

Scents and Sensibilities

DECORATING WITH SMELL

BY SUSAN LANIER-GRAHAM

Scent is power. Of all the five senses, the sense of smell usually evokes the strongest response in humans—memories, moods, appetites, even sensuality. Most women are especially sensitive to smells. Creating home ambience through scent is one of the best ways to put the finishing touches on any space.

While your mother had cans of spray and jelly-like room fresheners, today you have an abundance of ways to create the perfect aroma in your home. Knowing what's available and how to use them will help you create that perfect mood.

USING SCENTS

No matter what style you use, how much color you introduce, or how lavish the furnishings, if the smell doesn't invite people in, your house will never feel like home. Sometimes, it can even elicit negative feelings. If you learn to layer scents and play with combinations of smells, you create a long-lasting fragrance that will transform your home into an experience.

One of the best ways to layer scents and create a long-lasting effect is to use compatible aromas in a variety of forms. You can use the same or complementary candles, potpourri, incense and oils. For example, you can simmer a kettle of cinnamon vanilla tea and use cinnamon and vanilla candles throughout a room to create a warm, inviting space.

Realtors encourage sellers to evoke a feeling of coming home by using scents. The aroma of cinnamon and cookies will pull buyers in and make them feel comfortable. To



create the right mood for buyers, add a pot of water and any combination of allspice, cinnamon, cloves, ginger, orange peel or vanilla to your stovetop and simmer slowly. If you want to create a smell like fresh baked apple pie, sprinkle cinnamon and sugar in a metal pie pan and burn slowly on the stovetop over a very low temperature. You can also place vanilla extract in a metal pan and warm it in the oven to create the illusion of fresh-baked cookies. Once you remove the ingredients, the smell lasts for hours. If you combine it with complementary smells, the mood lingers for days.

CANDLES AND INCENSE

Candles, used for thousands of years to create a mood and change or mask smells, are perhaps the easiest tool in your scent arsenal. Candles are relaxing and warming, and the smell of even an unburned candle can waft throughout a room. The most common type of candle is made from petroleum-based paraffin and is available in a wide variety of scents and smells. You can also find candles made from beeswax, which burn longer and produce less soot. One of the newer and increasingly popular types of candle is made from soybeans. The biodegradable soy candles last about 50% longer than paraffin candles, burn cooler, are less toxic, and are less likely to trigger allergies. You can now also find scented wax beads. Place those in a simmer pot, available from any candle store, and the beads release scent as they melt.

Incense is a mix of plant matter—leaves, flowers, barks, roots—and is usually combined with oils extracted from the plants. For most homes, cones and stick incense offer convenience and easy clean up. Be sure you have the proper incense burner. When using stick incense, light the tip, and then carefully wave the incense stick through the air to put out the fire. Set the stick in the holder and it will send out waves of fragrance as the smolders.

POTPOURRI

Potpourri is also a common way to scent a home, is long lasting, and blends nicely with a complementary candle. You can purchase pre-packaged potpourri at stores, usually made from a combination of dried flowers, spices and aromatic oils.

If you prefer, you can also make your own potpourri. See the recipe section for some easy and aromatic potpourris.

ESSENTIAL OILS

Another age-old way to mask smells or create a specific ambiance is by using essential oils. More common today and usually a major component in aromatherapy, essential oils are distilled from the elements of a plant. Experiment with combinations that appeal to you and reflect the season or your moods. Cinnamon and pine brings memories of winters by the fire; citrus oils remind you of fresh spring days; while mint, basil and grass oils takes you back to lazy summer days. Common relaxing oils include vanilla, sandalwood and lavender. Uplifting and energizing oils include lemon, orange and peppermint.

To best use essential oils in your home, dilute the oil in distilled water and spray on sheets, upholstery and carpets. You can also place a few drops on an unlit, unscented candle or pair the oil with a complementary scented candle; simmer a few drops of the oils in water on your stovetop; place oils in an oil burner; or place a few drops of the oils on a ceramic light ring that you then place on a light bulb.

where to shop for aroma items

Candle & Gift Factory Outlet

2230 E. Indian School Road
Phoenix
602.522.2704
www.candleoutlet.com

Claire Burke

Sea Sights Sun LLC
5900 N. Granite Reef Road
Scottsdale

Essentials and More

6137 N. Scottsdale Road
Scottsdale
www.essentialsandmore.com

L'Artisan Parfumeur

Order online directly from France
www.laboutiquedelartisanparfumeur.com

L'Occitane en Provence

Scottsdale Fashion Square
Scottsdale
480.425.3526
<http://usa.loccitane.com>

The White Barn Candle Company

Desert Ridge Marketplace, Phoenix
480.419.2714
The Pavilions, Scottsdale
480.483.1763
Scottsdale Fashion Square
480.947.9050
The Summit at Scottsdale
480.575.5586

Yankee Candle Company

Fancy That

10625 N. Tatum Blvd
Phoenix
480.607.2747

The Yankee Candle Company

Scottsdale Fashion Square
480.663.0400

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The smells paint landscapes in your home, filling your rooms with memories, emotions and moods.



ROOM SPRAYS AND OTHER PRODUCTS

Most of us are familiar with the room sprays you can purchase at the supermarket. However, you can create a natural alternative to chemical sprays by using essential oils in distilled water. You can also combine fresh scents such as lavender or vanilla with distilled water and use as a linen spray.

There is nothing more delicious than a freshly scented home. The smells paint landscapes in your home, filling your rooms with memories, emotions and moods—and create new memories. ✨

Home Scent Recipes

Potpourris are the easiest and most fun home scents to make. Changing the potpourri with the seasons not only changes the colors for an appealing decoration, but it can help bring out the smells of the seasons.

Spicy Summer Potpourri

Use amounts of the following items that appeal to your sense of smell and that make an aesthetically pleasing display. Ensure that all of the items are thoroughly dried.

Try: orange peel, marigolds, chrysanthemums, lavender, asters, Queen Anne's lace, star anise seeds, cinnamon sticks, whole cloves.

Once mixed, sprinkle the ingredients with about 10 drops of sweet orange essential oil, lavender essential oil and clove essential oil. Store in an airtight container for about two weeks to mix scents. Refresh as necessary with a few more drops of the oils.

Rose Potpourri

1 ½ quarts of dried rose petals or tiny rose buds or a combination of both
1 cup of dried lemon verbena, lemon-scented geranium or lemon balm
1 cup of dried rose leaves
1 cup of lavender
½ cup of dried orrisroot
Several drops of rose oil

Mix all the dried ingredients. Add the oil and gently mix. Seal in an airtight container for at least two weeks.

Sweet Green Mist

This recipe yields 5 cups of mist. Place in spray bottles and keep in every room of the house.

20 drops of sweet orange essential oil
10 drops of lavender essential oil
10 drops of eucalyptus essential oil

Use an eyedropper to place all three of the oils in a small glass jar with a lid. Mix well. When you are ready to use, place 4 to 8 drops of the mixture in one cup of purified or distilled water in a spray bottle. Shake well. Store in a cool, dark place.