

# **THE TRUTH ABOUT ESSENTIAL OILS**

# **DISCLAIMER**

*This information is for reference purposes only.*

*Statements are not intended as a substitute for professional healthcare  
nor meant to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent medical conditions or disease.*

*Every illness or injury requires supervision by  
a medical doctor or alternative medicine practitioner.*

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# 1

## HISTORY AND TRADITION

Essential oils include a variety of hormones, vitamins and chemicals needed to perform various plant functions. A flower's essence, for example, attracts insects for pollination. In a shrub or tree, the essential oil becomes resin to heal wounds from severe weather damage. Essential oil regulates the water content in a plant and prevents evaporation. Or, a plant might produce chemicals to deter predators and warn other plants and trees. Often a plant produces a toxic substance against bacteria, virus or fungus. The essential oils of these highly complex organisms of the plant kingdom are one of nature's many gifts to human beings. They've been used to freshen the atmosphere, enrich the food, and heal whatever ails the body, mind or spirit of mankind.

Essential oils have been used for thousands of years in the art and science of aromatherapy. Legendary Chinese ruler Shen Nung is credited with discovering the medicinal properties of plants and writing the first herbal text, 'Pen Tsao' (c. 2700-3000 BC), a catalog of more than 200 botanicals. Today's archeologists continually find evidence of therapeutic uses for essential oils in the civilizations of ancient China, India and the Middle East. Ayurveda, traditional Hindu medicine practiced throughout the world, utilizes herbal treatment with origins in the 2nd millennium B.C.

Ancient Egyptians used incense, waters and ointments and resins for various religious ceremonies. Queen Cleopatra kept massive gardens of hundreds of flowers and used their essences to perfume her body and surroundings. Terra cotta urns filled with aromatic oils accompanied Pharaohs to the afterlife. Roman soldiers treated wounds with honey and myrrh and emperors and scholars relaxed in legendary perfumed baths. The Old and New Testaments

of the Bible contain detailed recipes using aromatic compounds.

Widespread use of essential oils throughout Europe coincided with the invention of glass distillation methods in the 16th century, the discovery of new trade routes and the invention of the microscope, which facilitated the study of bio-active compounds. These developments ushered in extraction of essential oil from plants such as French rosemary, Italian chamomile and lavender from England. Queen Elizabeth I used an abundant supply of English lavender oil throughout her life, a practice continued by Queen Victoria during her entire 64-year reign. The tradition was upheld in the latter 20th century by Diana, Princess of Wales, who often was photographed enroute between Kensington Palace and her aromatherapist's office. Her living quarters were kept naturally fragrant with essential oils throughout the year.

Modern aromatherapy was born in the early 20th century when Rene-Maurice Gattefosse, a French chemist working for a prominent perfumer, accidentally set his arm on fire in the laboratory. He thrust it into the nearest vat of cold liquid, which happened to be lavender oil, and felt immediate relief. Previous chemical burns had caused severe pain, redness, blisters and scarring. Surprisingly, this burn healed quickly with minimal pain and no scarring. Gattefosse coined the word 'aromatherapie' to describe his healing experience. He spent the rest of his life researching health benefits of essential oils and published his findings in the 1937 landmark book 'Aromatherapy.' It was translated into English in 1993 and the 2nd edition is still in print, 70 years after it was written.

French physician Jean Valnet continued the work of Gattefosse during World War II, using essential oils to successfully treat wounded soldiers with gangrene, greatly reducing the need for amputation. His book, 'The Practice of Aromatherapy,' popularized aromatherapy for medical and psychiatric use throughout France in the 1960s. In 1962, Marguerite Maury published

findings which heralded the cosmetic benefits of essential oils. The first English language book, 'The Art of Aromatherapy' by Robert Tisserand (1977), introduced the benefits of aromatherapy coupled with massage and advanced the practice in the United Kingdom and the United States.

The New Age movement latched onto aromatherapy soon after and 'the rest is history.' A burgeoning of holistic, natural medicine since the 1980s has provided a comfortable environment for aromatherapy. In 2008, aromatherapy accounted for 95% of the essential oils global market, roughly US\$ 4.6-billion. The industry has grown at a rate of 7.5% annually in the last decade and shows no signs of abating. Aromatherapy has been around for ages and its here to stay.

## 2

# AROMATHERAPY & ESSENTIAL OILS DECODED

First and foremost, aromatherapy is not intended as a substitute for traditional medical treatment. More accurately, it's an extension of a long-established practice of treating medical conditions with plants found in nature. Today's aspirin evolved from experiments with the byproduct of the spirea plant at the Bayer & Co dye factory.

An enterprising chemist, Felix Hoffman, synthesized the first acetylsalicylic acid, known from earlier research to treat rheumatism successfully. We've cured cold symptoms for generations with Vicks Vaporub, whose main ingredients are synthetic forms of mint (menthol), laurel tree (camphor), and eucalyptus (eucalyptol), in addition to cedar leaf, nutmeg and pine oils. Coca Cola was originally marketed as a 'nerve tonic,' containing various essential oils of citrus and spices.

Aromatherapy, like all healing, is both a science and an art, providing a fascinating but sometimes overwhelming study. Basically, essential oils are aromatic molecules removed from plant material - petals, leaves, twigs, seeds, needles, wood, resin and rind. Knowing the basic jargon of aromatherapy is the first step in understanding the remarkable way essential oils are used to treat 'whatever ails you,' physically, cosmetically, mentally, emotionally or spiritually. Following are basic terms and concepts to help wade through a plethora of botanical and pharmacological data, which at

times might seem confusing and contradictory. They are listed in alphabetical order for easy reference.

## **ABSOLUTE OILS**

Absolutes are the alcohol-soluble, or semi-liquid oil that results from the solvent extraction process used with plants that have an unusually low yield. For instance, 1,000 pounds of flowers yield one teaspoon of jasmine absolute. One teaspoon of rose absolute requires 5,000 pounds of petals; but steam distillation to obtain an equal amount of rose essential oil, called rose otto (attar) requires twice that amount, or 10,000 pounds of petals. Consequently, rose otto is twice the price of rose absolute which is among the costliest essential oils.

## **BLENDED OILS**

'Blends,' sometimes called 'formulas' or 'synergies,' are basically a manufacturer's recipe for a combination of oils targeted to treat a specific condition. There are as many pre-blended oils as there are ailments, diseases, bodily functions, moods, states of being, and levels of spiritual growth. The selection is limited only by a seller or manufacturer's imagination. Professional aromatherapists have their own 'recipes,' based on knowledge and experience. Experts advise even the novice or dabbler in aromatherapy to study the profiles of individual essential oils and concoct their own treatments based on a modicum of knowledge and personal preference.

The blends, however, are excellent if you want to experiment with pre-mixed formulas, but it will be just as time consuming as learning about individual oils. No two blended formulas, say, for congestion will for the same. Perhaps, when you compare blended remedies, you might find common ingredients, but their proportions will not be the same.

## **CARRIER OIL**

Whether essential oils are thick and oily or thin and watery, they share a common chemical characteristic: oil and water don't mix. Essential oils, even if they are clear and runny, will only blend well with fatty oils or alcohol. The primary way to dilute essential oils is in a carrier oil, sometimes called base oil. Carrier oils are usually pressed from seeds, nuts, vegetables or trees. Common carrier oils are almond, coconut, jojoba and sunflower.

In most essential oil 'blends,' the major ingredient is a carrier oil with small quantities, in some case only drops, of essential oils, which for the most part are too strong to be applied to skin undiluted, or too expensive to be used alone. A few essential oils, such as lavender or tea tree, are gentle enough to be used as carrier oils.

