

Health & Beauty



The Skinny On Essential Oils

Essential oils are organic compounds extracted from plants. Available in many scents, these beneficial oils are often collectively referred to as aromatherapy.

COMMON SCENTS

While many scents have multiple healing properties, here are some of the most popular scents and their common uses:

Peppermint: Helps with digestion, can improve focus and increase energy.

Rose: Great for reducing skin irritation and inflammation.

Lavender: Aids in relaxation, eases tension and is great for cuts and burns.

Eucalyptus: Improves respiratory issues.

Sandalwood: An ancient calming extract that also is said to be an aphrodisiac.

COMMON PREPARATIONS

Essential oils are extremely concentrated and should be mixed with a carrier oil for topical use to prevent sensitivities in the skin.

Common carrier oils:

- Almond oil;
- Coconut oil;
- Olive oil; and
- Jojoba oil.

PROPER USE

Adding even the most common essential oils, such as peppermint, lemon and tea tree oils, to your regiment can help fight cold and flu symptoms,

soothe sore muscles, heal skin conditions and improve digestion — to say nothing of making your home smell fantastic.

Be sure to follow proper dosage per the labeling or other professional guides. Essential oils can be very safe, but misuse can lead to toxicity.

Here are some ways to maximize the benefits of essential oils:

Aromatically

- Using a diffuser is the most popular method for applying essential oils aromatically.
- Diffusion is not just for your home or office. Apply your favorite scent to a cotton ball and place it in the air vents of your vehicle.
- Apply a few drops to a clean cloth or dryer sheet and add it to your laundry.

Topically

- Add a few drops of your favorite scent to a warm bath.
- Add essential oil to a hot or cold compress.

Internally

- Add essential oils to drinks, such as tea or milkshakes.
- Use oils in recipes, especially in baking, to replace certain herbs or spices.



Using Apple Cider Vinegar

Apple cider vinegar is popular these days. In its raw, unfiltered, organic and unpasteurized form, it is one of the oldest home remedies in the world. Like any natural wonder, however, there are downsides that go along with the frequently touted benefits.

THE BENEFITS

Maintains a healthy pH level. A healthy body should lean slightly alkaline. However, most of our bodies tend to be more acidic in nature. Maintaining a healthy balance of acid and alkaline in the body is essential to proper functioning. Raw, organic apple cider vinegar becomes alkaline when consumed. Drinking ACV with water everyday can help our bodies digest foods we tend to like, such as processed foods, sugars, and alcohol, and keep our energy levels up.

Regulates blood sugar. Research out of Arizona State University found that taking two tablespoons of apple cider vinegar in water before

going to sleep every night lowered blood sugar levels an average of 4 to 6 percent by the morning.

Detoxifies the body. Apple cider vinegar helps to remove harmful toxins that build up in the body. This goes for everything from breaking up mucus from the common cold to environmental toxins that build up in the liver. Flushing these toxins out helps the body to improve the natural blood filtration process and stimulate circulation.

THE WARNINGS

Don't overdo it. Ever heard the phrase, "everything in moderation?" That is because it is true. While a little ACV on

a regular basis can boost energy, improve digestion and detoxify the body, excessive consumption can cause low bone mineral density and potassium deficiencies.

Always dilute your ACV. While apple cider vinegar becomes alkaline through digestion, it starts out extremely acidic. This acidity can burn the tissues of your throat and around your mouth. To keep safe, follow a 10-to-one water to ACV ratio.

Rinse. This acidity doesn't just burn the throat and mouth but can cause serious damage to your teeth enamel over time. Rinse your mouth with cool water after drinking to keep your teeth strong and healthy.



DIY Spa Day

No matter who you are, and no matter what you've got going on, one thing is certain for everyone: Life is stressful. Not everyone has the time or money to indulge in a day of luxury at the spa, but you can treat yourself at home.

Here are a few tips and tricks to get that spa-like glow at home (and save a few bucks doing it).

