



BY SHEENA ADAMS

the healthy gardener

GOOD SCENTS FOR SUMMER

Of all the things we remember, smell may be the most powerful. On a physiological and emotional level, its influence registers deeply. An unpleasant odour can trigger a lifelong food aversion, whereas a delightful fragrance can become deeply ingrained as a pleasing memory. As gardeners we all have a library of much-loved fragrances that we associate with the past: perhaps Grandma's sweet lilacs or the climbing rose over Mom's arbour. More than likely, many of our plant purchases are decided by such good scents.

When considering fragrance, choose plants that

bloom in succession for a long season of enjoyment. Strongly perfumed plants that flower simultaneously should be placed some distance from each other or the result may be overpowering. Feed your fragrant plants *prior* to blooming, not *while* blooming.

One landscaping job I recall fondly was for a wonderful client, Beverly, whose only requirement was fragrance. We decided on winter-blooming Himalayan sweetbox, a collection of fragrant spring bulbs including hyacinth and mini-narcissus, spring-blooming choisya, summer-blooming lilies, roses



Heliotrope 'Marine'

and lavender, and late-blooming autumn clematis. For fragrance that soared into the sky I chose sweet honeysuckle, *Clematis montana* and climbing roses (including a favourite for low light, 'New Dawn').

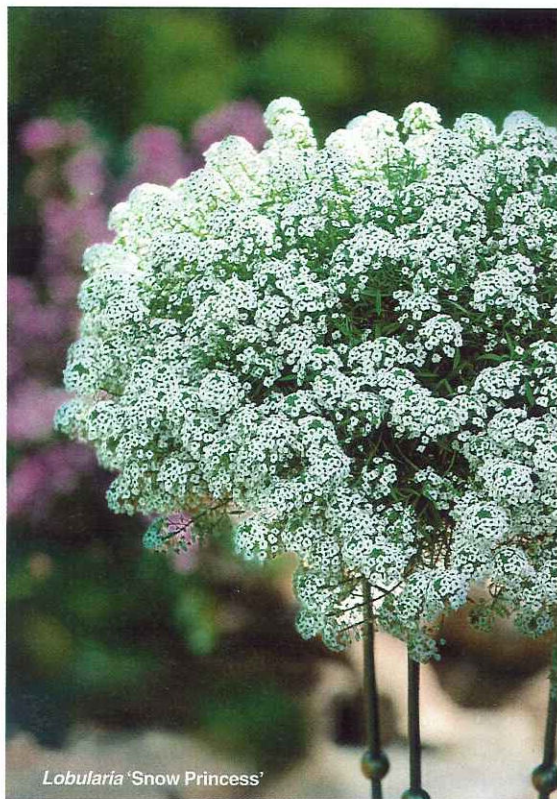
I learned that while fragrance comes in many forms – bulbs, perennials, shrubs, trees, vines – it can also be easily and instantly added each spring in the form of annuals. Inexpensive and in infinite colours and variations, fragrant annuals add that summer wow to our hanging baskets, patio planters and window boxes. They also attract hummingbirds,

butterflies and bees, further extending that feeling of well-being in our gardens.

SHEENA'S BEST FRAGRANT ANNUALS

BASIL BOXWOOD: Amazing basil boxwood has tight mounds of small leaves and resembles boxwood. It is a highly ornamental and fragrant edging for the patio or a container. And the edible leaves are great for pesto! Available from Burpee.

HELIOTROPE 'SIMPLY SCENTSATIONAL': The traditional baby-powder fragrance this plant is famous for is packaged into a soft-purple bloom with a yellow eye,



Lobularia 'Snow Princess'

unlike the traditional blue heliotrope. Deadheading is unnecessary and it's tolerant of salt, drought and heat—perfect for coastal climates. Proven Winners.

HELIOTROPE 'MARINE': This heliotrope is wonderfully exotic with dark-green leaves and large intense-blue flower clusters with an unforgettable vanilla fragrance. Heliotrope's flowers are a first choice for every scented bouquet and will transform a terrace into a perfumed retreat. Proven Winners and Veseys.

LOBULARIA 'SNOW PRINCESS': A fragrant mound of white blooms all summer long, this power plant puts all

How To Make Aromatic Bath and Massage Oils

MANY FORMS of holistic medicine, such as Ayurveda, use aromatherapy to treat ailments of both the mind and body. Oils infused with fresh herbs and blossoms are excellent for calming the heart and gladdening emotions. I believe the fragrance and self-nurturing effect also improve our capacity for perception, reception and compassion.

With the variety of oils, blooms and herbs available, the combinations are endless. Pour the infused oils into beautiful



glass jars as gifts; just be sure to label with the type of oil and plant products, and include instructions to store in the fridge and use externally only.

STEP ONE: Decide on your oil base (see suggestions at right), glass container and plant material. Rinse leaves or petals and let air dry. The amount is a personal choice depending on how fragrant you wish the oil to be; my suggestion is to start with a 1:10 ratio of plant material to oil.

STEP TWO: Using a funnel, pour the oil base into glass jars.

STEP THREE: Tuck the air-dried plant foliage into jars; you may need a wooden chopstick to poke it in. Be gentle with rose petals as they bruise easily. Cover the jar with cheesecloth and place in the warm sun for a day or two, blending regularly. Next, replace the cheesecloth with a proper lid, label or tag, and store for up to one month in fridge. If it goes solid from the cold, warm before using. You may choose to strain the foliage out, or keep it in for decoration.

