time of the year.

How to use essential oils

"The fastest and easiest way to benefit from these super, natural oils is to simply inhale them," says Broady. "This can be done unobtrusively with the use of the oils on a tissue or personal aroma inhaler.

"Each nostril will smell the same scent slightly differently", she adds, "so its best to make sure you smell through both to get the full effect."

The scent of certain essential oils can be very comforting – lavender, used in a huge variety of products from shampoo to fabric softener, can provide



"If you want to encourage conversation, contemplation or engagement at a workshop, frankincense could be perfect"

Laura Broady Founder, Scented Saviours

a sense of home and of safety. A similar feeling may occur with essential oil of orange – it could trigger warm wintry memories, or uplifting summertime vibes depending on your lifelong associations with it.

"Talking of comfort," adds Broady. "A 2015 survey of the British public revealed that the smell of freshly baked bread was their favourite, but unfortunately there isn't an essential oil for that – although you could try vanilla which smells a bit like cake!"

Other essential oils, such as tree oils including cypress, fir or frankincense, can help you feel protected or brave, while the zingy scent of citrus can often make your mouth water.

"Remember that up to 75% of your taste is formed through the sense of smell. Don't like the taste of something? Hold your nose and the taste will be markedly dulled," explains Broady.

If you want to create a particular ambience within a spa, you can diffuse scents into the air. Oils can even be selected to improve the flow of meetings.

For team building and to create a unified atmosphere in a business environment, Broady suggests putting some personal inhalers together as a group activity.

"Get blank nasal inhalers and drop between five and ten drops of essential oils onto the wicks and click shut," she advises. "Carry them around or keep them at your desk and simply breathe them in from time to time.

"Depending on your selection the

scent should last around six weeks, with some lingering much longer."

Safety first

Essential oils trigger memories and emotions associated with their aromas, and through the molecules affecting your central nervous system and other systems, such as digestion or respiration.

"It is true that some essential oils are not suitable for those living with certain medical conditions or during times such

as pregnancy," Broady warns. "So consult a qualified clinical aromatherapist with any doubts and do take care diffusing oils around others."

She adds: "If you're going to use them on your skin or in the bath, dilute the oil in a carrier such as jojoba so you do not sensitise your skin. Never ingest the oils and keep them away from children, stored in the dark glass in which they come supplied, with the lid firmly on."

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Scents for the season

Three essential oils that would be wonderful to support your winter wellbeing



1. VETIVER

For peace, sleep and connection (*Vetiveria Zizanioides* or the wild version, *Ruh Khus*)

Known as 'the oil of tranquillity', vetiver has a wonderful rich, rooty, base-note scent that is warm, woody and perfect for wintering.

"Vetiver anchors you to the present moment and can be useful if you find your head in the clouds. When you need to find more connection with a place or a person it enhances feelings of closeness," says Broady. "It can calm a cantering mind and has a handsomely reassuring quality to it.

"If you find the aroma too much, try softening it with a sedative floral such as ylang ylang or lavender.

"Diffusing vetiver during a Yoga Nidra session can enhance the peaceful effects of this relaxing discipline," Broady adds. "The same can be applied to guided meditations focused on the earth."



2. FRANKINCENSE

For fear, contemplation and yoga (*Boswellia Carterii*, *Serrata* or *Sacra* are all good options)

"If in doubt, get frankincense out!", says Broady. "It has such a broad range of benefits – it is amazing at slowing you down and deepening your breathing to access inner wisdom.

"Perfect for addressing fear, be it low-level anxiety or a panic attack, the piney, fresh scent of this protective tree, guides you to gather yourself.

"If you are holding a workshop and want to encourage conversation, contemplation or engagement, frankincense could be perfect. It is a euphoric oil, full of light and joy, so will keep the mind focused and positive. Ideal for team meetings, sales meetings, and training sessions.

"Frankincense balances all chakras and helps with connection to consciousness so could be a great oil to use in a yoga session."



3. CARDAMOM

For confidence and creativity (*Elettaria Cardamomum*)

Like a warming hug on a cold winter's day, cardamom is cheery and calming with a bit of spice to keep you motivated. According to Ayurveda, cardamom opens and soothes the flow of prana in the body, so it can fill you with a calm confidence – a good oil for presenting or public speaking.

"Cardamom is a great stimulator of new ideas and when I am creatively stuck, I find it releases blocks and often brings in a raft of different options to try," says Broady. "I'll be sniffing cardamom when thinking of strategies for social media or putting together new treatments and menus. In this instance I will blend it with lime or grapefruit for a sparkling boost of inspiration!"

Cardamom can also be softly reassuring, especially when blended with other spices such as ginger.