PREPARE THE MASKS

Hair masks and face masks feel like the ultimate indulgence because they leave hair and skin feeling soft and moisturized in a way that a two-minute daily beauty routine just can't muster.

You can prepare a great moisture-intensive hair mask with honey, one egg yolk, an avocado and a few tablespoons of olive oil. Just be sure to apply to clean, damp hair and leave in for at least 30 minutes.

PAMPER YOUR HANDS AND FEET

Mani-pedis are the quintessential spa treatment that you do not want to skip out on at home. Go all the way. This is not painting your nails at midnight in the bathroom with your foot propped up on the sink.

Do as the pros do and set yourself up at a proper table, with all the necessary accouterments: nail clippers and file, a soaking bowl, cuticle oil and your favorite nail polish. Don't forget the base coat and top coat. Not only are they spa essentials, but they will help keep your nails safe from



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chipping.

SET THE SCENE

Don't forget about the atmosphere. Half of what people love about a spa experience

is the relaxing atmosphere. It is also the reason most people don't feel quite as indulgent when doing these activities at home. It is not as easy to relax when toys

or laundry litter the floor and the smell of last night's lasagna lingers in the air.

Prepare water infused with fruit or veggies, such as lemon and cucumber, mint and

raspberry, or refreshing watermelon.

Burn a candle in your favorite scent and put on instrumental music to set the mood.

Better Snack Choices

Carbs and greasy or sugary foods are tempting, but here are a few healthy alternatives to guilty pleasure snacks.

SOMETHING SALTY

What you crave: When you want a potato chip, most of the time what you really want is something crunchy and salty, but potato chips are known for their high calorie and high fat counts.

Instead, try:

- Salted nuts. While nuts are also pretty high in calories, they are also very high in fiber and healthy fats.

- Baked chickpeas. Crunchy, salty and available in many flavor options. Try them with cayenne for a bit of a kick.

- Popcorn. Low in calories and fat, with a small boost of fiber. Just be careful with what you put on it.

- Briny condiments. Briny condiments are incredibly low on calories, which allows you to have a bigger portion. Pickled cucumbers, cabbage, peppers and olives are all great choices.

SOMETHING SWEET

What you crave: Baked goods are a comfort food. There is nothing like a donut with your morning coffee, a brownie on a rainy afternoon or a slice of yellow cake after dinner.

Instead, try:

- Angelfood cake. This cake is literally half air and pairs well with almost every fruit, so there is an added boost of healthy eating.



We are all the victim of strong and insatiable food cravings. Sometimes, they come out of nowhere and haunt us until they are satisfied.

- Muffins. Tasty without the added calories of cake frosting, this sweet treat can be a healthy option with the right fillings. Orange cranberry, rich banana nut and lemon crumb, or pumpkin sour cream muf-

fins are all worth trying.

SOMETHING CHOCOLATE

What you crave: There is something sweet, and then there's chocolate. For most of us, there is no escaping it,

which is why it is even more important to keep in mind more sensible ways of enjoying chocolate.

Instead, try:

- Dark chocolate. Antioxidants are purer in dark

chocolates, which have fewer calories and fat.

- Protein bars. You can often find them with chocolate, plus you get the added protein boost, which will keep you feeling full, longer.

Traveling with Beauty Products

Packing for a trip is always a stressful venture. What to pack, how to pack, how much to pack — there are many decisions to be made, especially when it comes to beauty products and toiletries.

Fear not. With these quick tips, you will be traveling happy in no time.

EVALUATE YOUR TRIP

The most important question is how long you will be gone. The answer to this can alter whether you bring travel-sized bottles of products or choose to bring full-sized items.

Unless you are traveling for an extensive period (read three weeks or more) and have hair like Rapunzel, travel-sized bottles will get you through just fine. You can even pick up empty, TSA-approved bottles at your local drug store and fill them up with your favorites, if you're opposed to just grabbing what's available in travel size.

As a bonus, you can leave them behind when you pack to come home, leaving you with a bit more room and one less thing to unpack.

