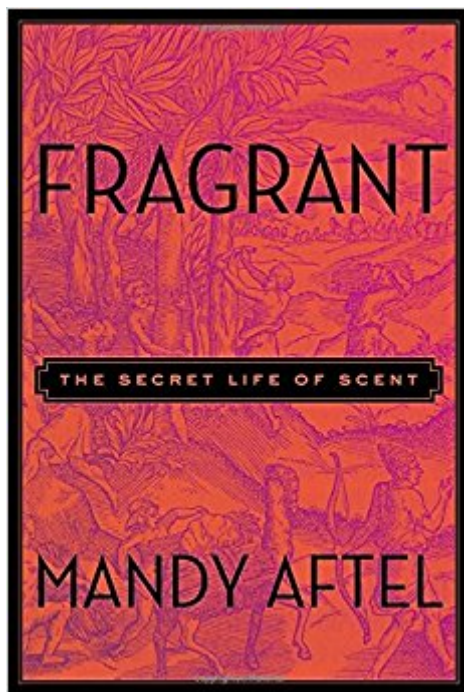


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# Fragrant: The Secret Life Of Scent



## Synopsis

Winner of the 2016 Perfumed Plume AwardThe “Alice Waters of American natural perfume” (indieperfume.com) celebrates our most potent sense, through five rock stars of the fragrant world. Look out for Mandy Aftel’s new book, *The Art of Flavor*, on sale in August! Mandy Aftel is widely acclaimed as a trailblazer in natural perfumery. Over two decades of sourcing the finest aromatic ingredients from all over the world and creating artisanal fragrances, she has been an evangelist for the transformative power of scent. In *Fragrant*, through five major players in the epic of aroma, she explores the profound connection between our sense of smell and the appetites that move us, give us pleasure, make us fully alive. Cinnamon, queen of the Spice Route, touches our hunger for the unknown, the exotic, the luxurious. Mint, homegrown the world over, speaks to our affinity for the familiar, the native, the authentic. Frankincense, an ancient incense ingredient, taps into our longing for transcendence, while ambergris embodies our unquenchable curiosity. And exquisite jasmine exemplifies our yearning for beauty, both evanescent and enduring. In addition to providing a riveting initiation into the history, natural history, and philosophy of scent, *Fragrant* imparts the essentials of scent literacy and includes recipes for easy-to-make fragrances and edible, drinkable, and useful concoctions that reveal the imaginative possibilities of creating with—and reveling in—aroma. Vintage line drawings make for a volume that will be a treasured gift as well as a great read.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Praise for *Â Fragrant: The Secret Life of Scent* Named one of *Â Time Magazine* *Â* and Flavorwire's Best Fall Reads *Â* *Â* "Aftel could be considered the scent world's Alice Waters. *Â* | She writes passionately about scent *Â* | pass[ing] through the histories of [her five] *Â* "landmark scents *Â* • like an anthropologist jotting down field notes. *Â* | A welcome perspective. *Â* • *Â* "New York Times" Sublime... *Â* "From astonishing, almost mythic accounts of the ancient spice trade to easy-to-follow formulas that will allow readers to try their own hand at perfumery, *Â Fragrant* *Â* is a lush must-read for all lovers of perfume. *Â* • *Â* • Elle "Mandy Aftel's seductive *Â Fragrant* *Â* plumbs the power of ancient and exotic smells to ignite desire, discovery, and transcendence." *Â* • Vanity Fair "A powerful history of the senses. *Â* "People sailed around the world the wrong way just to get different aromas into their lives, *Â* • explains Aftel. In the spirit of those spice-seeking adventurers, she sets off on a sweeping narrative tour, exploring the role of scent in everything from Greek mythology and classic texts like *One Thousand and One Nights* to its impact on modern medicine, and even flapper-era cocktails." *Â* *Â* *Â* • Vogue *Â* "Aftel writes passionately about our emotional connection with scent, its powers of transcendence and her mission to create perfumes that are the antithesis of overly chemical, mass-produced fragrances *Â* | deftly weaving in the Bible (the scent-drenched Song of Solomon), historic remedies (how to make 19th century Vienna Bitters) *Â* | linguistics (the Sanskrit origins of the word "musk"), literature (Charles Darwin waxing rhapsodic about jasmine), history (the spice route) and science (how frankincense may relieve depression) *Â* • *Â* • Los Angeles Times "Cinnamon, mint, frankincense, ambergris and jasmine seem to waft from the pages as Aftel interprets their history, mythology and ethereality, providing the reader with a heady literary elixir." *Â* • San Francisco Chronicle *Â* *Â* "A valuable recent addition to the perfume nerd *Â* • informational arsenal *Â* | Reading [Aftel *Â* •] book makes a person wearing perfume feel connected to every human in every era who has ever done so. *Â* • *Â* • Bookforum *Â* "This fall's most compelling tome of highbrow nonfiction by a Berkeley author *Â* | is [this] authoritatively voiced, utterly fascinating, fact-laden look into the surprisingly complex world of scent. *Â* • *Â* • San Francisco Magazine *Â* "Aftel offers intriguing insight into world cultures through the history of five key scents *Â* • including why *Â* mint tea is a sign of hospitality in the Middle East, and how the Dutch policed the cinnamon black market in Ceylon. *Â* • *Â* • Food & Wine *Â* "A fascinating mixture of history and personal anecdotes about perfume and the role scent plays in our lives. *Â* • *Â* • Largehearted Boy "A strong case for the powerful sense properties of scent." *Â* • Bay Area Reporter *Â* "Sumptuous and

