

Essential oil of the Month

By Kathy Padecky, Aromatherapist, HHP, CBS.

Sandlewood

Botanical Name: Santalum album

Common Name: Sandalwood, white sandalwood, yellow sandalwood, East Indian sandalwood, sandalwood Mysore, sanders-wood. Many people confuse West Australian sandalwood oil derived from *Eucarya spicata* or the West Indian sandalwood. *Amyris balsamifera* is the source of *Santalum album*. *Santalum album* has the best medicinal qualities of the various sandalwood oils.

Why I love: Smelling sandalwood immediately calms my body, mind and spirit. Sandalwood diminishes any anxiety from over thinking, stress and worry. When I smell sandalwood it reminds me of being in India where the aromas of spices and flavorful foods lovingly embrace all aspects of my being and especially my soul. It is an intoxicatingly wonderful perfume of nature to me.

Aroma and scent: Sandalwood has a mild, woody and sweet fragrance. The scent is long lasting. If the sandalwood essential oil has a fruity fragrance it indicates the oil was adulterated with benzyl acetate and geranyl acetate. It can be also adulterated with castor oil and cedarwood atlas oil.

Remember, your nose is your best indicator for identifying the quality of an essential oil. If you are uncertain about the oil you smell, simply purchase oils that are laboratory certified to be free of adulteration. You always want to use essential oils free of synthetics, other additives, or diluted with lesser quality oils.

Native to and history: Sandalwood was used in many cultures for religious rituals and meditation. Sandalwood caravans traveled the trade routes from India to Egypt, Greece and Rome. Indians made furniture from this tree. It is resistant to ants. Hindus use sandalwood in funeral pyres, burning it as incense. Yogis believed anointing one with sandalwood encourages a meditative state and enhances their devotion to their Creator.

Chemistry: The predominant chemical compound in sandalwood is santalol. It contains 66-80% sesquiterpenols, 5-11% sesquiterpenes, 1-3% sesquiterpenals, 1-2% carboxylic acids and trace amounts of other compounds. The sesquiterpenols,

sesquiterpenes sesquiterpenols are anti-inflammatory, sedative, immune supportive. It is an analgesic and calming to the body. Carboxylic acid has an anti-oxidant effect. It has the effect of also being a tonic and some consider it an aphrodisiac.

Part of the plant: Sandalwood is steam distilled from the heartwood and roots of a parasitic evergreen tree growing up to 29 feet tall. It is native to the Mysore region of India. The state of Mysore has a law stating that only dead sandalwood trees may be harvested. Indonesia, Timor, Celebes and East Indies produce sandalwood essential oil. A sandalwood tree must be 30 years old before it can yield an essential oil. The leathery leaves have purple flowers. There are 18 grades of sandalwood oil. Grades are referred to the different parts of the tree where the essential oil is harvested from such as the heart wood, chips or sawdust from the tree. Steam distillation of sandalwood is a lengthy process taking a minimum of 48 hours and up to 72 hours. The sandalwood bark and sapwood are free of any essential oil. The oil is pale yellow to clear in color.



Sandalwood may help the body recover from the following: acne, bladder infections, boils, bronchitis, constipation, coughs, depression, diarrhea, eczema, heartburn, hemorrhoids, impotence, infections, insomnia, itching, low libido, lymphatic congestion, menstrual issues, nausea, nervous tension, over thinking, dry or oily skin, recurrent nightmares, respiratory issues, sore throat, thrush, wounds infected

Sandalwood blends with: basil, black pepper, cassia, clary sage, clove, cypress, fennel, frankincense, geranium, jasmine, lavender, lemon, myrrh, neroli,

orange, palmarosa, patchouly, rose, spruce, vetiver, ylang ylang

Body, Mind and Spirit Connections: Sandalwood has an analgesic effect on the central nervous system. It is caused by a chemical compound, santalol that binds to the opioid receptors in the brain. (Okukawa H., Kawanishi K., Kato A. *Effects of sesquiterpenoids from Oriental incenses on sedative and analgesic action*). Sandalwood is an excellent choice to comfort anyone from nervous tension, anxiety and a tired mind. It is especially effective to use with the dying. It instills a sense of peace and acceptance.

Sandalwood is beneficial to soothe and rehydrate dry skin. Powdered sandalwood is used for skin treatments and in incense. In Ayurvedic medicine, sandalwood is used to cool and calm the body and mind (Frawley, D., *The Yoga of Herbs*). Ayurvedic medicine values sandalwood for its anti-inflammatory, anti-infectious properties. It is used as a paste for inflamed skin. Sandalwood opens the 3rd eye, the intuitive center found between your eyebrows.

Sandalwood imparts a cooling, astringent effect for intestinal and genitor-urinary issues. It is effective in alleviating hot, agitated emotional states caused by stress, anxiety, insomnia, anger, or nervous exhaustion. It instills serenity, harmony and balance. "Sandalwood helps us to re-establish an acceptance of reality as it is." (Mojay, G., *Aromatherapy Healing for the Spirit*).

Contraindications and Precautions: Sandalwood may be applied topically to the body. It is generally regarded as safe for internal consumption when the oil is without synthetics or additives. In rare cases, may cause dermatitis and allergic reaction. It is regarded as a general and sexual tonic. Sandalwood's viscosity is thick. Patience is required when waiting for the first drop of essential oil.

Essential Oil Recipes:

Sandalwood natural perfume

1 to 2 drops of sandalwood

Apply to your body as a perfume. The scent is long lasting.

A loving heart centered massage formula

2 drops jasmine

4 drops sandalwood

4 drops of ylang ylang

1 ounce of your favorite vegetable/carrier oil or unscented lotion

Mix the ingredients together and rub anywhere on the body. It is very effective when applied on chest over the heart. It has a breathtaking and intoxicating aroma.

Sandalwood skin nourishing cream

1 tsp of shea or cocoa butter

2 drops sandalwood

Blend together and apply to dehydrated skin. It rehydrates and softens the skin so it feels joyfully alive.

Sandalwood healing bath

8 drops sandalwood

1 oz of jojoba oil

Blend together and add to bath water. Adding milk helps it mix into the water. It relieves stress and encourages the body to clear toxins.

Did You Know: In ancient times, religious statues and chests were made from sandalwood. Termites and ants avoid sandalwood.

Disclaimer: These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. Products and/or techniques mentioned are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease. The information provided is for educational purposes only and is not intended as diagnosis, treatment, or prescription for any disease. The decision to use, or not use, any of this information is the sole responsibility of the reader.

Resources:

Aromatherapy for Healing the Spirit by Gabriel Mojay

Aromatherapy for Health

Professionals by Shirley and Len Price

Aromatherapy for Massage Practitioner by Ingrid Martin

Guide to Aromatherapy by Susanne Blake

Reference Guide for Essential Oils by Connie & Alan Higley

Spa Bodywork, A Guide for Massage Therapists by Anne Williams

The Australasian College of Herbal Studies Manual

The Chemistry of Essential Oils Made Simple by Dr. David Stewart

The Directory of Essential Oils by Wanda Seller

The Fragrant Heavens by Valerie Ann Worwood

The Fragrant Mind by Valerie Ann Worwood



About the Author: Kathy Padecky is an Aromatherapist and a Holistic Health Practitioner (HHP). She began working in the holistic health field in 1981 and teaches various massage modalities, aromatherapy, and hydrotherapy at the International Professional School of Bodywork (IPSB). Ms. Padecky is also publisher of the "Sacred Scents" Newsletter.

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