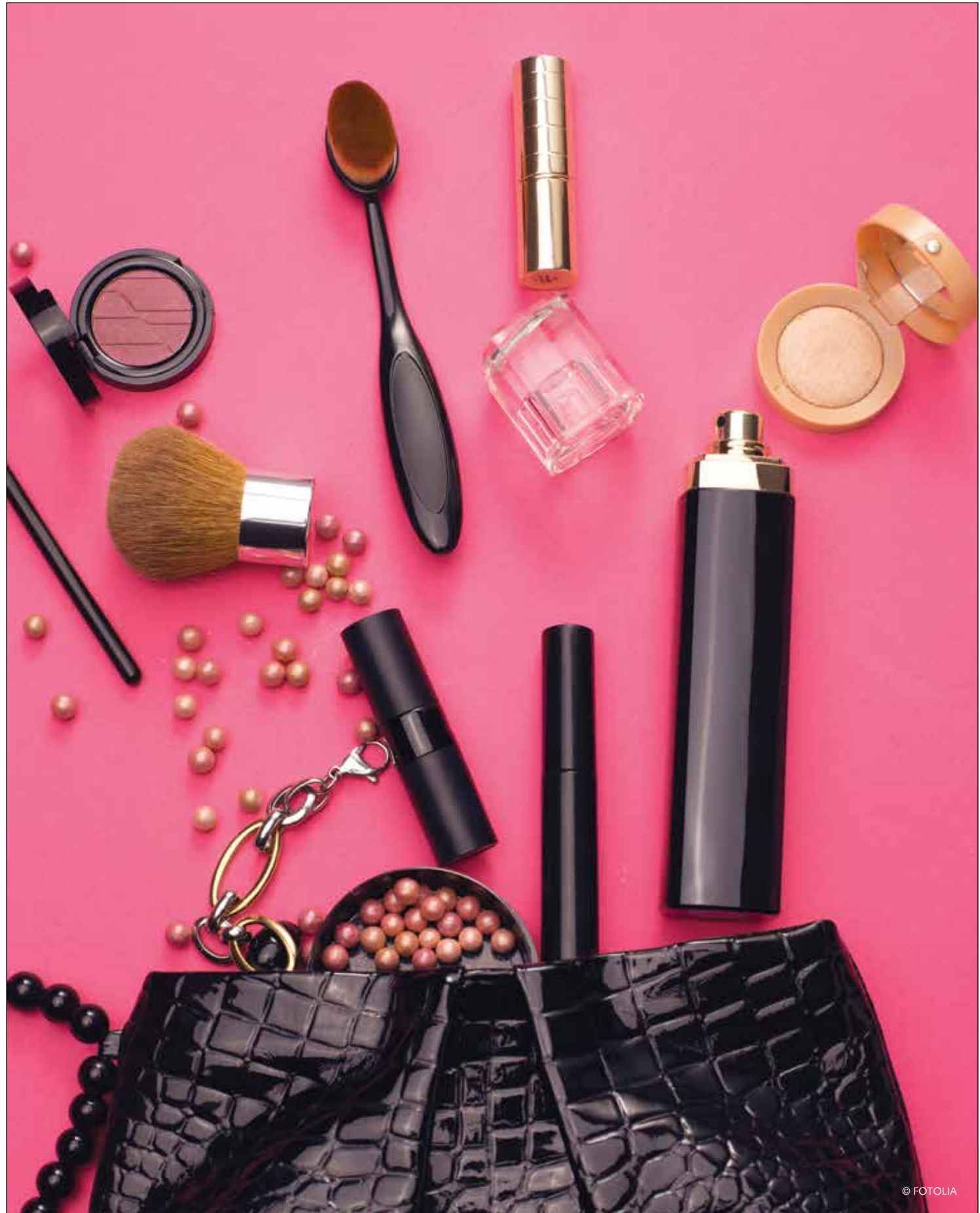
KNOW THYSELF

To some, what you wash your hair with isn't as important as how you dry it. If you don't require specific shampoos or conditioners, forgo them completely. Most hotels keep small toiletries in stock, with their complements, so use that precious luggage space for something more, well, precious. Like your hair dryer (because often the ones that are provided at hotels are tiny and slow).