SHEENA'S BEST BODY OILS

Ayurvedic Medicine, the sister science of yoga, is an ancient holistic medicine from India that uses aromatic massage as part of treatment. The oil base is chosen with care, blended with flowers, petals, herbs or essential oils and used for massage or baths:

ALMOND: Good for calming, best at night due to sedative equalities.

Warming.

AVOCADO: A sweet oil that nourishes



the skin and strengthens the muscles. Slightly warming.

COCONUT: Nourishes and softens skin, helps counter inflammatory skin disorders such as sunburns, chapped lips and psoriasis. Cooling.

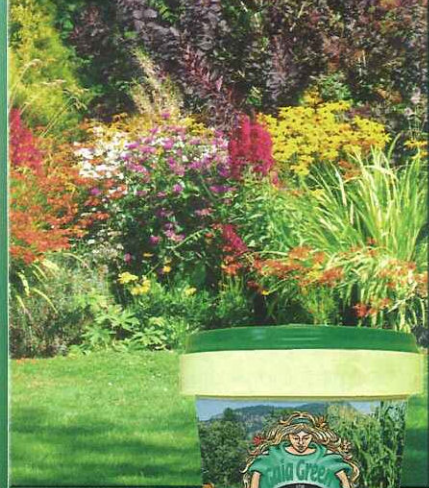
FLAXSEED: Use as a chest massage when congested. Warming.

OLIVE: Nourishes skin and hair. Great for a light massage; not as relaxing as some oils so use for day when alertness is key.

SESAME: Highly nutritious and strengthens all layers of the skin. Allays pain, calms the nerves and relieves muscle

turn the page for more

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Top to bottom: *Nicotiana* 'Perfume Mix'; *Heliotrope* 'Simply Scentsational'; Basil boxwood; Seven-Week Mix stocks and *Supertunia* 'Priscilla'

of its energy into flowers and scent. Tolerant of hot sun and requires no deadheading. A great addition to the alyssum family, and bumblebees and butterflies love it! Proven Winners.

NEMESIA 'CHEEKY': Masses of miniature lavender snapdragon-like blooms with a yellow eye, heavily fragrant. Flowers early, compact, and bred to bloom all season. Tried and True.

NEMESIA 'VANILLA SACHET': This basket and container stuffer trails with soft puffy blooms of white and yellow with a sweet vanilla fragrance. The Flower Fields.

NICOTIANA 'PERFUME MIX': Another fragrant cut flower that is easy to grow from seed. A full colour range of deep purple, white, pink and red. Vesey's.

SEVEN-WEEK MIX STOCKS: A wonderful seed blend of clove-scented stocks with strong



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tension and spasms. Good for children and the elderly. Excellent for rejuvenation. Sedative qualities. Warming. This is my favourite – once a week I apply it to my skin, muscles, and joints.

SUNFLOWER: Nourishes skin, good for sunburns and skin rashes. Slightly cool.

SHEENA'S PLANT PICKS

BASIL: Clears the head and sinuses. Relieves dullness and body ache.

CALENDULA PETALS: Gentle skin healing properties, soft on skin, nourishes.

CHAMOMILE: General pain relief and headaches. Good for nervousness.

LAVENDER: Calms emotions and soothes nerves. Reduces stress.

LILY: Calms the nerves and heart, harmonizes emotions.

MINT: For digestion enhancement, blend an oil with mint, lemon grass and ginger and rub on the abdomen in a clockwise direction.

OREGANO: Stimulant, helps with digestion.

ROSEMARY: Stimulates circulation. Supports lymphs. Good for memory.

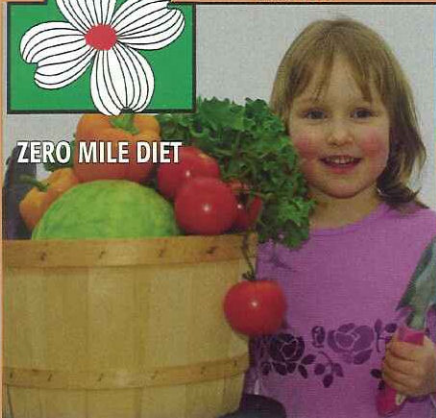
ROSE: Calming, good before bed.

SAGE: Immune booster.

THYME: Another immune booster.



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Nemesia 'Cheeky'

branches and hard stems, excellent for cutting. A colour palette of blue, white, yellow, pink, yellow, and fiery and carmine reds. Vesey's.

SUPERTUNIA 'PRISCILLA': Tolerant of cooler weather, this semi-double deep-veined purple bloom, loaded with sweet scent, can be planted early. Easy maintenance with limited deadheading and a wonderful cascading habit. Butterflies and hummingbirds adore it. Proven Winners.

SWEET PEA 'CUPANI': This heirloom sweet pea can be traced back to 1699. Two small flowers per stem with vibrant shades of red and purple and intense fragrance. Renee's Garden, McKenzie Seeds.

SWEET PEAS 'SCENTSATION MIX': Usually planted from seeds, this blend will perform all summer when planted in cooler areas of the summer garden. Excellent for cutting with four to five flowers on every long stem. West Coast Seeds.

VERBENA 'LANAI LAVENDER STAR': A heavily fragrant trailing verbena, loved by butterflies and hummingbirds. The soft-lilac/white-striped bloom atop ferny deep-green foliage adds texture to containers. ❀

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Horticulturist, arborist and organic-growing expert Sheena Adams also teaches yoga and is an Ayurvedic counsellor. Currently she is back at university working on a biology degree at the University of the Fraser Valley.

STYLIST Heather Cameron; PHOTOS (Sheena and How to) Terry Guscott; Plant images courtesy Proven Winners, Tried and True, Burpee and Vesey's