

**AROMATHERAPY & HERBS**  
**NATURE'S GREEN AND AROMATIC SECRETS**

Presented by: Jeanne Rose

Hosted by: Twila Willis  
6514 Pevensey Dr.  
Austin, TX 78745  
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## Introduction

This two day aromatherapy seminar covered fundamentals of using essential oils and aromatic herbs to their full potential for green, aromatic living. The class was presented by Jeanne Rose and hosted by Twila Willis at her home in Austin, Texas. The surroundings were very comfortable and the weather was so nice that we were able to meet outdoors in Twila's screened in Tea Room on the second day. It was the perfect environment for discovering nature's green and aromatic secrets. We learned about the Vocabulary of Odor, essential oil organoleptics, distilling hydrosols using a copper alembic still, essential oils as preservatives, tips for green living and lots of other aromaherbally stuff.

## Essential Oil Identification

The "Vocabulary of Odor" was developed by Jeanne Rose for the purpose of training to identify and categorize the seven basic odors of essential oils, thereby providing a common language for describing the aromas and chemical components of essential oils. The basic seven are, in order, floral, fruity, citrus, green/vegetative, wood, herb/camphor and spice. Essential oils may possess any combination of these scents/properties in the form of predominating notes, subsidiary or sustaining notes and back notes. For instance, the *Rosmarinus officinales*, var. *pyramidalis* studied during class was noted to smell predominately herb/camphor with a spicy subsidiary note and a fruity back note. In order to be a savvy buyer of essential oils, a person must be able to identify the oils by their odor and also by their organoleptic qualities of color, clarity, viscosity, intensity of scent and taste. For example, the above mentioned Rosemary was noted to be almost colorless, clear and non-viscous with an intensity of about 6 and a bitter herbaceous taste.

For therapeutic purposes, correct identification by odor of the oil to be used is extremely important. A camphory smelling Lavender would not be effective for helping sleep since camphor is known to be stimulating. The fact that fruity smelling oils are high in esters is equally important. This is what makes the vocabulary of odor an indispensable tool for learning to link aromas with the properties that cause them.

### Copper for Distillation

Copper is the best metal to use for the distillation of hydrosols and essential oils because of its anti-pathogenic properties. Copper is known to disrupt the DNA of yeast cells, kill bacteria and be resistant to dangerous microbes, therefore producing a clean, pure smelling and more sterile distillate. Since about 1500 copper alembics and condensing coils have been used to distill essential oils. Copper alembic stills remain in use and continue to work quite well. They can also be very beautiful. The 21 liter alembic used for demonstration was awe inspiring.

Twenty one liters seems a good size for learning the technique of distilling for hydrosols, since it doesn't require a huge amount of plant material. Hydrosols are the aromatic, non-alcoholic distillate left from the distillation process of organically grown plants that contains the water soluble parts of the plant material and micro-drops of the essential oil. Properly prepared hydrosols are highly beneficial, can be safely used in many ways, and are a vital part of "green living."

### Essential Oils as Preservatives

Essential oils are effective for use as preservatives in skin care products because they are anti-bacterial, anti-viral, anti-fungal and kill yeast. When using essential oils as preservatives for hand made products, Cinnamon, Palmarosa, Frankincense, Rosemary verbenone, Thymus vulgaris, or Oregano, Spikenard and *Litsea cubeba* are good choices. However, not all oils are equal on all fronts. For instance, Palmarosa would be a better choice for yeast conditions than Cinnamon would be, since cinnamon is an antibacterial. Provided that the product is made in the most sterile manner possible, the above mentioned oils added at least 1% in a lotion would be most useful for people to use instead of synthetic hand sanitizers.

### Green Aromatic Living

Green living is nothing new. It used to be the only way of living. Once upon a time people grew and processed almost everything they needed for sustenance. *The Ladies New Medical Guide* published in 1890 lists hygiene and household recipes and hints for the toilet. These remedies all could be made using ingredients commonly found in the larder of those days. For instance, a formula for chapped hands included egg yolks, unsalted butter, rose water, honey, and oatmeal or almond flour. It was recommended to rub the mixture on the hands, cover with

gloves and leave on overnight. This surely works as well today as it did over a hundred years ago.