CARRY ON

If it at all possible, pack your beauty products in your carry-on luggage — even if you also are checking a bag. Just don't forget the 3-1-1 rule: TSA only allows 3.4 ounce bottles of all liquids and gels in one, quart-sized clear plastic zip-top bag per passenger.

This can be quite a feat when it comes to beauty products, but if you can manage it, you'll not only be less likely to experience a toiletry leak (no one else is handling your bag) but, on the off chance your luggage is lost, you can deal with that crisis with your shampoo and toothbrush in hand.



Quotable Women

Words can stick with us. We all have little sayings that we hold onto and pull out from time to time when we feel lost, sad or out of control. From politicians to pop sensations, these women have figured out something important. Read on for your daily bit of inspiration and to be inspired for a healthier, happier life.

“I think the one lesson I have learned is that there is no substitute for paying attention”
— Diane Sawyer

“I’m very, very serious — I’m serious enough not to take myself too seriously. That means I can be completely wedded to the moment. But when I leave that moment, I want to be completely wedded to the next moment.”
— Maya Angelou

“When you love and accept yourself, when you know who really cares about you, and when you learn from your mistakes, then you stop caring about what people who don’t know you think.”
— Beyonce Knowles

“I’ll never know, and neither will you, of the life you don’t choose. We’ll only know that whatever that sister life was, it was important and beautiful and not ours. It was the ghost ship that didn’t carry us. There’s nothing to do but salute it from the shore.” — Cheryl Strayed

“Take criticism seriously but not personally. If there is truth or merit in the criticism, try to learn from it. Otherwise, let it roll right off you.”
— Hillary Clinton



“Your problem is how you are going to spend this one odd and precious life you have been issued. Whether you’re going to spend it trying to look good and creating the illusion that you have power over people and circumstances, or whether you are going to taste it, enjoy it and find out the truth about who you are.”
— Anne Lamott

“As you navigate through the rest of your life, be open to collaboration. Other people and other people’s ideas are often better than your own. Find a group of people who challenge and inspire you, spend a lot of time with them, and it will change your life.”
— Amy Poehler

Boost Your Confidence

Whether one of your relationships has you down or you are having a tough time at work, consider doing one of these small things to make yourself feel a little better. Building confidence is a job that is never finished and needs constant attention.

PERSONAL WELLNESS

- Call a friend or loved one with whom you haven't spoken in a while. We all have a person we might think of but forget to contact because we get busy. Letting people know how much they mean to us not only makes them feel good, it makes us feel good, too.

- Follow through on something a friend or family member has recommended to you, be it a book to read, a movie to watch or a restaurant to try. You get to try something new, and you can discuss it with your friend or family member later.

PROFESSIONAL WELLNESS

- Sometimes looking back on past work that you're very proud of is just the ticket. It can remind you of what you're capable of, bring back feelings of success and give you the determination and motivation you need to tackle a current project.

- Complete a task you've been putting off. A lot of times the tasks that we put off are the ones that require very little of our time — such as answering an email or emptying the dishwasher. Completing even a small task gives us a sense of accomplishment.



Self-esteem is something to which we all aspire, but every now and then, we all feel rather low and need a bit of a boost.

MENTAL WELLNESS

- Meditate. There are a lot of free apps for your smartphone, such as The Mindfulness App and Headspace, that will take you through timed and guided meditations. Reset your internal clock.

- Dance. Put on some guilty pleasure music (90s teen sensations, anyone?) and get up and move. Do it alone and do it often.

PHYSICAL WELLNESS

- Visit YouTube and find a

short exercise video. Many of us intend to go to the gym or try a new class, but time gets the best of us and we never do. We forget that many exercises can be done at home and in short spurts.

- Give yourself 10 extra min-

utes in the morning to get ready. Giving yourself time to slow down, try something new with your hair or make-up, or take extra care in getting dressed will help you relax and take pleasure in planning for the day ahead.