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Perfume Shoppers Are Moving Away From Gender-Specific Scents

Eight great eaux that will work for a man or a woman.

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Fall Style

By

The old “rule” of citrus scents for summer and woody ones for winter is vanishing. In fact, even the traditional cologne-perfume divide is changing, with more high-end fragrances being made to appeal not only for every season but also every sex.

Women are not just purchasing products for their male partners, says Théo Spilka, global vice president of Firmenich International, the largest fragrance manufacturer in the world, “50 percent of people purchasing those products are wearing them on themselves as well.” As a result, “It’s not unusual for us to take an approach to men’s fragrance that will seem very attractive to women,” he continues.

These days, this means that ingredients offering freshness (vetiver, patchouli), aromatic (mint, rosemary, thyme), and woody (amber, sandalwood) elements are trending. Bonus points if [they smell expensive](#), too.

Below are eight incredible scents, from popular new releases to enduring classics, that are very much of the now.



Photographer: Joanna McClure for Bloomberg Businessweek

① **Mentha Religiosa, by Roos & Roos**

Refreshing mint meets musky incense and cedarwood. “This new take on Orientals, with a warm vanilla direction, was created by a mother, Chantal, who is a well-respected nose, and her musician daughter, Alexandra, in France,” says Spilka. [\\$221 for 3.4 oz.](#)

② **Boss Bottled Tonic, by Hugo Boss**

Although marketed to men, this 2018 Fragrance Foundation Finalist has fruity top notes (bitter orange, lemon, and apple) that work for anyone.

[\\$86 for 3.4 oz.](#)

③ **Pinus, by Odur**

Pronounced *PINE-us*, grapefruit and bergamot with Swiss stone pine evoke camping on a dewy morning. [\\$241 for 2.5 oz.](#)

④ **Aedes de Venustas, by L'Artisan Parfumeur**

Leather, balsam, iris, and strawflower provide plenty of personality without being overpowering. Robert Gerstner, co-owner of the treasured Manhattan fragrance shop for which this was created, calls it “a very sexy and soft, spicy scent.” [\\$185 for 3.4 oz.](#)

⑤ **Grey Vetiver, by Tom Ford**

An earthy, clean-smelling classic, this cologne embodies today's tastes. “It came out in 2009,” says Spilka, but “the citrus construction and the vetiver freshness is absolutely key to the men's market.” [\\$166 for 3.4 oz.](#)

⑥ **Holy_wood**

A patchouli-esque perfume derived from fermented sugar cane is spiced with pepper and sweetened with rose. (Fun fact: Patchouli was a symbol of luxury in Victorian England, when it was used to deter moths in textiles shipped from India.) [\\$195 for 3.4 oz.](#)

⑦ **Brioni**

Intense, original, and surprisingly unisex (given its maker), it combines Sicilian lemon, magnolia, cedarwood, and violet. [\\$275 for 2.5 oz.](#)

⑧ **L'Eau Neuve**

Created in 1968, this “classic European fragrance with a clean opening and spicy background,” according to Roberts, is playful and vivacious, combining citrus with scents of the Mediterranean scrub, such as thyme and sage. Perfect for a gender revolution. [\\$130 for 2.5 oz.](#)