

NATURE'S PERFUMERY

Prized as much for their aroma as for their medicinal qualities, herbal tonics were among the very first scents – now the same herbs are making a comeback in the latest collection of natural fragrances

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LAVENDER

Forget about the lavender waters your grandmother used to wear – in the new range of perfumes, the plant is used to add a modern edge. “The name lavender actually comes from the latin for wash, *lavere*, and it creates a clean aroma without smelling synthetic,” fragrance expert Lawrence Roullier White says.

This clean effect is evident in Les Exclusifs de Chanel Jersey (£115, chanel.com), a powdery floral that remains fresh through its inclusion of distilled Jersey lavender. Mitchell and Peach

Flora No.1 Fine Edition EDP (£75, mitchellandpeach.com) is a natural formulation with lavender from the Mitchell family farm in Kent, blended with rose and fennel for an elegant scent. Shay & Blue Suffolk Lavender natural spray (£30, shayandblue.com) has a deeper, darker edge than you would imagine, while the remake of classic Seventies fragrance Aqua Manda EDP (£39.99, aquamandaperfume.com) blends lavender with tarragon and ginger for a spicy herbal hit. ➔



BASIL

An unusual, but refreshing addition to a perfume, this herb has a complex scent of its own. It combines sweet, spicy notes with a cooler, aniseed aroma that works well alongside citrus scents – as Jo Malone Lime Basil & Mandarin cologne (£40, jomalone.com) demonstrates perfectly. Basil is also one of the key ingredients in Clarins Eau Ressourçante (£32, clarins.co.uk), a fragrance that harnesses the soothing powers of basil essential oil to help create a sense of calm and relaxation.

Penhaligon's Lavandula EDP (£105, penhaligons.com) uses top notes of basil with earthier lavender and clary sage to create the perfect day-to-evening scent.



SAGE

Generations have used the mild peppery scent of sage oil to protect and heal but it fell out of favour until now. "Sage is rare in perfumery," says master perfumer Christine Nagel, who created Jo Malone Wood Sage & Sea Salt cologne (£40, jomalone.com). "But its ambiguity means it works for men and women." Amouage Dia Woman EDP (£170, amouage.com) has sage as a top note to balance floral elements, while L'Artisan Parfumeur Caligna EDP (£70, artisanparfumeur.com) is a woody scent with sage at its heart.



VERBENA

Verbena adds a fresh and zesty lift to fragrances. "The herbaceous scent of Verbena and Lavender de Provence Cologne (£20, crabtree-evelyn.co.uk) will bring a ray of sunshine to a cloudy day," says perfumer Fran Brown of Crabtree & Evelyn. L'Occitane Frisson de Verveine EDT (£42, uk.loccitane.com) mixes verbena from Provence with spring water to create an invigorating scent, and Woods of Windsor Bergamot & Neroli EDT (£17.99, woodsofwindsor.co.uk) combines grassy verbena with citrusy bergamot.



ROSEMARY

Many herbal scents have their roots in Italy. "Monks used plants to make health-giving elixirs," explains Lawrence Roullier White. "Then people began to use them as perfumes." Made with rosemary, lavender and citrus fruits, 4711 Original Eau de Cologne (£10, roullierwhite.com) was a Carthusian monk's 'miracle water' and Le Couvent Des Minimes Eau Des Minimes Cologne (£19, boots.com) is inspired by healing waters, too. Rosemary is also found in the natural perfume Florascent Aqua Aromatica Regia EDT (£65, pravera.co.uk).



MINT

"Herbal notes are often associated with happy times spent in the garden," Fran Brown says. Perhaps none more so than mint. Union Quince Mint & Moss EDP (£125, roullierwhite.com) sets mint amid sweet quinces. Inspired by Jean-Paul Guerlain's garden, Guerlain Aqua Allegoria Herba Fresca EDT (£42, johnlewis.com) uses peppermint with clover leaf and pear blossom. Mentha Citrata by Acqua di Stresa (£74, Harvey Nichols) blends mint with bergamot and violet from the mythical Garden of Hesperides. ➔



CORIANDER

“One of the reasons herbal scents are growing in popularity is because their freshness and tonicity can put a new twist on a more traditional scent,” explains perfumer Misung Park, from L’Occitane. “For example, when you put a spicy note into a floral fragrance, it introduces a wilder, livelier element.” Coriander is the perfect, spicy herb for perfume. Liz Earle Botanical Essence EDP No.1 (£47, lizearle.com) uses its pepperiness to add warmth to this rich fragrance, and, in Origins Ginger Essence Sensuous Skin Scent (£32.50, origins.com), the coriander creates a smooth, sultry effect. For evenings, Crabtree & Evelyn Assam Oudh EDP (£140, crabtree-evelyn.co.uk) includes a deep and rich coriander note. “The coriander here is refined and smoky, and brings a mysterious edge that’s perfect for evenings,” Fran Brown says. 🌿



Herbal fragrances can conjure olfactory memories of happy times spent in the garden