

Lip service

Barry M's Berry Good Lip Oil hydrates seriously moisture-deprived lips and adds a touch of colour.

● £4.99 from Superdrug.



Shea delight

The Shea Moisture Superfruit Complex hair care range is vegan-friendly and contains a blend of three different berries including raspberry, acai and goji. A matching conditioner and hair mask are also available.

● £9.99 from Superdrug.



Win! CONSCIOUS SKINCARE KIT FOR MEN



Conscious Skincare's new Organic Festival Kits would make a great Father's Day gift for dads on the go (or off to Glastonbury – you're never too old!). Containing six organic 50ml products in grapefruit, lemon and cedarwood fragrance to cover all toiletry needs – bodywash, lotion, handwash, hand lotion, shampoo and conditioner – plus an organic cotton cloth and environmentally-friendly bamboo toothbrush. The kits cost £28 and we have three up for grabs (the kit is not suitable for vegans). To enter, go to www.vegetarianliving.co.uk. Closing date for entries: 14 June 2018.



SCENTS AND SENSIBILITY

It's Aromatherapy Awareness Week this month and Debbie Mulkern of New Forest Aromatics in Hampshire could be considered the guru of essential oils. A trainer for Neal's Yard Remedies, she is the go-to expert for top hotels and spas seeking a signature scent, and she also offers a bespoke perfume service.

Perfume is always a very personal thing – but what if you had your own completely unique signature scent? Debbie Mulkern's service provides just that with a one-to-one consultation lasting around two hours that ends with you taking away your own personally blended fragrance. It isn't cheap at £100 for the experience, but with many 'off the peg' perfumes priced similarly, it's well worth the cost for something completely unique made with natural essential oils and no synthetics. Plus, it makes a wonderful self-indulgent treat or a special occasion gift idea.

As an added bonus, you'll come away with a much greater knowledge of essential oils and a fascinating insight into what goes into the creation of a perfume. You'll learn the scent basics – the difference in strength between cologne, eau de toilette and eau de parfum, as well as the different 'notes' – top, middle and base – that are combined to make a fragrance.

Debbie has noticed that many celebrity fragrances are heavy on top notes but can lack the base notes that provide longevity – a bit like some celebrities' careers! 'There are definite parallels between what types of perfume are fashionable and what's happening culturally at that time,' she says. 'In the 80s, popular fragrances of the day were very in your face, almost aggressive, and at the time women were wearing shoulder pads and asserting themselves in the workplace.'

After filling in a questionnaire about my general scent loves and loathes, I was handed dozens of little bottles to waft in front of my nose and sift into collections of 'yes', 'no' and 'maybe'. This process of blind-testing took me by surprise. I didn't immediately recognise aromas I'd expected to – like rose, for instance.

Debbie explained that high quality essential oils may smell different from the more familiar synthetic versions, while some were new to me entirely, such as sugandha kokila from the cinnamon berry, which hails from Nepal.

'Often what people think they like isn't what they end up choosing, or sometimes something they'd never considered really appeals,' she says. 'Associations with scents have a big part to play as well – for those who remember the 60s and 70s, patchouli oil can remind them of a flower power youth, for instance, or someone may recoil from a certain smell that reminds them of an unpleasant experience. I have clients who become quite emotional, even tearful, during the process because of memories that come up.'

My finished scent includes top notes of lemon myrtle, coriander seed, juniper and black pepper, middle notes of rose otto, neroli and may chang, and a base of cedar and sandalwood, among others. It really makes me smile and I feel uplifted every time I wear it. And it's even attracted compliments – I just have to try not to sound too smug when I explain they won't find this particular perfume in any shop!

www.newforestaromatics.co.uk

Win! YOUR OWN BESPOKE FRAGRANCE



Debbie is offering one lucky reader a vegan-friendly personal scent consultation at her base in Hampshire, plus a 50ml bottle of your own bespoke perfume to take away. To enter, go to www.vegetarianliving.co.uk. Closing date for entries: 14 June 2018.