

What is a Fragrance Oil, Absolute, Concrete and an Essential oil?

We are often asked if we have different types of oils. Many time folks that inquire don't understand that there are different types of Scenting oils.

Essential oils come strictly from plants. They will have a Common name and a Botanical name. Such as Lavender (common name) - *Lavendula angustifolia* (botanical name).

The essential oil is actually produced in specialized cells in the plant. The essential oil is extracted from the plant using a few different methods.

The most common method is steam distillation. Steam is forced though the botanical parts and the essential oil is distilled off. Hydro distillation is similar, only water is used to give the plants a so called 'hot water bath' - the essential oils still are distilled via steam, but only after the fact that the plant material was actually submerged in hot water. Cold pressing the plant such as is the case in several citrus oils will produce an essential oil too.

If the essential oil is extracted by a solvent - most commonly CO2 (carbon dioxide) the essential oils is really a concrete - further distilling and you have an absolute. An absolute because of the way it is processed will have more chemical constituents than a steam or hydro distilled essential oil. Hence the reason absolutes are so much more expensive.

This process to extract the essential oil is more time consuming and costly to extract the oil as is the case of obtaining a concrete or absolute. BUT for several plants this is the ONLY way to obtain the essential oil. As you know some plant produce very little essential oil and the method used to make concretes and absolutes is the only way to capture and secure the little bits of essential oils that are produced.

Fragrance oils on the other hand are not made by nature. They are made by man in a laboratory. They will have names like Pumpkin Pie, Vanilla Cookies, Strawberries and cream, Fresh car, Baby powder and on and on.

Fragrance oils contain petroleum by products and scents made in the laboratory using various chemicals that when combined can produce - similar smells to common scents.

Fragrance oils can be made using essential oils as PART of the ingredients but won't contain even more than a minute amount in the mix.

Fragrance oils are cheap to make. Essential oils can be very costly to distill as there are so many variables when it comes to the amount available in each plant, harvest, etc.

Essential oils can provide health benefits too numerous to mention here. Fragrance oils can be detrimental to your health and your pets' health. Breathing fumes from some of the chemicals used from the petroleum by products and chemicals used to produce the fragrance oils scents can be just as toxic as the fumes that are emitted from your automobiles gas tank. And everyone knows how dangerous the fumes from gasoline can be.

Perfumes by the way, can be made using just essential oils but they won't linger on the skin for long. So all commercially prepared perfumes will have both fragrance chemicals and essential oils blended, along with a fixative to help it to last more than the 2 hours that a pure essential oil based perfume would.

So why would you want to smell Fragrance oils that can hurt your health, when nature made essential oils that have tons of benefits to your health? You make the choice - I choose essential oils!!

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