Carrier oils are a way to distribute small amounts of essential oil over the entire body during the massage process. Additionally, carrier oils retain moisture and keep essential oils from evaporating too quickly when exposed to air. Diluted essential oils last longer; during massage this means essential oils will linger and absorb slowly into the skin.

## **EXTRACTION**

Extraction is the process used to remove oil molecules from plant material. It's important to understand extraction because it determines an essential oil's properties, its benefits, how it's purchased and ways it's used. The four primary methods of extracting essential oils are steam or water distillation, solvent extraction and expression.

- **Distillation by steam** under pressure is the most efficient means of extraction. Plant material is heated, a vapor forms and when it cools the resulting liquid is essential oil. In water distillation, plant material is covered in water and heated in a sealed container; this method takes longer than steam pressure and risks damaging delicate components of essential oils from longer exposure to heat. Steam distillation is the preferred and most commonly used method of extraction.
- **Solvent extraction** is used for delicate petals such as jasmine and rose with a low yield of essential oil. This extraction is the end process of a method called enfleurage, where petals are placed on glass and covered with an odorless fat or oil. An alternate method is to stir flowers into heated oil. Flowers are added until the oil or fat becomes saturated with flower essence, forming a substance called 'concrete' or 'pomade.' The pomade is soaked in alcohol which absorbs the fragrance of the fat, and the two are separated. The alcohol is allowed to evaporate, leaving particulate plant matter, the 'absolute' essence of the flower. The fat is used in soap manufacturing. When a synthetic petrochemical such as hexane or benzene is used as the solvent, the aromatherapy benefits of the absolute are inferior to those obtained with alcohol solvent, an organic substance derived from sugar or starch.

- **Expression** is the method for extracting oil from the rind of citrus fruit such as bergamot, lemon and orange. Traditionally, this was a time consuming project done by hand; today, expression of rinds is mechanized. You may experiment with hand expression by cutting off a segment of peel from a washed and dried piece of fruit. Pierce the peel with your fingernail, or knife tip, and over a bowl use your fingers to squeeze drops of essential oil from the rind. Store this oil in a dark glass bottle in a cool place. This is as good as any commercially obtained essential oil of citrus and can be used in any form of aromatherapy.
- A fifth recently discovered method of extraction utilizes **carbon dioxide (CO2) process** at low temperatures. This method produces highly fragrant aromas and many aromatherapists believe the process is preferable to solvent extraction. The CO2 process, however, requires expensive equipment making these oils costlier, as well as rare and difficult to obtain. Opponents of this type of this process believe the temperature in CO2 extraction is not high enough to properly distill plant molecules and that essential oils processed this way should be reserved for non-therapeutic uses, such as soap, candles and room deodorizers.

## **5% OR 10% OILS**

These are a type of blend, or formula, usually associated with more expensive essential oils. Suppliers make these costly essential oils more affordable by diluting them with a carrier oil. The percentage does not refer to the quality of an essential oil, but rather denotes its quantity. For example, a 1-ounce bottle described as '5% Rose Absolute in Jojoba' will have 30 drops (1.5 ml) of pure rose absolute and 95% jojoba oil.

## **FRAGRANCE & PERFUME OILS**

Fragrance oils, also called 'fragrant oils' or 'perfume oils,' are synthetically compounded aromas that simulate natural aromas. They should not be confused with pure essential oils. The scents might replicate natural scents, and have qualities of familiarity, richness, complexity and endurance. But fragrance oils are specifically formulated for addition to perfume, soap, candles, skin care, hair products, room deodorizers and household cleaners. They have no value nor application in aromatherapy. Some good examples of so-called essential oils are China Rain, Forest, Black Rose, Lily-of-theValley and Vanilla. These are fragrance, or perfume, oils commonly made from synthetic aroma chemicals.

## **HYDROSOLS**

Hydrosol - also called hydrolat, floral or flower water - is the water or vapor by-product of distillation. It contains the fragrance of an essential oil and has the same benefits. Hydrosols are valuable skin-care products, especially when used in addition to skin care with essential oils. Flower waters for cosmetic purposes are made, for example, from chamomile, neroli and rose petals.

## **NEAT**

Most essential oils are too strong to be used undiluted and the warning often

appears: 'Do not apply neat'. The rare exceptions are lavender and tea tree oil which, in addition to carrier oils, are safe when applied directly to skin.

## **ORGANIC OILS**

Technically, 'organic essential oils' must meet the same standards applied to organic food and bear the USDA green-and-white circular seal that appears on food products. This means plants must be grown without the use of chemical fertilizers or pesticides; and cannot be processed with artificial, synthetic or chemical additives or preservatives. If roses, for instance, are grown organically but their essential oil is extracted with a petrochemical or synthetic solvent, the resulting essential oil will not be 'organic.'

The term organic is used loosely and confused with words such as '100% natural,' 'pure,' 'chemical-free,' 'highest- or finest-quality,' 'no pesticides,' 'all-herbal,' 'grown wild,' and 'unsprayed.' These terms are not synonymous even though they are used interchangeably. The only way to be sure you're getting truly 'organic essential oils,' is to look for the USDA seal or ask a trusted dealer if they can certify a particular product is organically grown as well as organically manufactured.

In aromatherapy there are two schools of thought whether organic essential oils have a superior aroma or are more beneficial than non-organic oils. One argument is essential oils are highly concentrated and therefore they hold onto high concentrations of contaminants; however, there is no scientific evidence to support this reasoning. The counter argument is when oils are steam, water or alcohol distilled, molecules of pesticide and fertilizer are too large to pass through the distillation process. Hypothetically, only pesticides sprayed onto plant material during or after harvesting, two unlikely

occurrences, could survive distillation.

Whether to use organic essential oils is as personal as one's decision about organic food. Similarly, organic essential oils are more expensive than non-organic, sometime more than 100% higher.

# 3

## ESSENTIAL OILS BUYING GUIDE

### TOP 10 LISTS

There are more than 3,000 essential oils, of which approximately 300 are used in aromatherapy. Of those, there are 101 major essential oils traded on the global market. Only the professional aromatherapist or seasoned amateur would use all 101, rarely. The average arsenal of essential oils contains approximately one or two dozen individual oils and five to seven blends.

A good number for the layman or novice is ten. But which ten? Every manufacturer, merchant, author and practitioner has a 'Top 10' list of essential oils, and no two lists are the same. There are commonalities, naturally, but every list is different. There's the 'Top 10 Essential Oils Ever,' (again, no two lists alike), 'Top 10 Best Selling,' 'Top 10 Recommended,' 'Top 10 for Colds,' and 'Top 10 Florals,' to name a few. The best way to begin selecting essential oils is by making your own list: 'My Top 10 Essential Oils.'

### CHOOSING ESSENTIAL OILS

Essential oils are categorized myriad ways - alphabetically, botanically,

aromatically, chemically, according to ailment, physical body systems, or chakras, among others. Health, well-being and beauty are about balance, and ill-health and discomfort are about imbalance, or opposing forces. In the most primary sense, energy is both positive and negative and these two forces balance each other. Heat balances cold, dark balances light and opposites attract. One way to categorize essential oils is how they bring balance and return equilibrium.

Physical, mental and emotional problems, viewed as either positive or negative states, need an antidote. Treating illnesses collectively as a duality, essential oils can be categorized as either 'negative' (relaxing, calming, tension-relieving, sedating) or 'positive' (stimulating, rejuvenating, invigorating, awakening). This is the method used in Chapter 6 and 7. These 24 basic essential oils are a compilation of several lists by various authors, aromatherapists, retailers and manufacturers. They are by no means all inclusive, but rather a good reference point. If you find this system useful, you can add other essential oils to the lists based on your experience and additional research.

