



Beauty

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Scent of a man

Do you reek of gentleman, cigars, leather – or sex?



How do you like your fella to smell? It can often depend on the scents that were popular at the time of your sexual awakening. I don't mean when you lost your virginity; I mean the more powerful, Damascene, epiphanic, yearny stuff that comes a little later. (I feel so bad for this generation of girls, who are forced to inhale Lynx during these important moments.)

I have fond feelings for Dior's Fahrenheit (£46.50; boots.com). It might not seem the chicest of fragrances now but, in the late Eighties, it was revolutionary. Most of the popular "aftershaves" smelt like your dad – old and fusty. Fahrenheit, on the other hand, was a pristine, optimistic, soapy kind of scent, but still sexy. I think what we were witnessing was the birth of metrosexual man. It's one of our

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bestselling men's scents now, and a whiff of it still makes me think of freshly showered, lean and hungry young men to this day.

There are some grown-up versions of this sort of olfactory aesthetic. Anything with vetiver is usually clean and classy. Guerlain's green and peppery Vétiver (£42; johnlewis.com), created in 1959, is the classic; Frédéric Malle's Vétiver Extraordinaire eau de parfum is a cooler, crisper modern version (£110; liberty.co.uk). Green Irish Tweed from the House of Creed (£90; creedfragrances.co.uk), with lemon, verbena and sandalwood, has been popular with elegant men for nearly 30 years. Devotees include George Clooney, Robert Redford and Clint Eastwood. If a man has no clue what to buy for himself, I usually point him at this.

Blenheim Bouquet eau de toilette from Penhaligon's (£85; penhaligons.com) sounds like something a nan would wear, but I promise it's one of the most refined men's fragrances around, with lemon, lime, rosemary and black pine. Created in 1902, it is very, very English – Winston Churchill wore it.

And yet, there must be a female equivalent of the madonna/whore syndrome. Although I love a man to smell squeaky clean, reliable and sophisticated, I sometimes find the aroma of a morally sketchy bon viveur knee-weakening. Eau de booze 'n' fags or whisky 'n' cigars = yes.

Tom Ford, not surprisingly, knows how to make a chap smell dangerous, charming and masculine. His Tobacco Oud eau de parfum is my favourite of his scents (£140; selfridges.com). It's all expensive cognac and club chairs, but still very contemporary. Cowshed has a really good wood-tobacco scent called Neville (£50; neville.co.uk). Not the manliest name in town, but still masculine and classy.

If you feel that you want a proper bad boy – I mean properly like Batman – I dare you to treat him to this gangster of a fragrance: Nasomatto's Black Afgano. It's warm, strong, boozy, smoky and hedonistic. It contains hashish, but is just about legal (because you can't extract the drug). The price is quite illicit – £108 for 30ml (spacenk.com) – but still, what price disarming all those around simply by walking into the room? ■

What we love

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FROM TOP: **Captain Fawcett's Beard Oil**, £34 (carterandbond.com). **BaByliss Super Stubble**, £90 (boots.com). **Murdock London Beard Moisturiser**, £24 (murdocklondon.com). **Braun CoolTec**, £199.99 (braun.com/uk). **Mr Natty Frank's Beard Elixir**, £8.50 (nivenandjoshua.com).

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