SCENTS

These scents promise to deliver on perfume, not

7 Virtues Vanilla Woods

The latest scent from this

tally friendly.

notes of pear.

Layering

**Phlur Hanami** 

problems. All are cruelty free,

sustainable and environmen-

\$88 | Sephora, sephora.com

Canadian brand is warm and

delicate, brightened up with

\$95 | Sephora, sephora.com

in this fresh blend, which also

\$72 | Sephora, sephora.com

There are six travel sprays in

this set, designed to be worn

in combination so you can create your own blends.

**Libertine Sex & Jasmine** 

From \$56 | Kiss and Makeup

kissandmakeupstore.com A heady, sensuous floral with

jasmine, vanilla and amber-

gris from this Edmontonbased perfumer.

\$130 | Secret Location,

Zingy and invigorating,

US\$78 | Skylar.com

thanks to bergamot, black

A rich combination of jas-

mine, vanilla and patchouli.

pepper and a hint of wasabi.

**Gallivant Tokyo** 

**Skylar Arrow** 

secretlocation.ca

Sandalwood is the key note

has fig and white florals.

**Clean Reserve Fragrance** 

TO TRY

## JUST GOOD SCENTS

New breed of clean perfumes said to be free of irritating ingredients

AILEEN LALOR

Making perfume is as much an art as painting, composing or penning literature. The greatest can manipulate notes skilfully, dictating how they unfold.

In doing so, perfumers transport you, evoking memories: Your grandmother's dressing table, the best party you ever went to, the precise moment you fell in love.

While many beauty fans see fragrance as pure pleasure, there are some who find it a pain.

Perfume can cause health problems in some people. There are skin irritations, which are relatively easy to tackle (just stop wearing perfume). Trickier to manage are issues caused by inhaling fragrance, especially that worn by others.

"The real issue around scent is unintended exposure," says Karen Bartlett, a professor in the School of Population & Public Health at UBC who specializes in inhalation toxicology. "The way we perceive scent, is that it releases gaseous chemicals. There's a molecule that goes from the perfume to a person's nose.

"That sets up a number of things. It can cause coughs, runny noses and runny eyes or, at the extreme side of things, it can exacerbate or bring on an asthma attack, which can kill a person."

Sufferers also report headaches, dizziness and nausea as a result of being exposed. Then there's the fact that some people simply find some fragrances unpleasant.

We often think of these inhalation reactions as allergies, but they're really more like irritations.

"The perfume industry understands 'perfume allergy' to mean a skin rash, whereas many of the people I talk to who say they are allergic to perfume turn out to get headaches and nausea when they smell it," says writer Tania Sanchez, who co-authored Perfumes: The A-Z Guide with biophysicist Luca Turin.

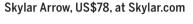
"I'm familiar with those symptoms. I suffer them when I smell an extremely brutal perfume, the discomfort of overwhelming stimulus."

In the past few years, though, a new breed of fragrances has emerged: So-called "clean" perfumes that omit ingredients that are anecdotally connected with respiratory issues. These include preservatives like parabens, phthalates (which make perfume "stick" to skin), sulfates, UV inhibitors and formaldehyde.

It's hard to say for sure if these ingredients are the culprits because there isn't a large body of research yet, but they have been connected with health problems.

"The purpose of these ingredients is 'scent throw' or sillage, when a scent walks into a room ahead of you. They also make the scent last longer on the skin throughout the day and ensure the colour of the perfume remains clear and does not turn golden brown," says Barb







Gallivant Tokyo, \$130, at Secret Location

Stegemann, founder of Canadian

"A perfume should turn colour,

it's not a bad thing. Sillage is not

something anyone should want;

the person in the next cubicle

should not be able to smell your

perfume. There is no sillage in our

clean fragrances. You would have

to lean in and be intimate with the

wearer of a clean scent. It's for the

wearer and those he or she is ex-

Stegemann says her customers

"I have spoken to women in tears

telling me they have not worn per-

fume for decades and now they can

Eric Korman, founder of US

"From what we've seen over

100,000 customers, removing and

avoiding these kinds of additives

seems to cut down tremendously

Workplace and public space bans are Bartlett's preferred ap-

proach to problems with fragrance

("What's wrong with the smell of

clean skin?" she wonders), but

clean perfumers believe there are

other ways to tackle the issue that

don't leave fragrance fans wanting.

be tighter legislation around ingre-

dients, including banning ingre-

dients that might be problematic

from all cosmetics, not just per-

fume, and making it mandatory to

Stegemann thinks there should

on respiratory issues," he says.

clean brand Phlur, has had similar

again with our line," she says.

experiences.

consistently say they can wear her

tremely intimate with."

products without reacting.

clean perfume brand 7 Virtues.



Libertine Sex & Jasmine, from \$56, Kiss and Makeup



Phlur Hanami, \$95, at Sephora



skin [reserve ble

7 Virtues Vanilla Woods, \$88, at Sephora

reveal potential skin allergens, as

CLEAN

\$72, at Sephora

is the case in the EU. 'You can read the ingredients on our packaging and website and know if anything you are specifically allergic to is in there. So you have an informed customer who knows if they can wear your product," she says.

Korman says customers also need to get informed about what denotes quality in a perfume, since people tend to think that longerlasting, heavier and more intrusive fragrances are better.

"A light, citrus-based product might evaporate more quickly, but all vou need to do is reapply it," he says. "There's definitely a need for re-education about the fact that quality is not the same as staying power. Brands in the mainstream aren't really talking about the art and craft of making a perfume, and how it should or shouldn't be

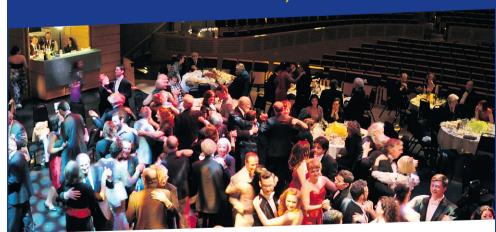
He believes that perfume fans need to follow simple etiquette rules such as changing things up frequently so they don't get used to a scent and over-apply it.

Sanchez says we should also be careful how we choose our scents.

"If people are going to be stuck next to you for a long time without being able to move, as in the office or at a restaurant, perfume should be worn so that only someone very close can smell it." she says.



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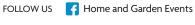
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