From the list of '12 Essential Oil Relaxants,' pick five intended to treat a specific problem or situation you want to correct, some imbalance in your life that needs work. Choose another five essential oils from the list of '12 Essential Oil Stimulants.'

Next, with your list, visit a perfumery, health food store or drugstore where essential oils can be sniffed and see which aromas appeal to you. If you smell anything you don't like, immediately reject that oil. If the oil is not pleasing to you or if you find it offensive on any level, it will cause a negative reaction, even if only subliminally. If you've gone through your list and found only one or two oils pleasing to you, that's fine. As you continue to work with aromatherapy, you will instinctively choose additional oils as the need arises or your smell changes.

## **LABELING**

Before purchasing essential oils, it helps to know how to read labels and advertising unique to this industry. Manufacturers are not deliberately deceptive but understanding labeling of essential oils is tricky. You don't need a post-doctoral degree in chemistry, pharmacology, or general medicine, but there are a few catch phrases that can help you identify products.

### **STRAIGHT-FORWARD LABELING:**

- 100% Pure Essential Oil
- Therapeutic Essential Oil
- No additives, no pesticides
- First distillation
- Undiluted & pure
- Maximum therapeutic benefit

It's also a good idea to familiarize yourself with the subtleties of essential oil labeling. For instance, '100% pure essential oil' does not necessarily mean 'undiluted.' A product can have 3 drops of lavender oil in 8 ounces of jojoba oil and still qualify as 100% pure.

First distillations are the strongest and highest quality of an essential oil. Subsequent distillations are progressively weaker.

## **DUBIOUS LABELING:**

- Vitamin-enriched oil
- Rich in essential oil
- Blend containing pure essential oil
- Plant-based oil
- Extracted from whole plant

Notice if labeling or advertising specifies which part of a plant was used to obtain a specific oil. If research says the best essential oil of a plant comes from its petals, for example, be careful not to choose a product that contains 'leaf extract.' Essential oil of orange blossom flower and essential oil of orange rind are two totally different oils with different properties and therapeutic benefits.

It's advisable to purchase single essential oils, rather than blends or pre-mixed remedies, whenever feasible. This allows you to 1) control the amount of dilution that suits you best, 2) regulate the intensity and nature of the aroma, and 3) extend the shelf-life of oils because they last longer in undiluted states.

## **SHOPPING**

Take time to shop around and do the math. Essential oils can be purchased at a health food store, organic grocery store, New Age gift shop, mainstream drugstore, bookstore, perfumery, or natural cosmetics store. There are quite literally hundreds of retailers, distributors and manufacturers worldwide who offer Internet shopping or auctions. It's a good idea to study websites

thoroughly to be able to determine and choose a reputable dealer with whom you want to do business.

Compare pricing which can vary dramatically. Excellent rose otto can vary from \$300 to \$700 per 1/2-ounce (15 ml) depending on the seller. If you are willing to pay the higher price, make sure it's justified and that you 'get what you pay for.' Similarly, prices vary drastically according to country of origin. The most desirable essential oil of sandalwood comes from India and costs \$150 per ounce (30 ml); sandalwood oil from Australia sells for \$80 per ounce. When shopping online, compare shipping costs; a few large distributors offer free shipping with every order.

Finally, purchase essential oils only if they come in dark bottles, either blue or brown glass. Light and heat reduce the effectiveness of essential oils and shorten shelf-life. Oxygen in the air inside a bottle can cause color deterioration and rancid odor. Large quantities of oil are best recanted into smaller containers to reduce the amount of oxygen in the headspace of a bottle. If stored in fully topped-off, tightly sealed, dark-glass containers in a cool area, 40 to 60 degrees Fahrenheit (5 to 20 degrees Celsius), essential oils last 6 to 24 months.

Ask your retailer for the life-span of a particular oil at time of purchase. At any point, if you detect a foul, or uncharacteristic odor, the essential oil has become rancid and is no longer therapeutic; in fact, it even might be detrimental to health and cause skin irritation or allergic reaction.

# 4

## **WAYS TO USE ESSENTIAL OILS**

In aromatherapy, the benefits of essential oils are experienced two ways - through inhalation or topical application to skin. Essential oils are not ingested in self-therapy, especially by a layman, and only in rare cases under the direction of a licensed medical practitioner.

Inhaling an essential oil increases brain frequency, balances right and left brain activities, and signals the release of hormones to specific areas of the body. Applied to the skin, essential oils enter the blood stream and are drawn to specific body parts that need healing. Essential oils are guided to a particular hormone, body part or system with which it is most compatible and effective. One specific oil might be effective with muscle tissue, another might be drawn toward bone marrow. It's as if the aroma molecules are soldiers marching toward a precise target, ready to strike when and where needed.

### **INHALATION METHODS**

- The simplest and fastest way to inhale aroma molecules of essential oil is to sniff directly from an open vial, or to wear essential oil mixed with a carrier as a perfume.
- A more intense delivery to the brain is achieved by placing a few drops of oil in the palm, cupping hands over the nose and inhaling and

exhaling slowly and deeply through the nose, keeping the mouth closed.

- Diffusing oil into the air is the most thorough method of inhalation. A wide variety of diffusers range from a pottery bowl heated by a candle underneath to an electrically heated bowl. There also is a nebulizer, vaporizer, humidifier, wick inhaler, plug-in atomizer with wick refills, room spray, potpourri, pillow or linen sachet, and the newest trend, a multi-reed diffuser. With every diffusion method, only a few drops of oil, combined with steam or water, are all that is needed to reap therapeutic benefits.

## **TOPICAL APPLICATION**

- A full body massage, with properly diluted essential oil, is the most popular way to apply essential oil to the skin. Targeted relief can be achieved by applying essential oils to reflexology points on soles of the feet and palms. With headache, oils can be massaged into the temples. For abdominal relief, a localized massage relaxes muscles used in digestion and elimination.
- A leisurely soak in bath water treated with essential oil or scented bath salts is the perfect ending to a massage or a leisurely healing on its own. Diluted essential oil can be added to a hot tub or Jacuzzi, or splashed on sauna rocks.
- Essential oils added to shampoo, conditioner, soap, face cleanser, lotions and moisturizers are a wise addition to face and hair beauty regimens.

## **DILUTING**

Generally, three to five drops of oil, added one by one, to one teaspoon of carrier oil or lotion is a good ratio; use less in skin care products for the face. Exceptions to this rule for stronger, more powerful oils are noted at the end of each profile in Chapters 4 and 5. For tub water, first dissolve essential oil in honey, vegetable oil, half-&-half, powdered or liquid milk; this will disperse oil throughout tub and prevent it collecting in one spot.

## **BLENDING**

- When creating a blend, the main thing to remember is 'the nose knows.' Based on your research, choose 3 oils that will do what you want them to do. Experiment with them on swabs to determine your unique 'recipe' and the quantities you want to incorporate into a particular blend. Using only 3 ingredients, plus carrier or base oil, mistakes can be corrected easily. With experience, add or subtract additional oils one at a time, for a maximum of 5.
- Keep it simple.
- Remember to exhale...and enjoy!

# 5

## GENERAL SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

The following suggested precautions are not a complete safety reference for essential oils. Please refer to specific safety precautions at the end of each profile in chapters 6 and 7. If you have any questions, please consult your physician or a trained aromatherapist.

- A safe rule of thumb is to never use an essential oil undiluted directly on skin, or neat. Exceptions can be made for lavender and tea tree oils, but only after careful experimentation with test-patches. Some persons might be hyper-sensitive even to lavender and tea tree, the two gentlest essential oils in aromatherapy.
- A skin patch test should be administered prior to every first-time use of an essential oil.
- Essential oils should only be taken internally under the supervision of a licensed medical practitioner.
- Essential oils are highly flammable; use extreme care around fire.
- In the event of eye injury from essential oil, irrigate eye with a sterile, isotonic, saline solution for 15 minutes. Immediately consult a physician if pain persists after the eye wash.

