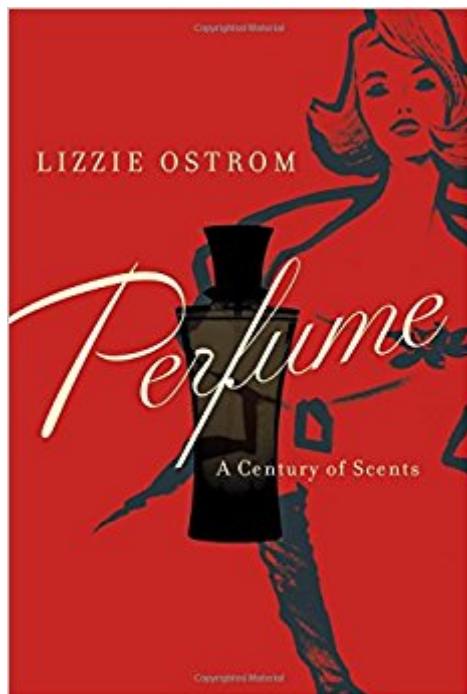


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# Perfume: A Century Of Scents



## Synopsis

Signature scents and now-lost masterpieces; the visionaries who conceived them; the wild and wonderful campaigns that launched them; the women and men who wore themâ •every perfume has a tale to tell. Join Lizzie Ostrom on an olfactory adventure as she explores the trends and crazes that have shaped the way weâ ™ve spritzed. One hundred perfumes and scents in all their fragrant glory reveal a fascinating social history of the past century. From the belle epoque through the swinging sixties, to the naughty nineties and beyond, Ostrom brings intelligence and wit to this most ravishing of subjects. There was the patriotic impact of English Lavender during World War I and perfumes that captured the Egyptomania of the 1920's. Estee Lauder created "Youth Dew" and with it, distilled the essence of 1950's suburbia. Patchouli Oilâ •the "anti-perfume" of the 1960sâ •was sure to keep money out of the hands of corporations and "the man." And who could forget the fervor created by the grunge androgyny of CK One? Scent is truly the passport to memory, makingÂ PerfumeÂ both a lush treat and an insightful examination of the twentieth century through the most mysterious of the five sense. B&W Illustrations throughout

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

â œFragrance has always been wrapped in social and economic issues, controversy, memories and history as Lizzie Ostrom so persuasively shows in the lively Perfume: A Century of Scents. A sharply focused introduction to each chapter further puts the decadeâ •and its fragrance fashionâ •in perspective.â • - Associated Pressâ œIn this witty, entertaining new book, Ostrom surveys the 20th

century by examining 10 key scents created in each decade. It turns out that a history of perfume is both wide-ranging and oddly intimate; after all, Ostrom writes, "a scent is as much about the people who wear it as the people who make it." - *Boston Globe* *Witty and informative, Ostrom's history reveals the way fragrance speaks for historical eras while also evoking them.* Pleasant reading for both lovers of perfume and popular culture. - *Kirkus Reviews* *Rich and intriguing, this book explores the relationship between scents of the 20th century and their ties to politics, gender dynamics, fashion trends and the technologies of their time.* - *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* *Readers with an interest in perfume and general history of the various time periods will enjoy Ostrom's fragrant reminiscences.* - *Booklist* *Rich and intriguing, this book explores the relationship between scents of the 20th century and their ties to politics, gender dynamics, fashion trends and the technologies of their time.* - *The Columbian* *An entertaining romp through a century of perfumes. This book is as delectable an artifact as the product it describes . . . the perfect accompaniment to a bottle of J.A. Adore.* - *The Independent* *A really enjoyable and fun book.* - *The BBC, "Fact Not Fiction" Book Club* *A wonderful, well-informed read. Charming and illuminating.* - *The Spectator* *Beautifully written and sumptuous. Will make a perfect gift.* - *Stylist*

Lizzie Ostrom is one of today's most exciting commentators on all things perfume. A lifelong fragrance fan, she began hosting events for people to discover the world of scent in 2010, under her alter ego of Odette Toilette. She has worked with many fashion brands, as well as cultural and scientific institutions including the Tate, Royal Academy, Royal Institution, Royal Observatory Greenwich and The British Museum. She is also the co-host of the popular podcast *Life in Scents*. Lizzie lives in London and her favorite perfume changes far too often. Find out more on her website: [www.odettetoilette.com](http://www.odettetoilette.com).

Really love this book! Perfume in history and how it's affected our daily lives. I read some criticism of this that it's not about perfume in detail, the notes, the oils used, how each one was created, etc. There are so many books like that out there that go into fragrances in depth. I like this historical perspective full of interesting little anecdotes. Easy to pick up if you put it down for awhile, as each little two or three-page vignette about each perfume is very brief.

Her words are like music.

very interesting history and context of each perfume

Very informative

I love perfumes. I have a variety of fragrances from Britney Spears (whose perfumes are seriously underrated) to Coco Chanel, so I was excited to read Perfume a Century of Scents. I liked parts of this book and others I didn't, hence the 3 star rating. The author details different perfumes over the last century, including the advent of synthetic scents, bottles and marketing. She has an introduction to perfume and then she breaks down each decade with the signature scents of the ten years. I didn't always agree with all her choices as the creme de la creme of that decade (Ralph Lauren's Polo is not included and neither is Elizabeth Taylor's scents) but there are many that are still very popular today that she discusses. There is no set template for every perfume she reviews. sometimes she discusses the ingredients and sometimes she doesn't. I found myself really wanting to know what ingredients were in these scents. She tries to capture the era of the perfume like the swinging sixties. Her writing style can be a little over the top, example "anyone tempted to try Bal a Versailles must first summon the heraldic trumpeters and demand that a master of ceremonies with red sash and monocle hurry round a ballroom crying "Make way! Make way for Her Royal Excellency!" And the author clearly loves Chanel No 5, which she believes will be worn by the first woman resettled on Mars, discovered buried by a Neo-Iron age society, well you get the point. These gushing phrases are throughout the book. What I found very interesting about this book was the history of perfumes in the last century, especially the marketing and producers of fragrances. I had no idea that Sears was into perfumes or that Baccarat crystal designers were involved in creating bottles. Some of the marketing ideas were pretty advanced and innovative for the times. Also interesting were the men's fragrances like Old Spice and Brut.

I was quite surprised at much of what I read about in this book. It is more of a cultural history versus a deconstruction of certain perfumes, which I actually found more enjoyable, as it evoked not just the scent itself but the overall aura. I could better imagine what made these scents appealing to people "or scandalized them!" and I doubly enjoyed finding scents I owned or knew throughout the narrative, some often in older eras that I thought! Is Chanel No. 19 the perfume of the future? I certainly hope so, as I'd love to be ahead of my time here, as I cherish my fast-dwindling bottle of the EDP

Interesting book, with lots of history as well as information about perfumes. Very enjoyable and informative read.

I cannot think of any reason to purchase this book. I confess that I have always wondered just how a perfume comes to be formulated (how ingredients are chosen, how various scents are mixed); how a name is chosen for a scent; how it is marketed and received. Idle curiosity, I might say. Well, you will learn absolutely nothing from this book about any of those topics. The book is divided into eras and speaks about various scents that became popular then. No reason why. Society and women's issues are briefly covered but not in enough detail to make this book purchase worthwhile. Sorry...there must be better books about perfumes out there.

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