gorgeous. I want to give [Fragrant] to every woman I love. Sophie Uliano, *Gorgeously Green* “Working with archetypical aromas cinnamon, mint, frankincense, ambergris and jasmine- Mandy uses aroma as muse and guide into an exceptionally well documented unfolding of the human experience. I’d highly recommend [Fragrant] if you’re at all curious about aromatic ingredients. She’ll teach you how to interact with a perfume how to smell it, think about it, experience it. Best of all, you’ll learn olfactory factoids that are perfect cocktail party fodder. Paths & Errands “Riveting and indulgent. [Fragrant] is a like a well-crafted piece of fine art, or a gourmet meal. You want to savor every single word on every single page. The Girl Who Knows “A Botany of Desire for scent.” Michael Pollan (via Twitter @MichaelPollan) “Masterful storytelling awaits within the pages of Fragrant. We are treated to natural history, adventure, the enmeshing of scent with human civilization. This cornucopia of information is delivered to us engagingly, summoning all of our senses in the process. Scholarly meets sensual, intellectual meets tempestuous, the creative marries the practical. The illustrations and cover art alone would be worth the purchase of this precious volume; they possess a life all their own. Fragrantica “Ms. Aftel’s previous career as a writer along with her experience as a natural perfumer allows for a perfect synergy. [Fragrant] is] as easy to read as a true-life adventure. I learned so much I didn’t know about ingredients I thought I knew a lot about. The section of my bookshelf which houses the books on scent and perfume that I think are essential is pretty small. With the publication of Fragrant it just got one volume bigger. Mark Behnke, Colognoisseur.com “In this sensuous and profound exploration of the history, science, and art of perfume, expert perfumer Aftel seduces readers with a sensualism that only intensifies as her stories unfold. The book is peppered with fascinating trivia [and] recipes and tidbits that entice readers to wake up their noses and perhaps engage in their own scent alchemy. Publisher’s Weekly (starred review) “Aftel’s vast knowledge and passion for perfumery are on full display here, and her personal anecdotes read like an old friend sharing a cherished recipe. Strongly recommended for casual readers interested in the basics of scent and perfumery. Library Journal “Aftel will greatly expand what readers think they know about fragrance as she chronicles the medicinal, culinary and spiritual uses of aromatics from antiquity to the present. [Aftel] doesn’t merely create pleasant aromas; she opens an olfactory portal to the sensual and spiritual appetites that make us feel alive and in the

