

A former self-described "fragrance junkie,"

Wendi S. Berger had spent her career at fashion and beauty magazines. "But when I was pregnant and read up on the chemicals in fragrances, I stopped wearing them," she recalls. "We are bombarded with chemicals on a daily basis. If we can find great alternatives to cut some out of our lives, why not?" That led Berger to found the all-natural Pour le Monde Parfums.

As people are living healthier lifestyles, they're becoming more aware that what they put on their skin is just as important as what they eat. "Our skin is our largest organ, so we want to feed our skin with ingredients found in nature, not in a chemical laboratory," says Chanté Floreani, founder of Root Down Botanicals. "Also, natural fragrances provide therapeutic benefits that synthetic fragrances do not. Essential oils have been shown to promote health and well-being by reducing stress, improving mood and increasing mental focus."

That explains the boom in the natural →

perfume industry. As the options have grown, natural perfumes have become more sophisticated—and accessible—as well. "Natural perfumers have always made complex perfumes with thousands of oils in any given formula," says Nannette Pallrand, owner of Nature Girl and Rich Hippie. "Now we have more boutiques and places where one can buy this type of product."

Unlike traditional perfumes,
natural ones don't come with
health risks. "Natural fragrances
are derived from real plants,
flowers, barks, roots and leaves,"
says Brian Paulsen, president and
co-founder of Rare Earth Naturals. "They
contain the life-force energy of the plants
and have verifiable, scientifically proven benefits.
In contrast, 95 percent of synthetic fragrances are made

from petrochemicals. Of the thousands of these synthetic fragrance chemicals, fewer than 300 have ever been tested for safety on humans, and

certainly not in the combinations that manufacturers are using in fragrance

and perfumes."

Paulsen explains that perfume and fragrance chemical manufacturers aren't subject to strict FDA regulations, so they don't have to disclose these chemicals to consumers. Many synthetic fragrances contain neurotoxins, which are toxic to the brain, as well as phthalates that damage the endocrine system. Some traditional ingredients are also linked to allergies and cancer, and can cause watery eyes, skin irritations and other consequences.

Phthalates, which are also commonly used in nail

# Scent-sational

Get the most out of your natural fragrance by choosing one that fits your needs

For relaxing...

## Evening: Relax & Unwind by Root Down Botanicals

The sweet, spicy floral of ylangylang soothes the body, while bergamot adds a dash of citrus. \$33; rootdownbotanical.com

For a little romance...

## Lilura by Rare Earth Naturals

A sensuous perfume with three predominant notes: jasmine sambac, sandalwood and davana. The latter is an oil from davana flowers that has been used for centuries in India for fertility ceremonies.

\$21; rareearthnaturals.com

## For an energy boost...

#### **Empower by Pour le Monde**

The unisex citrus invigorates with its top notes of crisp lemon, Persian lime, Italian bergamot, Brazilian orange and Florida grapefruit.

\$95; pourlemondeparfums.com

For a mood lift...

#### Kalachakra by Rich Hippie

An organic blend of Bulgarian white Alba rose, Egyptian rose, Turkish rose, Indian jasmine and Tunisian orange blossom creates a rich, sweet scent. \$235; rich-hippie.com

For balance... -

## Silky Rose by Acorelle

Essential oils of geranium and rose help harmonize the body and give a boost in self-confidence and enthusiasm. \$55; baudelairesoaps.com

For restoration...

## Peloponnesian by Strange Invisible Perfumes

Notes of mountain sage honey,
Aegean sea air, hydro-distilled
lime, orange, orange flower, botanical musk and cypress conjure
up the ancient scents of the
Peloponnesos in southern Greece.
\$285; siperfumes.com

For an autumnal scent...

## Kesu by Tsi-La Organics

The combination of warm amber, Egyptian jasmine, davana, exotic spices and fresh lime is perfect for fall. \$44; tsilaorganics.com



For well-being...

#### Blue Violet by VERED organic botanicals

"Perfumes can contain up to 5,000 chemicals that women spray on their pulse points and chest area, which go into the bloodstream and cause a lot of health and hormone imbalance," says master esthetician and gifted herbalist Vered Back. "So it was very important to me to create an organic perfume that will not harm anyone but will actually benefit them physically, mentally and spiritually."

Made with 100 percent organic ethically sourced and wild-crafted

therapeutic essential oils, Blue Violet, the soft, sexy, heart-healing new perfume from Vered Back—with notes of woodsy green floral, violet and a touch of yuzu, a known stress reliever—is totally unique, utterly feminine and absolutely irresistible. veredbotanicals.com—Rona Berg

