

BEAUTY

Scents to SEDUCE

Created to captivate, this spring's glamorous, edgy scents smell divine and work on a subliminal level too – spray them where you want to be kissed...

When it comes to weapons of mass seduction, the right perfume is an essential weapon in your armoury. It is thought that smell plays a key role in attraction because, subconsciously, we are drawn to the opposite sex due to their heady and highly individual mix of pheromones. And, according to fragrance experts, perfume can enhance this.

"It is the catalyst for the alchemy," explains fragrance historian and perfumer Roja Dove. "When you first see someone you are attracted to, you instantly feel that magical frisson of excitement. As you get closer, you breathe in a little of their perfume and their olfactory tattoo is imprinted on your psyche. This is because the sense of smell is the most primitive of all the senses."

So, if it is a magical mix of scent and the individual's personality that leads us to fall in love, which perfumes should we choose to help the process? "The sensuality of scent is a very personal thing," explains biophysicist Dr Luca Turin, who specialises in studying the science of smell and scent, "and what smells sexy to one person might be abhorrent to another. However, certain notes are generally considered to be sexy and sensual to both men and women, and when we wear them we appear to smell attractive to others."

This is because these notes are thought to have the same effect on our bodies as our hormones. An example of this is rose water, which contains phenylethyl alcohol, a known narcotic androgenic that mimics the chemicals produced in the brain when we fall in love. No wonder roses are the symbol of romance.

"Opt for white flowers," advises Roja. "They have a warmth and sensuality but are not overt or vulgar. And they contain a molecule called indole, which is found in musk, so is highly seductive." Other sensual notes include lilies, tuberose and jasmine – the come-and-get-me white blooms that release their scent at night.

This February, anyone looking for a Valentine's Day scent will be spoiled for choice as the latest fragrances are not backward in coming forward with their aim to seduce, and with names like Fetish, Almost Bare and Truly, Madly, Deeply, they are happy to make their intentions clear. Says Roja: "While lingerie sits on the skin, scent becomes part of it. Fragrance is a woman's most intimate accessory, and seduces by whispering a promise. For maximum impact, put scent in the dip of your collar bone, and directly below your ear, so that when the one you love whispers sweet nothings in your ear, he is directly over the fragrant hot spot." ■

Love notes: (Back, from left) **Boadicea The Victorious Seductive**, £150, has a core of precious musk and ambergris over sandalwood and patchouli, rosemary, fir and resins, punctuated with jasmine. No wonder Rihanna is a huge fan. Exclusively from Harrods. **Juliette Has a Gun Lady Vengeance**, £59, is a feminine, sensual scent from perfumer Romano Ricci, with Bulgarian rose, patchouli and vanilla. (Centre) **Roja Dove Fetish**, £195, is a sensual chypre, with notes of oak moss, patchouli, musk and vetiver, tempered with rose and ylang ylang, and the all-important white flowers, including jasmine and tuberose. From Harrods. **Maria Lux Truly**, £128, is one of a collection of three individual scents, each formulated to celebrate a different type of love. Truly (pictured) is a sparkling white floral bouquet, Madly is a hypnotic blend of lavender, herb and citrus fruits, and Deeply is a passionate oud, with woods, resins and amber. From Liberty. (Front) **Bobbi Brown Almost Bare**, £48, is formulated to smell like soft, warm skin, and blends Italian bergamot with violet leaves to relax and soothe the senses, over jasmine, cool cedar and warm amber. **Les Senteurs Frédéric Malle Carnal Flower by Dominique Ropion**, £200, is an ode to the sensual white-flowered tuberose, and was created to capture the scent of the flower in bloom. From Liberty. **Agent Provocateur Maitresse**, £39, takes its name from the French for mistress, teacher and paramour, and features rose, jasmine, iris and sandalwood over sensual tonka bean.

