

Natural fragrances in natural cosmetics

Pure, innovative, and varied

The market for natural cosmetics has changed rapidly over the last few years. The ecological niche market has advanced into the mainstream. Alongside the ingredients in the product there is now a need to attract the consumer with textures and packaging. By using the right fragrance the producers can clearly differentiate themselves from the competition, and at the same time effectively carry the message of the positive attributes of the natural ingredients. In an interview with the perfumer Alexandre Illan from Düllberg Konzentra, we learn about consumer demands, trends and the particular feeling of happiness that comes with using natural fragrances.

As a perfumer do you find it difficult to avoid the use of synthetic ingredients?



Alexandre Illan, Düllberg Konzentra: Limiting oneself to pure, natural raw materials is in fact a major challenge for perfumers. Natural essential oils are often very expensive, so we can use only small amounts in our formulations. A kilogram of genuine rose oil costs almost 6,000 Euros. A kilogram of synthetic rose oil can be obtained for a fraction of this price. Other popular fragrance notes, such as jasmine and tuberose, also command a high price. In our formulations we have to limit ourselves to a smaller amount of ingredients and come straight to the point. For a lavender note, for example, the solution may be to use just ten components instead of 25.

Do you use other natural ingredients as well as in addition to the essential oils?

In addition to a wide range of essential oils we also use individual in-



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2013 is the year of red fruits, such as pomegranate, cherry, plum or red currant

gredients that are obtained from natural raw materials. Because there is, for instance, no essential oil from peaches or apricots we have to create the fragrance using other natural aromas ingredients. These materials often have a fruity character and can be reminiscent of the green leaves of rhubarb, while others have a nutty/waxy character and smell like coconut cream. We can use all of these natural fragrances as traces or as so-called "overdoses", depending on the desired effect.

A lot of consumers find essential oils too intense. How do you find the right balance?

Natural essential oils are pure, highly concentrated substances that should only be used in small amounts, for example dissolved in avocado or almond oil at a proportion of 1:15. In our

compositions we combine the individual ingredients in a carefully selected proportion to obtain the right balance and the best profile for the oil.

Which classic fragrances are most frequently used when perfuming natural cosmetics?

Base accords with citrus are always successful because they are fresh, clear and uncomplicated. The concept of aroma therapy is also popular, with combinations such as lavender ylang patchouli, cardamom cinnamon, limette ginger or orange vanilla. People generally prefer fragrances that they know, that they can recognise, and that they can clearly identify such as mandarin, apple or rose. This preference is expressed in our **Solinotes** portfolio. These are simple accords consisting of five or six essential oils. But we also cater for those requesting complex fragrances based on fine perfumery fragrances or inspired by classic accords such as chypre, amber or fougère.

Which new trends are you noticing in the fragrancing of natural cosmetics?

2013 is the year of red fruits, like pomegranate, cherry, plum or red cur-

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rant. Trends also cover exotic fruits such as oriental figs, star fruit and mango. We are also noticing a preference for transparent, green, floral notes like lily, lime blossom, honeysuckle or lotus. Marine, aquatic notes are also gaining popularity for natural cosmetics.

Are genuine marine raw materials used for the aquatic notes?

For the salty, seaweed note we in fact use a seaweed absolute. For a clean, green/watery accord we use, for example, an extract from the peel of the watermelon.

How important are organically produced fragrances for your company?

We are Ecocert certified and have a wide range of organically grown and produced essential oils. We are constantly expanding our portfolio to meet the increasing demand for such products.

Essential oils are also used therapeutically because of their wide-ranging action on the mind and the body. How important is this aspect in your fragrance creations?

Whether we are talking about flowers, leaves, roots, resins or woods, all natural ingredients consist of thousands of substances which can influence our body, and our moods. For me essential oils have an almost magical quality with just one droplet able to make



*Finally it all rests on one thing –
the harmony of the fragrance*

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us feel happy, sensual, alive or relaxed. When I smell lavender oil I feel snug and secure because the fragrance reminds me of the time that I spent with my family in the south of France.

Depending on the dosage each formulation can have a very light or an intense effect. A lavender bouquet becomes stronger and more aromatic with rosemary or sage oil. Vanilla or benzoin on the other hand make the lavender fragrance sweeter and softer so that it moves more towards an oriental fragrance. A woody fragrance is made more crisp and bright with citrus notes. It lets the fragrance glow and gives it more complexity. Finally it is all a matter of one thing – the harmony of the fragrance. ■

A natural perfume formulation can be found on the Internet (see Internet panel)

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