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INTRODUCTION

Do you love perfume and fragrant home and body products? Are you bewitched by the fragrance of flowers, trees, and other botanicals? Do you long to capture their scents in a usable form for the body or your home in a natural, more tangible way? This book will answer all those questions for you in a fun and friendly way.

I am a dedicated “do-it-yourselfer” (DIYer) who enjoys all aspects of creating perfumes by hand, from harvesting exotic, fragrant flowers in my garden to extracting their scent, processing the extract into a usable product, bottling, and yes, even designing the labels. DIYers know the feeling of accomplishment from working a project through to completion and making creative gifts for themselves and others.

Why this, why now? Perfume making was the secret realm of the corporate perfume houses for many years, but the rise of artisan perfumery has changed all that. People like me found rare books with methods of blending perfumes, and we experimented until we hit gold—the ability to make lovely perfumes, colognes, body butters, and many more fragrant products.

As an artisan natural perfumer, aromatherapist, and herbalist, I am driven by a passion to have as much hands-on involvement as possible with the botanicals that I use in my arts. Artisan perfumers, herbalists, and home gardeners in the twenty-first century are trying their hand at capturing the scent from their plants, with varying degrees of success. Although they possess the “do-it-yourself” passion, they need a good blueprint for creating a finished product.

Over the past four decades, I have refined the lovely art of creating fragrant extracts from the plants that grow in the garden, and I’ve based my perfume business on it. In this book, I am passing on to you my tips and secrets for successfully creating fragrant extracts from your garden. Realistically, neither I, nor probably you, can grow enough plants to make all the scents we need for creating perfumes; sometimes it’s necessary to purchase essential oils and absolutes for a truly finished fine perfume. Even body sprays, body butters, and other concoctions you’ll make with directions in this book may need some final ingredients that are processed.

You may already have essential oils and absolutes on hand, and I will be recommending some for you to use. There is also the possibility you’ll be very happy with homemade extracts that capture the freshness of such scents as mint, rosemary, or conifers. This book is about experimentation, creativity, and finding scents that you like and want to make, whether it’s an alcohol perfume, a scented balm, a hydrosol, or a fragrant powder. *Homemade Perfume* is organized so that you can choose the method of fragrance extraction that appeals to you, read about it, and then immediately create perfumes and other scented products.

I hope that this book gives you the feeling that you are planning all of these fragrant projects with an experienced, helpful friend guiding you along the way. My biggest wish is that this book will bring you many hours of enjoyment, a sense of fulfillment, and fragrant beauties to enjoy as you become a perfume gardener who makes wonderful gifts from the earth.

You will learn how to make alcohol- and oil-based perfumes; body, room, and linen sprays; face, body, and hair vinegars; body butters; solid perfumes; and more, with your fragrant extractions and supplemental aromatics. The projects in this book are suitable for ages six and up, although children under eighteen will need supervision for most of the processes.

Enjoy, stop and smell the roses, and play with your garden’s fragrant bounty. As Helen Keller said: “Smell is a potent wizard that transports you across thousands of miles and all the years you have lived.” Now you will have the ability to create memorable fragrances that will have your friends and family remembering the fragrant creation you made—a living legacy of scent and delight!