Vinegar infused with citrus peel makes an excellent cleanser of many surfaces such as stoves, porcelain, wood floors, cutting boards, dusty woodwork, doorknobs, etc. It is easy to make. One simply adds the peels of citrus fruits to a gallon of cheap white vinegar. The vinegar takes on the antibacterial benefits of the citrus peels as well as the clean citrus scent. The peels of one grapefruit, one orange and one lemon make a good start. Once the vinegar is used up the peels should be composted. If desired, water may be added to the empty bottle to make a spray for small jobs. Baking soda is another common item that can be used in combination with vinegar to keep home surfaces clean. Pouring two cups of baking soda followed by one cup of plain white vinegar into sinks will keep drains free flowing and smelling good.

Other practices such as being sure one's bedding is clean and comfortable are helpful to maintaining health naturally. Also, incorporating herbs, hydrosols and essential oils into daily life promotes green and aromatic living to its full extent. Last but not least, the path to personal healing should include "SALEM." This is a mnemonic for Supplements, Attitude and Aromatics, Lifestyle Changes, Exercise, and Medication Constancy. In other words, one should investigate and incorporate the proper supplements and give them plenty of time to work; at least a year. Attitude adjustments that allow for play help to reduce stress as does daily use of aromatics. Lifestyle changes such as diet, time of meals and quality rest in a clean and comfortable bed go a long way in promoting health. Exercise is important to healthy living, whether one is participating in some type of rehab such as Cardio, or simply walking briskly several times weekly. If on medication one absolutely must learn about their medications and take them as prescribed. Finally, meditation, visualization, and/or dream therapy can be employed to facilitate overall health.

### Personal Experience

During this seminar I had the opportunity to blend three oils for adding to a lotion base. The purpose of the blend was to be for skin or for emotion. I chose Spikenard (*Nardostachys jatamansi*), Palmarosa (*Cymbopogon martinii*) and Lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*) create a pleasant smelling anti-wrinkle combination. I decided on Spikenard as a base note, for its fixative quality and its properties of uniting the function of the skin layers. The Palmarosa was

meant to add to the overall benefit to the skin and also to add a grassy/green smell to the product. Then I wanted Lavender also for its skin benefits and as a floral top note. The blend was successful then a small amount of lotion was added and it was again mixed by succession. After that the rest of the lotion base was added and incorporated. The results of this experiment have been: Day one – a thick lotion with a predominating floral note, a green subsidiary note and a slight woody backnote. One week later, the lotion was too thick for my face but working well on hands and elbows. Beginning to have a predominant greenish/grassy smell with mild floral tones. Added equal amounts of Rose Geranium hydrosol to thin out viscosity and add more floral odor. Two weeks later, it was almost all used up. Still smells predominately floral. Adding the hydrosol increased the scent and also made the viscosity better for application to the face. I haven't used it long enough to be able to tell if it is reducing my forehead wrinkle and so have made more to give it more time working. I do feel that the combination of essential oils and hydrosols in the product will have a better result than with essential oils alone.

#### Fifteen New Things Learned

1. A sample treatment for sinus and bronchial complaints.
2. Salt inhalers work better than straight inhalants.
3. The history of Rosewood is incorrect.
4. When distilling the goose neck should remain cool enough to touch.
5. Distillation using electric heat is not recommended.
6. Patchouli is fermented before distillation.
7. Rosemary verbenone repels pine bark beetles.
8. The white grapefruit was missing out of my citrus kit.
9. 150 years ago people consumed 7 gallons of alcohol (low alcohol beer) per person per year.
10. The alchemic symbols for distill, condensing coil and others related to the process.
11. Carvacrol is the best ant-bacterial.
12. Home remedies from *The Ladies New Medical Guide*, 1890.
13. The meaning of the mnemonic SALEM.
14. Jeanne Rose's preservative formula.
15. Seeing and touching a copper alembic still caused me to buy one.

## Conclusion

This seminar presented many avenues for achieving health through the use of herbs, essential oils, hydrosols and lifestyle adjustments. The information was delivered clearly through discussion, demonstration and hands on experience. Nothing beats in person class with Jeanne Rose. She makes it all come alive and make sense.

## Sources:

Rose, Jeanne. Handout for *Green and Aromatic Living* Aromatherapy seminar. TX & MO 2007-2008.

Thomson, Elaine. Various essays, 2002-2006.

Authors Bio: Ms. Thomson is a budding aromaherbalist who lives in Hitchcock, TX. She is currently pursuing the art of growing and distilling herbs for hydrosols.