- Keep essential oils in a locked cabinet, away from children.
- Asthma and epilepsy patients should avoid fennel, hyssop and rosemary.
- Babies and elderly persons require lower doses of essential oils, half that recommended for an healthy adult. Peppermint and eucalyptus have been known to cause respiratory problems with these age groups. Lavender and neroli, despite their gentle nature, can be tolerated only in minute amounts (1 drop in bath water and 1/2 drop per ounce of carrier oil.)
- Cancer patients may use mild dilutions of bergamot, chamomile, lavender, ginger and frankincense; fennel and aniseed in particular should be avoided.
- Persons undergoing chemotherapy should avoid using essential oils.
- High blood pressure patients should avoid essential oils of black pepper, clove, hyssop, peppermint, rosemary, sage and thyme.
- Low blood pressure patients should avoid excessive use of lavender oil.
- Persons allergic to nuts cannot use sweet almond or peanut carrier oils. Safer alternatives are sunflower, canola (non-GM) and safflower oils.
- Pregnant women should avoid essential oils before the 18th week of pregnancy, especially in cases of prior miscarriage. In the second trimester, essential oils may be used in low doses formulated by a professional aromatherapist or health care provider.

# 6

## TWELVE ESSENTIAL OIL RELAXANTS

### BERGAMOT

Bergamot, grown chiefly in Calabria, Italy, is a sour tasting citrus fruit whose rind ironically produces a sweet, lemon-y oil with a gentle, refreshing fragrance. Bergamot has been cultivated in South America and the United States, but the quality is incomparable to fruit grown in southern Italy's unique soil. The green or yellow oil is an important ingredient in many colognes and perfumes, and is used in the production of Earl Grey tea, giving the drink its characteristic aroma. Bergamot is considered the finest citrus oil and is sometimes called the "sunny" oil. It has a soothing, calming effect and simultaneously energizes and uplifts the spirit.

Bergamot is good for skin conditions such as eczema, psoriasis and herpes, acne and oily skin. It's excellent for cystitis and urinary tract infections, as well as for reducing fever. It balances the appetite, and is useful for weight reduction as well as stimulating the appetite.

The anti-depressant qualities of bergamot make it ideal for Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) on cold, gray days. It's mild, sedating effect helps control anger, relieve stress, reduce nervous tension, fear and anxiety.

## **PRECAUTIONS:**

- Bergamot should not be used on the skin neat. It should only be used in a carrier oil, lotion or bath water. A few drops in a solution is adequate.
- Since most bergamot oil is photosensitive, to prevent severe skin reaction, it should not be used on skin within 12 hours prior to sun exposure. However, bergamot oil labeled 'Bergaptine Free' or 'Bergamot FCF' (Furo-Coumarin Free) is safe even in direct sunlight and will not cause a reaction.

## **CHAMOMILE**

Chamomile oil, a deep-blue substance extracted from white, daisy-like flowers, is a sweet, herbal aroma with a fruity, somewhat bitter undertone. When dried, the flowers are used to make highly aromatic chamomile tea, a drink commonly used to promote relaxation. There are many varieties of chamomile, but the German and Roman species are believed to have the best medicinal value. Chamomile is soothing, calming and balancing with a gentle rejuvenating or restorative effect.

This is one of the few essential oils that can be used safely on infants and children, as well as during pregnancy.

Chamomile oil is an anti-inflammatory agent useful in treating skin rash, blisters, and allergies, including eczema. It also has analgesic properties and is useful in the treatment of deep, persistent pain, muscle tension or spasm. It is excellent for reducing stomach ache, pre-menstrual cramping and headache, including migraine. Because of its gentleness, a few drops diluted in boiling water can be used to make a soothing eye compress to

treat conjunctivitis or tired eyes.

Chamomile's calming and sedating effect make it a traditional ingredient in massage oil to promote overall relaxation. It's a favorite for balancing mood swings, emotionality, anxiety, nervous tension and insomnia.

**PRECAUTION:**

- Chamomile oil that is no longer blue and has begun turning green is not fresh and should be discarded.

**CLARY SAGE**

Clary sage, commonly called salvia, is a tall herb with purple-green, hairy leaves and a profusion of small white or pale violet flowers. Steaming the petals and leaves yields a sweet, musky oil with nutty, floral tones, the most euphoric of essential oils, uplifting, intoxicating, deeply relaxing and revitalizing.

Physically, this oil is an excellent analgesic, particularly for abdominal and stomach pain, including menstrual cramps, menopausal symptoms such as 'hot flashes,' and labor pain. Clary sage relieves headache, including migraine, and is an effective chest massage to alleviate asthma. It is often used to treat dandruff and promote healthy scalp and hair.

Clary sage oil can produce a drug-like "high," and is a powerful aid in treating depression, anxiety, and melancholy. It is useful in reducing stress that diminishes sexuality and thus is considered an aphrodisiac. This oil also aids in focusing the mind and results in more creative thinking, as well as

restful sleep and vivid, pleasant dreams. Clary sage is often used to achieve a meditative state.

### **PRECAUTIONS:**

- Use of euphoric oil such as clary sage is not compatible with alcohol consumption or recreational drug use.
- This oil should be avoided throughout pregnancy and never used on infants or children under 18.

## **FRANKINCENSE**

The frankincense tree grows in India and Middle Eastern and African countries, including Oman, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia. Its milky-white resin hardens into orange-brown "tears," which when steamed produce an essential oil with a fresh, woody, fragrance with balsamic, smokey tones. Frankincense has been used for centuries in purification rites of Judaic, Christian and Islamic religions to remove negativity and was a gift of the Magi to the infant Jesus. This oil, used as a disinfectant and perfume fixative, is also an ingredient for incense. Generally, it is calming, uplifting and rejuvenating.

Frankincense is one of the best essential oils for skin care, an excellent therapy for dry, sensitive or mature skin that has lost its elasticity. This oil is used to restore skin tone and prevent wrinkles. It also helps reduce scars and stretch marks. Additionally, frankincense oil is helpful in the treatment of asthma, bronchitis, coughing spell, sinusitis, cold and sore throat. Medical research was conducted in 2008 at the University of Connecticut and the U.C.

Davis in California, using a frankincense compound to successfully treat osteoarthritis of the knee.

This is the most valuable essential oil for inducing slow, deep breathing, alleviating fear and developing courage and emotional strength. It is also an aid for eliminating sadness, anxiety, nervous tension, stress, and nightmares. Frankincense inspires prayer, meditation and mystical states of mind.

## **LAVENDER**

Lavender oil comes from the purple or violet flowers of a bushy shrub with gray or green leaves grown globally, but the most desirable comes from France and England. The colorless to pale yellow-green oil has a clean, floral fragrance, slightly sweet, with subtle balsamic or woody undertones. Known as the Queen of Essential Oils, or the cure-all oil, lavender is the best all-around essential oil. It blends well with other essences and boosts their effectiveness. If you can have only one oil, make it lavender. This oil, believed to activate the pineal gland in the brain, balances and normalizes body functions, as well as emotions, and has been used for thousands of years for its soothing, calming and relaxing effect. Lavender is frequently used in skin care products, perfume, soap and household cleaners. It can be used safely on children and infants when diluted in a carrier oil or lotion.