moment—| Evocative, heady and overflowing with history and lore. —Kirkus Reviews "Fragrant is a thoughtful, beautifully written meditation on scent; I love that Mandy is both intrepid researcher and sensualist, with an innate gift for storytelling and an abiding curiosity in the provenance of her ingredients. This book vividly shows how the aromas of the natural world have the power to open the pathways to our minds, guiding and defining our traditions, our history and our future." —Alice Waters "Reading Mandy Aftel's thoughtful and charmingly written *Fragrant*, I was taken on a journey of intrigue and fascination that operated on all my senses. Who knew there was so much to learn about the human affection for smelling good? Or, indeed, for the adventure of smelling itself." —Alice Walker "Mandy Aftel has been tutoring my nose for many years. I've been lucky enough to make regular pilgrimages to her perfume studio to smell with her through the hundreds of materials in her collection, to browse in her wonderfully eclectic library, to be informed and inspired by her passion for scent in all its forms. In *Fragrant*, she distills that passion into an eloquent account of the forgotten stories of nature's aromatic materials, the pleasure and meaning that they've given to people through the centuries, and simple ways of bringing those riches back into our own lives." —Harold McGee, New York Times columnist and bestselling author of *On Food & Cooking*

Mandy Aftel is an internationally known artisan perfumer and the author of six previous books, including *Essence and Alchemy: A Natural History of Perfume*. Her work has been featured in *The New York Times*, *Vanity Fair*, *Vogue*, *O, The Oprah Magazine*, *Elle*, *In Style*, *W*, and *Bon Appétit*, among many other publications. Aftel lives in Berkeley, California.

A beautifully written book! A poetic integration of sensuality, philosophy, and history. Fascinatingly describes the origins and technicalities behind the production of perfumes, essential oils and other fragrant essences. I inhaled this book (heheheh). You'll learn a lot about the five essences she discusses, and come to more deeply appreciate the sense of smell and all of the feelings and experiences it can elicit within us. I find myself now slowing down and truly relishing scents and exploring them more deeply. On a lighter note, I have a kindle, but I chose to buy the hardcover after seeing it at a bookstore because it is simply gorgeous. A pleasure to hold and look at. With metallic detailing on the cover, it's very eye catching. The photo on the cover doesn't do it justice. A hardcover copy enhanced the reading experience for me. The one star review listed is hogwash, I doubt the reviewer even read the book. Mandy is actually biased against synthetic fragrances. You don't have to be a fragrance hobbyist or connoisseur to enjoy this book and really benefit from it. Treat yourself or a

loved one to this jewel!

A fascinating & fragrant history of scent and its role in our lives - from ancient myths to our everyday interactions with smells. Mandy's book is like stepping into another world, one filled with a magic and sensuality that brings a greater richness to the wonderful - and less wonderful - scents that pervade our lives. Well written and incredibly interesting, it is difficult to put down and hard to contain one's excitement when sharing it with anyone and everyone nearby.

I was hoping for something a bit less cerebral than Turin, but honest and useful on natural perfumery. I'd have liked to see this purged down to about 50 pages, the rest was a bit of a ramble fest that is opinion and personal thought. It seemed to me to be written by an artist, not a writer; in need of edit. However, it has flashes of true brilliance and enjoyable information. Especially the historical recipes and historical information on antiquity. The recipe section is most useful. For that, I am thankful for this read.

Fragrant: the Secret Life of Scent, by Mandy Aftel is one of the best written books about fragrance I have ever read and I do a lot of reading on this subject. Mandy has woven a fascinating story around the history of several spices throughout history and how they came to be used today as it is. This is a book by an author who really knows and loves her subject and wants to share this love of fragrance with her readers. Not only is this a gift but Mandy gives us all the gift of how to make some of her fabulous fragrances and that I truly do appreciate.

Fun read, but lots of opinions stated as fact. If you enjoy scents, this is nice, and does include a few recipes too.

I did like this book. Great info on ingredients. Did tend to go on in places, but worth the read

Beautiful book cover and inside. Love reading Mandy's books, well written and can't put it down. Lots of information from someone who loves what she does. I purchased Essence and Alchemy on kindle and order it with this one. Love that also.

I loved this book, it is beyond fascinating! Mandy is a very original thinker and superb writer. I recommend Fragrant to people all the time, whether they're interested in perfume or history or our

sense of smell, and they love it! It's like a lens that reveals a fantastically rich part of our world that is so often overlooked, highly recommended!

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