

Popular Essential Oils for Soap Making

If you're getting into soap making at home, chances are you're already a big fan of evocative scents. The traditional smell of soap is fresh and clean, but it's much more enjoyable to add new and exciting scents to your homemade soaps to make them truly unique.

Soap making is addictive to say the least, but it's a real art and finding the right base recipe is something all soap makers spend a lot of time trying to perfect. After all, a well-made soap can provide a host of wellness benefits, from curing acne to helping relieve depression.

So let's take a closer look at all the 'notes' which go into a winning fragrance melody.

Soap-making top notes

These are the immediate scents which make quick, fleeting impacts on the senses. Soap top notes are fresh and short-lived, but no less evocative than the deeper notes.

Popular soap-making top notes include eucalyptus, bergamot, mandarin and lime. Those zingy, tantalising scents, which make the mouth water and hit you before deeper scents start to develop.

Soap-making middle notes

These more subtle, gentler scents take a little longer for the nose to notice. They provide the main 'body' of the soap's overall scent, and can support and connect your top and base notes beautifully. Middle note essential oils are the key ingredient to a well-rounded soap scent.

Typical middle notes include ginger, peppermint, pine, rose and geranium, among many others. Passionate soapmakers enjoy experimenting with these links from the top, fleeting scents of a soap, to the deeper base notes. Which brings us to...

Soap-making base notes

Your base note essential oils are, as they sound, deep and extremely evocative. Essential oils such as frankincense, ylang ylang, cedarwood and patchouli are all very popular base notes, thanks to their rich, heavy smell and long-lasting impression. Base notes take longer to evaporate, and therefore act as a great fixative in your soap-making blend.

Finding your blend

Scents are incredibly personal, and what smells great to one person might not work for the next. The best way to find a soap-making recipe which suits you is to pick your top, middle and base notes carefully and evenly.

You can use a toothpick to find blends which work for you without much wastage. Choose your recipe of notes, then dip your toothpick into each oil to make it pick up the scent. Then you can pick up various toothpicks and hold them closely together under your nose to find a combination that you like. To be certain that you like it, store the toothpicks together in a container and revisit a few days later to make sure it still fits the bill.

But the best advice in making your own soap is to follow what your nose is telling you. You'll soon be a connoisseur of the finest homemade soap scents, and a far better soap maker as a result!

Aromatherapy and Essential Oils for Valentine's Day

Few things are more evocative for the senses than delicious scents, and aromatherapy could be just the trick to make sure your Valentine's Day plans come off to perfection.

You can enlist the help of essential oils to create a romantic environment in the comfort of your own home, filled to the brim with delicious scents. And the great thing about delicious smells is that they have the power to conjure up memories even decades down the line, meaning your loved one will be reminded of your romantic efforts for many years to come.

So, let's take a look at the oils that simply must play a part in your extra-special Valentine's Day plans.

Floral essential oils

Uplifting and irresistibly delicious, floral scents are an important part of any romantically scented scene. As well as lifting the mood, floral oils can help to moisturise the skin, leaving it baby-soft and smelling delicious.

One of the finest floral essential oils for romance has got to be ylang ylang. These yellow flowers were originally native to Asia, but are now grown in many other tropical locations, meaning ylang ylang is a little easier to come across.

[Ylang ylang essential oil](#) is fantastically soothing and can help to create calmness, as well as being a much-applauded aphrodisiac. Just the ticket for Valentine's Day! But be sure to dilute according to instructions before using on the skin.

Herbal essential oils

Choose your middle note from one of the many herbal essential oils available. These can be tremendously healing and, chosen correctly, can give your aromatherapy massage oils extra aphrodisiac punch.

[Patchouli essential oil](#) is a popular choice from this category. Native to Malaysia but also widely found in South America, India and China, this evocative essential oil is created from distilled fermented leaves. As a result, it provides a deliciously woody, musky scent with a sweet edge. As well as being superb for relaxation, patchouli essential oil can be hugely useful for treating dry, sore skin.

Woody essential oils

Musky scents can be extremely evocative, so they deserve a firm place in any romantic aromatherapy recipe. Woody essential oils are also really good for the skin and have many proven aphrodisiac qualities.

A popular woody base note is [cedarwood essential oil](#). Native to Algeria and Morocco, this delicious oil is distilled from wood, stumps and sawdust from the cedarwood tree. As a result, it's incredibly deep, sweet and musky. It's deep amber in colour and is suitable for most skin types (though shouldn't be used during pregnancy). Its unique scent is similarly pleasing to both men and women, making it the perfect ingredient for a romantic Valentine's Day to remember.

Choosing your carrier oil

If you're planning a romantic massage this Valentine's Day, be sure to pick the right carrier oil for the job. Most essential oils need to be diluted before they're applied to the skin, so use a natural oil such as olive oil or almond oil as your carrier for the best results.

Here's to a very happy Valentine's Day this year!