Lavender is an excellent analgesic for muscle ache/spasm and headache when used in massage oil or bath water. It is effective for relieving symptoms of cold, sinus congestion and bronchitis, as well as for counteracting virus and infection. Oil of lavender can be applied undiluted (neat) directly on flesh wounds and burns, including sunburn, to relieve pain, combat infection and speed healing and skin restoration. Lavender is both a

treatment for insect bites, as well as an insect repellent. Other skin conditions treated with lavender are acne and itching due to allergies.

The aroma of lavender helps control irritability, anger, anxiety, mood swings, hyperactivity and insomnia. The cooling effect of this soothing oil aids insight, rationality, clear thinking and meditation.

### **PRECAUTION:**

- Lavender should be avoided during the first three months of pregnancy.

## **MARJORAM**

Marjoram, a bushy herb with dark silver-green leaves, downy stem and clusters of tiny, pinkish white flowers, yields a colorless oil with a spicy, warm, woody aroma. It's been used in perfume, ointment and as a food flavoring since the time of Ancient Egypt. Marjoram is known as "the great comforter" for its strong and powerful sedating effect.

Marjoram helps with all types of pain because it dilates blood vessels and creates a warming effect and improves circulation. It is successful in reducing sharp, steady pain from migraine headache, sore muscles, stiff joints, even chronic pain of arthritis and rheumatism. An abdominal massage with marjoram oil relieves constipation and flatulence. Marjoram's heavily sedating property is anaphrodisiac and helps reduce sexual desire during celibacy.

Emotionally, marjoram oil is effective when dealing with grief, extreme

melancholy or loneliness. Marjoram can also be used for hyperactivity(ADD/ADHD) hysteria, obsession (OCD) and trauma (PTS), as well as insomnia. Inhaling this soothing aroma gives comfort, solace, fortitude, inner strength and endurance.

### **PRECAUTIONS:**

- Marjoram can be numbing and should be used with discretion. Excessive, or long-term use should be avoided to prevent dulling of the senses.
- Marjoram should be avoided throughout pregnancy.

## **NEROLI**

Neroli, also called orange blossom, is the pale yellow oil from deeply fragrant white flowers of the Seville orange. It has a delicate, fresh floral fragrance with a strong, bitter-sweet undertone and is an ingredient in many popular perfumes. The oil is associated with innocence and purity, like the blossom, a traditional wedding flower, from which it is extracted. The fragrance emanating from the bridal bouquet is believed to soothe the nerves of an anxious bride or groom. The aroma is calming, uplifting and mildly hypnotic. This hauntingly beautiful fragrance is one of the costliest essential oils.

Neroli oil is a cell regenerator and is effective in noticeably rejuvenating all skin types, especially mature, dry and sensitive skin. Neroli tones facial skin and muscle, making it a choice ingredient in skin-care products, massage or bath oil. A neroli massage in the abdominal region will relieve intestinal spasms related to diarrhea.

Neroli is the recommended choice of aromatherapists for treating chronic anxiety, disappointment, and shock. It helps alleviate depression, despair, panic attacks, hysteria and post-traumatic stress (PTS), and instills confidence, initiative and optimism. Neroli is a subtle aphrodisiac, particularly helpful in overcoming shyness, nerves or fear of sexual encounter. The cheerful, uplifting property of this oil aids meditation, creative thinking and healing on all levels of body, mind and spirit.

## **ROSE**

Rose bushes, familiar to everyone, yield an essential oil from flower petals, ranging in color from pale pink to deep scarlet red. The most common species for aromatherapy are the Damascus, Cabbage or French Rose. "Rose otto," obtained by water distillation, is the most expensive essential oil on the market, between \$500 and \$1,400 per ounce, or \$1.25 to \$4.00 per drop. This clear to pale yellow oil has a delicate, subtle aroma that is light, sweet and spicy.

"Rose Absolute," distilled with solvent (alcohol), varies in color from orange to brown and has a deep, dusky and honeyed aroma, much stronger than rose otto, but available at half the price. Some aromatherapists consider rose absolute inferior, but other than a difference in fragrance, the properties and benefits of rose otto and rose absolute are generally the same.

The rose is considered by many the most regal of flowers, the finest and most elegant flower in the garden. It traditionally symbolizes true love and its essential oil is a tonic for the physical heart as well as emotions. It is a tender, uplifting and soothing aroma that has been used for centuries to heal

both heart and soul.

A rose oil massage or bath is a preferred treatment for female reproductive problems including premenstrual cramps and emotionality (PMS), menopause, and postpartum depression. Rose oil is also a choice ingredient in skin-care products for all skin types, but especially for treating mature, dry or sensitive skin. This essential oil is an aphrodisiac for both men and women, alleviating sexual anxiety and inspiring confidence in one's ability to express sensuality.

Essential oil of rose alleviates sadness, disappointment and grief, while nurturing and strengthening the inner spirit. It creates a comforting feeling that allows one to experience and express love toward others, as well as themselves.

### **PRECAUTION**

- Rose oil should be avoided in early pregnancy, especially if there is a history of miscarriage, but it is perfectly safe in the second and third trimesters.

## **SANDALWOOD**

Sandalwood oil is distilled from roots and heartwood from the inner part of the sandalwood tree, an evergreen whose wood is among the strongest and heaviest in the world. Its pale to dark yellow essential oil is the richest and longest lasting of essential oils and the beautiful fragrance is enhanced with time, rather than becoming rancid as most oils when they age. The sweet, woody aroma with touches of balsam and spice has a balancing, harmonizing

effect on the psyche and has been used in religious rituals for thousands of years to aid prayer and meditation. Sandalwood is appealing to both male and female senses and is widely used to make perfume for both sexes, as well as incense. The fragrance is erotic, relaxing and uplifting.

Indian sandalwood is the finest and most desirable. However, it has become an endangered species and its oil is consequently quite costly. Australian sandalwood oil, approximately half the price of Indian sandalwood, is considered a satisfactory and comparable substitute by most aromatherapy experts.

Sandalwood is the main essential oil for treating bronchitis and laryngitis, because of its antiseptic as well as soothing and calming properties. It is also used for the treatment of urinary and bladder infections and fluid retention. Its astringent and balancing quality makes sandalwood appropriate for treating acne and other skin and scalp conditions resulting from dry, flaky skin. Sandalwood in massage oil or bath water is an overall body and mind relaxer, good for tension headaches and insomnia.

Sandalwood relieves sadness, aggression and obsessive thinking. It's a powerful aphrodisiac, especially when frigidity or impotence result from stress, depression or feelings of isolation.

**PRECAUTION:**

- Sandalwood oil should not be applied neat (undiluted) to skin.

**SPEARMINT**

Essential oil of spearmint is distilled from the pink or lilac flowers at the head of this busy herb with spear-shaped, green leaves that grow to approximately 3 feet. The pale yellow-green oil has a fresh, minty aroma, similar to peppermint but sweeter and milder. This is an excellent, less harsh alternative to peppermint for children. It's a common flavoring in chewing gum, candy, food and medication because of its sweet, cooling, and calming effect. Spearmint tea makes an excellent bedtime drink. Ancient Greeks used spearmint in bath water for its antiseptic and refreshing properties.

Spearmint essential oil works well for chronic respiratory problems, such as bronchitis and sinusitis and accompanying headache or chest pain. It also is used for common digestive problems caused by tension or spasm. When massaged on the abdomen this oil will relax stomach muscles and relieve hiccups, nausea, vomiting, flatulence, constipation or diarrhea, and also treats motion sickness. Spearmint is excellent for whitening teeth and promoting healthy gum tissue. When added to a facial cleanser, spearmint clears and tightens pores, leaving skin toned and firm.

Oil of spearmint's uplifting and refreshing properties make it a good choice for alleviating mental fatigue and mild depression. Spearmint also brings a feeling of balance and tranquility during periods of stress or anxiety.

