

The Scent of a Woman

BY: Susan Ferrier

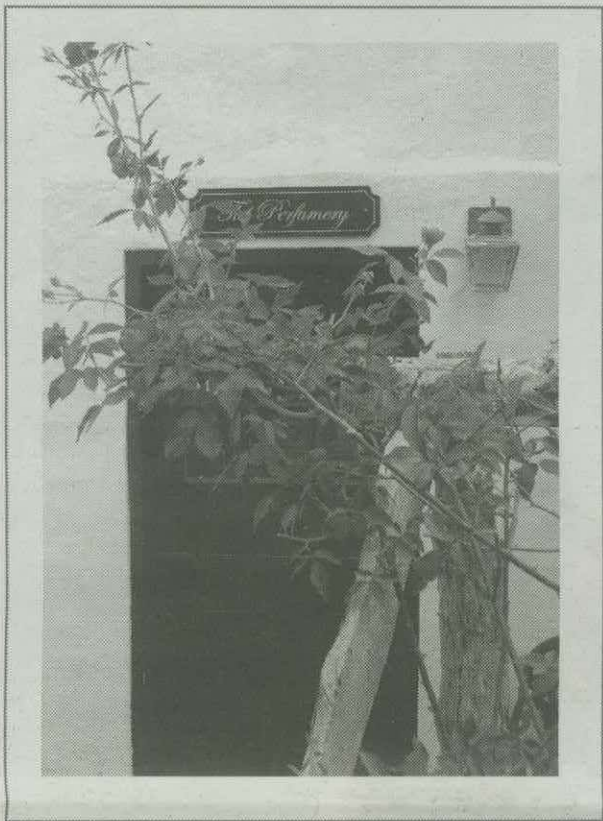


Photo by: Susan Ferrier

Our sense of smell is often regarded as the most powerful of our senses and largely capable of evoking an emotional response. So, it seems logical that our choice of perfume has the ability to leave an impression on those we meet, do business with or even hope to attract. This does not diminish the importance of our clothing, hairstyle and demeanor, it simply adds another dimension. It is our fragrance that often lingers in the mind of a child, friend or lover.

I believe that every woman should have a signature fragrance, a scent that people associate with her. My mother always wore Estee Lauder's Youth Dew, and when I pass someone wearing it my thoughts shift to her. A friend with a bohemian style wore Patchouli oil, an extremely distinctive odor considered unpleasant by many. But she wore it in such a way that it never overpowered and mixed well with her body chemistry, leaving many to associate the musky scent with her.

Do you have a signature scent or do you belong to the fragrance of the month club?

Some of us enjoy trying the latest designer fragrances but still wear a favorite stand-by, sometimes it's even the same scent we wore in high school—think Shalimar or Replique. I frequently wear the original Dolce and Gabbana. I love the scent and enjoy telling people what I am wearing. It seems so Carrie Bradshaw-esque. But I would have to say my signature fragrance is Christian Dior's Dune. This is the scent that garners the most compliments. I can't go out wearing this perfume without strangers telling me how great I smell or asking what I am wearing. When you have a fragrance like this, it is worth keeping.

How do you find your signature scent? Although, it involves your own body chemistry, it isn't an exact science. There is a bit of trial and error involved. Scentiments.com recommends you "request samples of your favorite designer perfume so that you can try them out for a few days...to test perfumes before purchasing because, while a fragrance scent may smell great in the store or on another person, it may not react

well with your natural scent or last as long as you would like."

This is why you can smell Yves St. Laurent's Opium on a friend and love it but when you purchase it for yourself, you don't even recognize the fragrance. I have purchased perfume, worn it, loved it, but discovered that my frequent headaches were triggered by my beloved scent.

Lili Bermuda, a small perfumery located in St. George's Bermuda owned by the Brackstone family, offers up some additional tips. Initially, do not spray a scent directly on you. Use a perfume blotter for sniffing. In between sampling scents, smell some coffee beans. This works much like cleansing the pallet when sampling wines. "Selecting a perfume is extremely personal. It's like finding a husband. You fall in love with it and over time others begin to associate it with you," says Isabelle Brackstone.

If you want a signature scent exclusive to you, there are a few perfumeries that mix customized scents. However, getting the right blend may prove challenging even for the most experienced perfumers. Lili Bermuda has employed one perfumer for the past 43-years. On occasions, Brackstone has agreed to mix customized fragrances, but it is not something she typically agrees to do. She explains people perceive scents differently; they may describe a scent as flowery or spicy when in fact it is a fruity or green fragrance. Brackstone recommends sticking to ready-made fragrances rather than trying to have one custom created.

If you want a scent that is ready-made but not readily available at the local mall, consider purchasing from a small perfumery. If a trip to Bermuda is not in your immediate future, you can purchase online at www.Lilibermuda.com. I recommend purchasing what is called a Perfume Library for \$25 plus shipping and handling. This gift box of seven of the shop's most popular perfumes gives you the opportunity to sample the fragrance before making the investment. Once you have found the perfume that stops people in their tracks, you have your signature scent.

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