



# Fragrance *focus*

ADDRESSING THE FACTS AND FUN OF FRAGRANCE  
YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW

*In every age, from the beginning of time, smells and aromas have had their part in history. Today is no different. Fragrances continue to be an essential part of living.*

## History of Fragrances:

The history of fragrance and lotions goes back to the very beginning of civilization. As far back as 200 years before the birth of Christ, the Babylonian ruler, Hammurabi, decreed that everyone in his kingdom (men and women) had to wash in perfume. Frankincense and myrrh figured strongly in the Bible as gifts to Christ from the Three Wise Men. Assyrian warriors curled their long beards with scented oils. Napoleon is said to have used an average of 54 bottles of cologne each month, and always wore his favorite scent into battle. King Louis XIV of France prescribed that members of the court should use a different fragrance each day. Sir Walter Raleigh regularly placed potpourris of roses throughout the rooms of his home.

During the 17<sup>th</sup> century, gentlemen carried aromatics in the heads of their walking sticks so they that they could open them and inhale whenever the occasion demanded it. There was nothing sissy or feminine about the early American cattlemen who came into town for their monthly baths and took to lilac water in an effort to mask the trail smells composed of horses, cows, sweat and whiskey. But by the turn of the century nobody giggled when the well dressed, starch-collared man left the barbershop with his hair slicked and parted and smelling of petunias. There was nothing un-masculine about their use of fragrance. Prior to World War I, the only fragrant lotions used by men were Bay Rum and Witch Hazel.



During the Roaring 20's those men who wished to be dashing applied a dose of women's perfume under their jacket lapels. The free spirit of the Roaring Twenties liberated men (as well as women) but they could not as yet choose from a family of products developed for and marketed specifically to men. It wasn't until the early 30's, during the Depression, that an American cologne after-shave was introduced to capture the imagination of men across the country. It was an instant success and was considered the ultimate "morale booster." In the mid-60's, social, economic and industrial changes inspired men to begin experimentation with innovative fashions and fragrances. It is during this time that we begin to see the proliferation of Fragrances, colognes, and cosmetics for men. Starting in the 1970's, Men's fragrances began to be taken more seriously as a marketing category.



## Fragrance in the Workplace

Lemon has been shown to help clerical workers to make fewer computer and word processing errors. Lavender helps a person perform mathematical calculations faster and with fewer errors while Peppermint improves performance in sustained attention tasks. Pleasant fragrances have been shown to improve workers' behavior in situations involving conflict and their ratings of people and objects. In addition, they also help to reduce stress. Fragrances have also been used to promote well being in meeting rooms and hotel lobbies.