#### **PRECAUTIONS:**

- Although spearmint is a common flavoring in foods and over-the-counter medications, essential oil of spearmint, as with all essential oils, should be ingested only under the direction of a licensed health practitioner.
- Spearmint might irritate eyes or sensitive skin, even when diluted in a carrier.

## **TEA TREE**

Tea tree is actually a shrub with medium green to yellow needlelike leaves; also known as paper bark, tea tree's bark is papery and white. Essential oil extracted from tea tree leaves and twigs is pale yellow with a pungent, spicy, aroma, somewhat like nutmeg, and having a slight camphor odor. Oil of tea tree is the most medicinal essential oil for fighting all three infectious organisms: bacteria, viruses and fungi. Its powerful antiseptic plus immunogenic properties make it a preferred choice for combating a variety of illnesses and ailments. This is an excellent all-around first-aid ointment. Tea tree oil generates penetrating warmth and healing both physically and emotionally.

Essential oil of tea tree can be applied neat (undiluted) to effectively treat skin rash, athlete's foot, nail fungus, cold sores, herpes, insect bites, head lice, skin abrasions and acne. Vaginal yeast infection (candida) can be treated with warm tea tree baths and regular abdominal massage with tea tree in a carrier oil. With steam inhalation and gargling, this oil alleviates cold symptoms and sore throat. Used routinely it prevents colds from developing into bronchitis, sinusitis or laryngitis. Regular baths and massage with tea tree oil help boost the immune system, especially in cases of long term, debilitating illnesses such as mononucleosis or Epstein-Barr Virus. Tea tree, mixed with aloe vera gel, reduces the pain and discomfort associated with shingles.

Tea tree's powerful aroma clears the mind, aids concentration, and counters fatigue. This oil also inspires self-confidence, helps dispel the gloom of chronic illness and fosters a positive, creative attitude toward healing. It also provides a subtle feeling of inner strength and endurance.

## **PRECAUTIONS:**

- Tea tree oil should be used in moderation - a maximum of 4 drops in bath water, and 2% in massage oil or lotion.
- This oil might irritate sensitive skin.

## **YLANG-YLANG**

The essential oil of ylang-ylang is extracted from large yellow tropical flowers of the cananga tree which blooms profusely year-round in Indonesia.

Translated from Malayan, ylang-ylang means 'flower of flowers.' This pale yellow, clear oil has an intensely sweet, almond and floral fragrance, with an exotic, woody and balsamic note. It has an exotic, seductive smell which is soothing, euphoric and sedating, making ylang-ylang a popular ingredient with perfumers and confectioners. 'Ylang-ylang extra,' the highest grade of this oil, is generally preferred for aromatherapy over grades 1, 2 or 3.

The primary medicinal use of ylang-ylang is treatment of high blood pressure (hypertension), heart palpitations and rapid breathing. Ylang-ylang is an ingredient in skin and hair care products for the treatment of excessive oiliness. This oil is a powerful aphrodisiac, useful in the treatment of impotence and frigidity when massaged on the abdomen and groin. The sweet, rich fragrance helps release inhibition and evoke passion.

Ylang-ylang is useful to reduce general stress and tension. It also helps overcome sadness, frustration and anger, as well as more severe emotional problems including panic attacks and post-traumatic stress (PTS). By

creating a feeling of peace and tranquility, ylang-ylang unlocks repressed feelings and aids in meditation, creative thinking and artistic expression. A few drops of ylang-ylang in bath water before bedtime helps relax both mind and body, making it a choice treatment for insomnia.

**PRECAUTIONS:**

- Ylang-ylang should be used in tiny amounts and for short periods of time. Extended or excessive use might result in headache or nausea.
- Blending with a citrus oil, such as bergamot or neroli, to lighten the effect of ylang-ylang helps prevent negative side effects.

# 7

## THE BASIC ESSENTIAL OILS

### **BASIL**

Basil, sometimes called 'sweet basil' or 'holy basil,' is an aromatic herb with yellow-green leaves and tiny white flowers, yielding a watery, pale yellow essential oil. It has a sweet, light mint aroma with hints of licorice or anise, giving it a spicy, fruity, balsamic fragrance. Oil of basil is similar to oil of rosemary, but gentler and more subtle. It's a mild stimulant that awakens the senses and restores stamina. In India, basil is a sacred herb grown as a house plant to protect the dwelling and the spirit of its inhabitants.

Basil is an anti-spasmodic, useful for muscle and digestive spasms when added to massage oil. This is an excellent remedy for menstrual cramps and tension, as well as chest congestion. Basil is also used to counter physical exhaustion, especially from long-term, debilitating illness. This is a good, overall 'pick-me-up' tonic when energy reserves are depleted.

Mental fatigue is greatly alleviated by basil oil, which aids quick thinking and decision making. This is a gentle, all-around mental stimulant useful in countering depression and lethargy, as well as 'psychic exhaustion' or ennui. It's also an aid for clearing the mind prior to meditation.

### **PRECAUTIONS:**

- Basil should be avoided throughout pregnancy, on hyper-sensitive skin and children under the age of 16.
- Use basil sparingly - no more than 2% (6 drops to 1/2 oz) of carrier oil or lotion; avoid prolonged use and refrain from applying neat (undiluted) on skin.

## **CINNAMON LEAF**

The leaves of the cinnamon evergreen tree are used to obtain essential oil of cinnamon, a yellow, watery substance. 'Cinnamon bark' is highly fragrant, and its dark-red/brown essential oil is readily available; however, it's highly irritating on most skin and is seldom recommended for aromatherapy. Essential oil of cinnamon leaf is highly aromatic, with a harsh, sweet and spicy fragrance, somewhat peppery and resembling clove, but stronger and sharper. Cinnamon is used extensively to flavor food and medicine. Cinnamon leaf oil is exhilarating, inspiring and reviving.

Used regularly in a diffuser or vaporizer, cinnamon oil is an excellent preventive for colds and infections from bacteria, virus or fungus. It also speeds recovery during respiratory illness. An abdominal massage with oil containing cinnamon leaf aids a variety of problems caused by sluggish digestion, including flu symptoms and flatulence. Cinnamon, either in massage oil or bath water, is beneficial for persons with poor circulation who suffer from continual cold hands and feet; this oil will warm body and soul with positive energy. Massaged on joints and spine, cinnamon is a successful remedy for arthritis pain and stiffness.

Cinnamon has life-affirming properties which make it an excellent remedy for feelings of isolation and sadness, as well as lethargy and listlessness. It

brings courage, optimism, and renewed enthusiasm for life's pleasures.

### **PRECAUTIONS:**

- Cinnamon leaf oil should be avoided on sensitive skin
- Use sparingly - no more than 3 drops in bath water or added to 1/2 oz. massage oil or lotion.

## **CLOVE BUD**

The clove is a small, bushy evergreen with dark green, aromatic leaves, bearing fragrant red flowers and purple berries. Rose-pink buds at the center of the blossoms are sun-dried and then distilled to obtain essential oil of clove, a fresh, sweet, spicy fragrance, similar to cinnamon but not as fiery or intense. This pale yellow oil has been an ingredient in perfume, medicine and food for thousands of years, dating back to ancient Egypt, China and Rome. Clove's aroma is mysterious, intriguing, gently stimulating and revitalizing. Clove is also highly analgesic, warming and comforting.

Clove oil is a traditional home remedy for toothache pain; applied directly to gum tissue or aching tooth, clove has mild anesthetic properties. It also is an effective breath freshener and cold preventive, due to its antiseptic quality. A clove oil massage is effective in treating muscle ache and joint stiffness associated with rheumatism and arthritis. A reliable cure for winter chills, as well as 'the blahs,' is a warm soak with clove bath oil. Clove also works as an appetite stimulant and for relief of flatulence, indigestion, and nausea.

