

Summer scented saviours



Aromatherapist Laura Broady explains why summer is the season when scents take on a new dimension and advises on how to pass on the power of essential oils to your clients



Laura Broady

Summertime memories for most people are infused with certain scents that bring to mind times of relaxation, freedom and fun. In warmer weather, our sense of smell is heightened due to humidity, which increases the amount of volatile aromas in the air. Perhaps that explains why your suntan lotion smells amazing when used on holiday at the beach but less impactful when used on a cooler day at home in the park.

So many memories of summer are associated with aroma – freshly cut

grass, barbecues, the ocean, fresh fruits, flowers. And while you can't always be in the right place at the right time to enjoy these, essential oils can provide a way to experience the next best thing.

If you wish to recreate an oceanic blend, try eucalyptus, lime, rosemary and lavender for a reminder of the fresh sea breeze. While there isn't an essential oil that smells like cut grass, a chamomile lawn smells like fresh apples and hay, so Roman chamomile might be a good choice to create a calm, fresh atmosphere. Fragrant flowers such as ylang ylang, rose and jasmine are all excellent choices to complement a sunny summer's day or a restful evening.

Taking a little heat off

Cooling essential oils, such as peppermint, spearmint and lavender, all work well as compresses. Soak a flannel in icy water and add a drop or two of the essential oil (pre-diluted in a vegetable carrier oil such as coconut oil). Squeeze out and apply to the back of the neck. This also works as a cool foot bath too. Take extra care with peppermint as it can irritate a sensitive skin. Always check for general contraindications and take advice from a qualified aromatherapist if pregnant or living with medical conditions.

To give your clients a summer seasonal boost try working with the three essential oils I have selected to add a little sunshine to your life.

Laura's scented saviours for summer

What three perfect scents for the season can offer you and your clients



JASMINE

For assertiveness and empowerment

(*Jasminum Officinale/Jasminum grandiflorum/Jasminum sambac*)

A sweet, floral and intoxicating aroma, the scent of jasmine is seductive, creamy and ethereal. However, it can be rich in the compound indole, which in high concentrations can smell like mothballs, so those that detect this can be offended! However, indole has been copied synthetically and its earthy aroma is perhaps most famously used in Calvin Klein's Eternity to great commercial success.

Jasmine is among the most expensive of essential oils, so you can purchase it in a pre-blended dilution. It's a great oil to have on or up your sleeve on a tissue when going into a meeting or interview – especially if you're feeling intimidated.

Jasmine can re-energise flagging motivation and give a real confidence boost. Let it lift your self-esteem and happiness when feeling fragile or low.

I turn to jasmine when I urgently need to restore peace and calm. It is both grounding and uplifting and it's my go-to oil for gaining perspective.

Jasmine is known as the Angel of Flowers and is useful to enhance meditation practices. I love to use it on a summer's evening to create a feeling of all being well with the world.

LAVENDER

For skincare and fatigue

(*Lavendula Angustifolia*)

With its fresh, sweet, herbaceous aroma, lavender is perhaps the most recognised essential oil scent, but I'd encourage you to seek out and compare different varieties. English lavender tends to be fresh whereas the French is often sweet like honey. I have one that is wild-grown at high altitude and it smells just like heaven.

From the Latin *lavare*, meaning 'to wash', lavender is still used to cleanse wounds and burns, as well as in all manner of cleaning and personal products. Dilute in a vegetable carrier oil before use and apply regularly to reduce the impact of oven burns and the like – it works!

Lavender is high in natural esters, making it anti-inflammatory and good for skin issues such as eczema, dermatitis, psoriasis, acne, hives, boils, bruises, bites, stings, ringworm, sunburn and sores. Diluted lavender oil and aloe vera makes for a good sunburn remedy. It is also a natural anti-histamine.

An effective and popular choice as a sleep aid, lavender can be overused at night, making it stimulating and awakening. Small amounts throughout the day are better for the circadian rhythm, so sleep should come easier when the time comes.

PETITGRAIN

For positivity and relaxation

(*Citrus Aurantium Amara/Petitgrain Bigarade*)

Extracted from the twigs and leaves of citrus trees, to me the woody, fresh scent of petitgrain smells of holidays. There are many varieties to discover – mandarin, bergamot, lemon, lime – but my favourite is the one from the bitter orange tree. It is almost a fragrance in its own right, but is magically transformed when blended with lavender, benzoin, ylang ylang, bergamot or geranium.

Used on skin that is out of sorts, petitgrain helps to regulate sebaceous secretions and is an ideal choice for balancing combination or oily skin.

Blended into hair conditioner, petitgrain leaves hair smelling of sunshine. It is also good for deodorising, so use within body lotions to stay fresh or as a yoga mat cleanser when diluted in witch hazel.

The aroma of petitgrain calms the chatter of the mind and is the perfect pick-me-up to counteract the effects of anxiety and stress. I can highly recommend anyone convalescing from any kind of illness or affliction to try doing so with the support of petitgrain. In the bath it is peaceful, as an inhalation it is calming and as a massage oil it is fortifying. ●●●●●