

## SANDALWOOD



**Plant/Part:** Tree/Inner heartwood (Source: India/Australia)

**Latin Name:** Santalum album

**Family:** Santalaceae

**Extraction:** Distillation

**AROMA:** Woody, sweet and exotic, subtle and lingering.

**PROPERTIES:** Sandalwood is said to have been used for over 4000 years as a perfume and temple incense. It has a sweet, buttery, woody aroma that is very sensual. It is uplifting and relaxing and is beneficial for all types of skin. Traditionally burnt as an aid to meditation and much used in religious ceremonies. Creates an exotic, sensual atmosphere with a reputation as an aphrodisiac. Excellent skincare oil. useful for dry and damaged hair and as a body fragrance.

Very useful to the genito-urinary system alleviating cystitis and should be massaged in the kidney region where it has a purifying and anti- Inflammatory action. Its aphrodisiac qualities can relieve sexual problems such as frigidity and impotence, perhaps dealing with the underlying anxiety. Its antispasmodic and tonic action on the body should encourage relaxation and a feeling of well being. Was once used to alleviate sex-transmitted diseases and may well have a cleansing action on the sexual organs. Could be useful in promoting vaginal secretions. Also helpful with chest infections, sore throats and dry coughs which accompany bronchitis and lung infections. Very relaxing and aids sleep When catarrhal conditions present. Helps to stimulate the immune system and keep infection at bay. May also treat heartburn (a burning sensation just below the ribcage) and could be helpful for diarrhoea due to its astringent properties.

**CHEMICAL CONSTITUENTS:** Santalols, Fusanols, Forneol, Santalone.

**PRECAUTIONS:** A lingering aroma, often persists in clothes after they have been washed. Its aphrodisiac qualities are well known and should be used at your own peril! Perhaps best avoided in states of depression as it may lower mood even further.

**BLENDS:** Basil, Benzoin, Black Pepper, Cypress, Frankincense, Geranium, Jasmine, Lavender, Lemon, Myrrh, Neroli, Palmarosa, Rose, Vetivert and Ylang Ylang.

**Digestive:** stimulates the production of gastric juices (carminative), relaxes the digestive muscles. used to treat diarrhoea, nausea, colic, gastritis.

**Genito-Urinary:** stimulates the production of urine (diuretic). antiseptic, used to treat genito-urinary infections. especially chronic ones. used to treat gonorrhoea; it is more of a male remedy, but can be also used for leucorrhoea.

**Muscles/Joints:** relaxes the muscles.



**Respiratory:** antispasmodic, antiseptic, helps to expel mucus, used to treat bronchitis, catarrh, coughs, laryngitis, sore throat.

**Skin/Hair:** antiseptic, astringent, anti-inflammatory, mildly pain-relieving, stimulates cellular regeneration and assists in the healing of wounds and scars. used to treat acne and wrinkles. moisturizing, perfect for dry skin (but can be used for all skin types).

**Emotions/Mind:** sedative and tonic, used for nervous tension, stress, anxiety, and depression. subdues aggression and irritability, promotes compassion and openness, clears thought processes, fosters awareness - no wonder it's been used as a meditation aid for centuries! according to a friend, it helps to make dreams more vivid. in india it was said to promote the awakening of the kundalini.

**Other:** aphrodisiac. used for earaches.

Sandalwood is a small evergreen, parasitic tree, which obtains its nourishment by attaching suckers to the roots of other trees. The variety *Santalum album* grows in India and various islands of the Indian Ocean, with the best quality being found in the province of Mysore. *Santalum spicatum* grows in Australia and yields a somewhat inferior oil. The trees are very slow-growing, and only very mature trees, which are nearing the end of their life, are cut. The trunks are left to lie in the forests until the outer wood has been eaten away by ants, and only the heartwood, which the insects will not attack, is then used for building, furniture making, incense and the extraction of essential oil by steam distillation.

The oil contains santalol, fusanol, santalic acid, terasantalol and carbides, and varies from yellowish to a deep brown. It is extremely thick and viscous, and the odour, although not initially strong, develops when applied to the skin, and is amazingly persistent. Sandalwood has been used in India for many centuries, both in traditional Ayurvedic medicine, and as a perfume and incense. Its most important medicinal use is as a very powerful urinary antiseptic. It has been used for at least two and a half thousand years for the treatment of various infections of the urinary tract, such as cystitis. It has been traditionally used to treat gonorrhoea, but it would be irresponsible and illegal for an aromatherapist without a medical training to use it in this context, unless medical advice and treatment was also sought.



It is also a very good pulmonary antiseptic, and I have found it good particularly for dry, persistent and irritating coughs, for it is also very sedative. It is one of the best essential oils to use in the treatment of chronic bronchitis, and can also be used for soothing sore throats. The best methods of use are inhalations and external application to the chest and throat. The taste is bitter in the extreme, which makes it very unpalatable for use as a gargle.

It is probably best known as a perfume, since it has been used in perfumes, toiletries and cosmetics, both in the East and in Europe, for longer than anybody has recorded. As a cosmetic ingredient, Sandalwood is far more than a perfume, for it is beneficial to many different skin types and problems. It can be used for dry and dehydrated skins, especially in the form of warm compresses, but at the opposite end of the scale it is helpful for oily skins and acne, as it is slightly astringent and a powerful antiseptic. It is one of the perfumes that seems to be as popular for use by men as it is with women, and this can be a useful way of ensuring that a man, or perhaps more often a teenage boy, will regularly use any skin preparation you

may prescribe, as he will feel assured that he will not smell 'funny' but more as if he has been using an expensive soap or aftershave. Sandalwood can be used in aftershaves for young men with barber's rash, for it is extremely soothing, and relieves the itch as well as inhibiting the bacteria which cause the rash.

The widespread popularity of Sandalwood as a perfume, may be due to its long-held reputation as an aphrodisiac, and unlike some of the essential oils and other substances believed to have such an effect, Sandalwood really does seem to live up to such expectations.