Clove is excellent for mental and emotional negativity due to a physical

ailment. Generally, it's an excellent tonic for energizing and reviving the psyche and restoring a positive attitude.

### **PRECAUTIONS:**

- Avoid using on sensitive or dry skin
- Use sparingly - maximum three drops in bath water, or 1/2 ounce massage oil or lotion.

## **EUCALYPTUS**

Approximately twenty of more than 700 species of eucalyptus are used in aromatherapy, each with subtle differences. Basically, the eucalyptus tree is a tall evergreen, sometimes 100 feet (30 meters) high, with dark green leaves from which a colorless to pale yellow essential oil is extracted. The penetrating aroma of eucalyptus oil is sharp, camphorated, balsamic and woody. 'Lemon eucalyptus' is a distinct species so-called because it has a distinct, citrus aroma. Generally, eucalyptus is piercing, clearing and invigorating. It is one of few essential oils whose potency increases with age rather than deteriorates.

Eucalyptus is the most popular essential oil for decongestion from colds, bronchitis and sinusitis, whether the infection is viral, bacterial or fungal. Used with steam inhalation, eucalyptus clears the respiratory system and relieves accompanying sore throat, headache and neuralgia. Eucalyptus oil kills airborne bacteria and is a good room disinfectant and deodorizer when used in a vaporizer or diffuser. Essential oil of eucalyptus is also used as an insect repellent, or treatment for insect bites. Skin rashes and conditions

including shingles respond well to eucalyptus when a few drops of oil are added to bath water. It's also effective when blended with bergamot for treatment of herpes and cold sores.

The purifying and uplifting property of eucalyptus oil makes it an antidote for both mental exhaustion and emotional constriction. It's also a good psychic cleanser for removing negative energy in the home. The fragrance of this oil, especially 'lemon eucalyptus,' is an extremely powerful aid to focus the mind during mental activity, and to maintain concentration. Eucalyptus is also used to clear the mind prior to meditation or during prayer.

## **GERANIUM**

The ornamental garden geranium does not yield an essential oil, and only one of more than 700 varieties of geranium is used in aromatherapy. Essential oil is obtained from the entire geranium plant - stalks, hairy, serrated leaves, and clusters of florets ranging from pink to magenta and red. The fragrance of this light green oil is lemony, and herbal, with soft hints of rose. Far less expensive than essential oil of rose, geranium is an economical substitute. It is often used by perfumers to extend rose oil's efficacy. The aroma is gently refreshing, uplifting, harmonizing and equalizing. It comforts and creates a sense of security and stability.

Geranium stimulates the adrenal cortex and corrects hormonal imbalance, including menstrual cramps and menopausal symptoms. It's antiseptic quality aids in detoxifying the lymph system in addition to healing minor flesh wounds. As a beauty aid, geranium regulates skin glands and prevents excessive oil production. It's gentle stimulating action improves circulation and acts on the urinary system as a mild diuretic. Added to massage oil, with

daily treatment geranium is effective in reducing cellulite. It's also a good personal deodorant, as well as room freshener and insect repellent.

Oil of geranium works as an antidepressant, controls mood swings, nervousness and anxiety. It combats mental fatigue due to stress and overwork. Geranium controls the flow of energy in the body and balances the psyche emotionally and mentally, as well as physically.

## **JASMINE**

Jasmine is a flowering shrub with fine green leaves and delicate white blossoms whose oil is extracted only with solvent, which produces 'Jasmine absolute,' the sole type of jasmine essential oil. The fragrance of this dark orange oil is a powerful, exotic floral with a sweet, honey undertone. It takes roughly 1,000 pounds of flowers to produce less than two ounces (4.5 grams) of Jasmine absolute, making this one of the most expensive essential oils in aromatherapy. Jasmine is picked at night when its perfume is strongest, giving it the title 'queen of the night.' Oil of jasmine is euphoric and mildly hypnotic. Its powerful aphrodisiac quality made it Cleopatra's choice perfume for wooing Marc Anthony. Empress Josephine used jasmine to lure Napoleon Bonaparte. Jasmine oil is intoxicating, liberating and revitalizing.

Jasmine is an excellent skin-care ingredient, particularly suited to mature skin that needs to be rejuvenated. A few drops of jasmine absolute in a warm bath eases muscle spasm, joint stiffness and the pain of sprained ligaments. Jasmine effectively treats the reproductive systems of both men and women. An abdominal or back massage with jasmine oil eases labor pain during childbirth and helps alleviate the discomfort of an enlarged prostate gland. The powerful aphrodisiac action of jasmine absolute can reignite

passion in the most troubled sexual relationships.

Oil of jasmine, an antidepressant of a stimulating nature, is the best choice for restoring confidence in those who suffer debilitating vacillation, lethargy and indecision. Jasmine dispels fear, paranoia and pessimism. The positive qualities of jasmine unlock repressed emotions, elevate thinking, and foster insight and wisdom.

## **LEMON**

Lemon essential oil is cold pressed from the rind of the common citrus fruit which grows on small trees year-round. This pale yellow-green oil should not be confused with oil of 'lemongrass,' 'lemon-petitgrain,' or 'lemon balm.' which have different properties and uses in aromatherapy. Oil of lemon's fragrance is a light, clean, slightly sweet scent similar to fresh lemon rind but richer, more intense and longer lasting. This oil is used extensively in perfume, medicine, personal care products, and household cleaners, in addition to being a popular food flavoring. Lemon is often blended with other flavorings and fragrances to enhance their properties. The aroma is invigorating, refreshing and purifying.

Lemon oil's astringent and antibacterial qualities make it useful for cleansing wounds as well as detoxifying the circulatory, respiratory and lymphatic systems. Lemon oil neutralizes acid and is useful in treating rheumatism, gout, or an overly acidic stomach. It's also useful for halting the spread of bacterial infections, colds, and sore throats. As an ingredient in beauty products, lemon oil is exceptionally good for dull, oily skin, dark spots, and varicose veins, when added to lotions, massage oil or bath water. A drop or two of lemon oil added to shampoo or final rinse water gives hair a bright, sparkling sheen, regardless of natural color. A lemon oil bath is

recommended for physical exhaustion as well as mental fatigue.

Lemon oil helps eliminate confusion and aids quick thinking, decision making and concentration. It is excellent for clearing the mind prior to meditation. The aroma of lemon clears negative vibrations and creates warm, comfortable feelings toward others.

### **PRECAUTIONS:**

- Essential lemon oil is photosensitive and should not be used on skin 24 hours prior to exposure to sunlight.
- Avoid using on sensitive skin.
- Use sparingly - maximum three drops in bath water, or 1/2 ounce of massage oil or lotion.

## **PATCHOULI**

The patchouli bush has large, soft, hairy leaves and pale pink flowers. The leaves are dried and fermented for several days before they are distilled to obtain an exotic, dark orange essential oil. The heavy fragrance is sweet, spicy and woody, slightly balsamic and smoky. Patchouli is a powerful ingredient in perfume and is used as a deodorizer and moth repellent in carpeting, clothing and other woven fabrics. It's also an aphrodisiac for both male and female. The distinct, strong aroma is uplifting, balancing, regenerative and sensual.

Patchouli is a beneficial skin care ingredient for mature, oily skin and

conditions such as dandruff, dermatitis or athlete's foot. Its regenerative properties are effective in skin cell renewal, particularly with scar tissue. Patchouli treats insect and snake bites, in addition to being an effective bug repellent. Sexual desire and passion are stimulated when patchouli is worn as perfume, or added to oil for an abdominal massage. Patchouli helps both male impotence and female frigidity.

Patchouli is excellent for stress-related emotional imbalance, including anxiety, nervousness and anger. It is useful for treating procrastination due to confusion or depressive, negative thoughts. Patchouli's earthy smell grounds and centers the psyche. It's used to remedy spaced-out thinking and excessive day dreaming. Patchouli has been used to reduce cravings during withdrawal from drug or tobacco addiction.

## **PEPPERMINT**

Peppermint essential oil, one of several mints used in aromatherapy, is distilled from pale purple, flowering tops or downy leaves of the peppermint plant. The pale green oil is nearly colorless with a fresh, penetrating smell and a hint of grass and camphor, similar to spearmint but more pungent. Peppermint is one of the oldest and most important natural drugs, dating back thousands of years to ancient Egypt and Greece. It's used throughout the world today in over-the-counter medications and to flavor food, gum and candy. A menthol content from 50 to 85% gives peppermint oil its minty aroma and creates a unique sensation which simultaneously cools and stimulates. The bold action of peppermint is soothing, refreshing and energizing.

Peppermint is the principal essential oil for a variety of digestive maladies. A gentle abdominal massage with peppermint oil will help relieve irritable bowel

syndrome, diarrhea, flatulence, constipation, colon spasm, motion sickness, vomiting or nausea. Peppermint's analgesic properties have relieved headaches for many years. Diluted in a carrier oil, peppermint oil rubbed on temples, forehead and neck helps even chronic migraine headache. A peppermint massage is also good for arthritis, muscle ache or spasm in legs or feet, and menstrual cramps. As a decongestant and expectorant, peppermint oil massaged on the chest will treat colds, cough, bronchitis, sinusitis and asthma. The anti-viral property of peppermint fights influenza, herpes, yeast infection and athlete's foot. As a powerful antiseptic, peppermint oil treats bad breath, tooth decay and gum disease.

Peppermint oil when inhaled improves mental clarity, alertness, concentration and intuitive thinking. It is excellent for treating mental fatigue, as well as feelings of insecurity, inferiority or apathy. Here's an excellent, restorative tonic, an overall pick-me-up.

### **PRECAUTIONS:**

- Essential oil of peppermint might cause an allergic reaction, especially on sensitive skin, and should only be used in a carrier oil, lotion or bath water.
- Avoid using oils or lotions with peppermint oil on children under 5 years old; a severe choking reaction to menthol might occur.

## **PINE NEEDLE**

The towering Scotch pine, an evergreen with characteristic red bark, yields oil from its branches, cones and needle-like leaves. The preferred source of

essential oil for aromatherapy is pine needles. This colorless clear oil has a fresh, earthy, balsamic fragrance with a subtle touch of turpentine. Pine oil is a powerful antiseptic traditionally added to soap, cleaners and deodorants, as well as men's cologne. It is used in saunas and steam baths for a dual cleansing/energizing effect. The piercing aroma is revitalizing, warming and invigorating.

Pine is a primary essential oil for clearing phlegm from the lungs and respiratory system and is used for simple colds, as well as chronic sinusitis, bronchitis, hay fever or allergy. Pine is antiseptic and kills both bacteria and viruses. Added to a vaporizer, pine will ease breathing for asthma sufferers as well as disinfect room air. Pine also provides a stimulating analgesic massage for headache or neuralgia. Pine, in a compress or massage lotion, alleviates sports injuries, sprains and muscle strain from over exertion. A pine bath treats cystitis in addition to gently stimulating and reviving weak kidney or bladder function and serving as a mild diuretic. It's an excellent ingredient to include in massage treatments for cellulite.

Oil of pine is good for relieving fatigue and mental exhaustion stemming from irritability and tension. Pine oil diffused into the air clears the psyche, removing feelings of guilt and inspiring self-confidence, acceptance and forgiveness. A mist of pine will clear a physical space of stagnant, negative vibrations and provide a comfortable atmosphere for meditation.

## **PRECAUTION:**

- Pine can be irritating to sensitive skin, even when diluted in bath water, massage oil or lotion.

## **ROSEMARY**

Rosemary is a bushy shrub with silver-green leaves and a profusion of sky-blue flowers, from which essential oil is extracted. This thin, colorless oil has a sweet, herbaceous aroma with touches of balsam and camphor, giving rosemary a slightly medicinal, fresh odor. Historically, rosemary is believed to create a shield of protection around the psyche to ward off negativity and is used for this purpose in wedding and funeral rituals. Commercially, rosemary is a traditional ingredient in hair and skin care products. Rosemary is calming, comforting, invigorating and balancing.

A few drops of rosemary oil in shampoo, conditioner or rinse water will stimulate the scalp, correct dandruff, and encourage growth of strong, healthy hair with natural shine and highlights. Rosemary in facial products will revitalize mature, dull skin. A warming, rosemary body massage stimulates circulation, loosens stiff joints and alleviates muscle ache, spasm and the pain of neuralgia, arthritis, rheumatism and gout. This oil has powerful antiseptic qualities and, when diffused into the air, halts the spread of airborne infection. A morning bath with rosemary oil helps jump-start the day, even relieving an alcohol hangover.

Rosemary is the strongest essential oil for aiding brain function. Rosemary provides mental structure, stability and strength during times of emotional stress, negativity and confusion. Rosemary, popular with students and writers, enhances memory. A few drops, diffused into the air or dabbed on wrists while studying or writing, clears the mind and stimulates creative thinking as well as intuitive vision. This oil encourages practical thinking and aids in problem solving on physical, emotional and spiritual levels. Rosemary oil or incense are traditional aids for centering and focusing the mind prior to meditation.

## **PRECAUTION:**

- Use of rosemary oil is not recommended during pregnancy, in cases of epilepsy, or when fever is present.

## **THYME**

Thyme is a bushy shrub with small green leaves and white flowers. Essential oil of thyme is extracted both from leaves and white top flowers. There are more than 150 species of thyme. The most powerful is 'red thyme,' recognized by its orange- or brown-red color. The recommended use in aromatherapy for red thyme is air diffusion, due to its high concentration of phenol, a strong skin irritant. A milder variety is 'thyme linalol,' a pale yellow, thin liquid, recommended for skin application diluted in a carrier oil or bath water. Some manufacturers produce 'white thyme essential oil,' a colorless oil, which is a multi-distillation of red thyme and less irritating on skin.

All varieties of thyme smell the same to a degree, red thyme being the most intense. The aroma is spicy, sweet, woody and slightly medicinal. Thyme oil was used in ancient Egypt, Rome and Greece in baths, burners and massage oil as a disinfectant and to fill the atmosphere with its pleasing herbal fragrance. Thyme's effect is energizing, strengthening, purifying and re-balancing.

Thyme is the major essential oil used to fight infection, either bacterial or viral. It aids in production of white blood cells, strengthens the immune system, and is preventive against colds, sore throat and influenza. Thyme stimulates production of red blood cells, thereby increasing oxygen throughout the body and bringing renewed vigor. It is used during illness to

regulate a depressed appetite and improve sluggish digestion or poor elimination, including constipation. This essential oil simultaneously enlivens and calms bodily systems, restoring strength and stamina, especially in cases of chronic fatigue as well as accompanying lack of sexual interest, frigidity or impotence.

Essential oil of thyme is useful emotionally in cases of lethargy, melancholia and depression, including postpartum. For its grounding and re-balancing action, thyme is used to treat mental 'spacey-ness,' unrealistic thinking and lack of motivation. Thyme gives a feeling of courage, determination and resolve.

**PRECAUTIONS:**

- Avoid every variety of thyme during pregnancy and in cases of high-blood pressure.
- Red thyme is not appropriate for use in massage oil or bath water, nor with children.