

## Oil is Well If you blend them the right way!

Essential Oils are becoming increasingly relevant these days due to their therapeutic and valuable properties for the mind, body and surroundings. They are available in stores and on the internet, but did you know that using them without proper information or expert guidance can be a risk? Viki Shah meets Melanie Jane Nightingale, the UAE-based esoteric art practitioner and natural perfumier to know all about aromatic oils and their alchemy.

From the Daffodil fields of England to the Lavender fields of France, it has been a fragrant journey for Melanie Jane Nightingale. This year marks her 20th year as a holistic therapist, and to celebrate the milestone, she is hosting a bouquet of events designed to provoke and indulge the senses. "Aromas and Alchemy" is a trilogy of workshops designed by her to increase participants' knowledge of aromatherapy and have an informed understanding of essential oils, how they interact with each other - and with us - and the complex craft of blending, leaving with a bespoke blend of their own!

"Whilst suffering from post-partum depression I stumbled into the world of aromatherapy and natural fragrance, not realising at the time the true healing power

of essential oils. The day after my first aromatherapy massage, the black cloud that had been hovering over me for years had lifted and I wanted to share the joy of that moment with the world," - says Melanie.

During the interactive sessions, you'll learn how to make naturally indulgent and effective personal care products like remedies, lotions, body mists and face oils. It's an aromatherapy class like no other with a glass of Prosecco and finger food along with a wealth of information. Participants benefit from her two decades of experience and learn how to make their own bespoke aromatherapy products.

**AROMA AND ALCHEMY WORKSHOP**  
The workshop begins with an understanding of Essential oils, their

origin, source and the different families. Did you know that there are 3 types of Lavender with different uses? Lavandin, Spike Lavender and Lavender and that Spike Lavender which is extremely high in camphor is not good for kids? The talk has innumerable nuggets like these that go a long way in enhancing your knowledge of essential oils. The session goes on to explain extraction of oils leading to details on each oil and its benefits and contraindications. Finally, you are asked to decide the purpose for which you are making a blend for yourself and decide on the various oils to achieve that purpose keeping in mind the blending technique, yin yang aspect and notes.



### WHAT IS INSIDE A BOTTLE OF ESSENTIAL OIL?

Essential Oils are produced by the defence mechanism of the plants. A bottle of essential oil is all about the science of botany, distillation, alchemy, effects of the immune system of the plants that produce these oils, leading to the effect of that oil on us and our body. Created in the glands, in nature they are used for various reasons. They help strengthen organ functions and defence mechanisms and help the body do its job better. But there are few things that you should know before you use essential oils. The wrong use of oils can be hazardous too!



### TOP TIPS TO KEEP IN MIND BEFORE YOU USE ESSENTIAL OILS:

Choose wisely and under expert guidance. Know all about the oil before you begin using it and always do a patch test.

Use essential oils with a lot of caution. Keep away from your eyes and open wounds and wear gloves when you work with them and wash your hands after applying them.

The most permeable parts of the body are: soles of the feet, shoulders, mucous membranes, forehead and scalp, so oils are immediately effective when rubbed in these parts.

All essential oils have Yin AND Yang aspects/molecules; some may be stimulating to the body yet calming to the mind, for example, Rosemary.

Do not experiment with ingestion until you have taken the time to learn how to do it safely. For example, camphor is used in the treatment of certain infectious and respiratory diseases, but oral ingestion is toxic.

Beware of contraindications like low blood pressure (avoid Ylang Ylang) and epilepsy (avoid Eucalyptus, Rosemary and Camphorous oils).

If used in the wrong way oils can be hazardous too! For example, Wintergreen oil contains the active ingredient methyl salicylate (98%) and although it has been used in ointments for rheumatism and other such complaints, the topical application of this oil, can cause internal bleeding if used in conjunction with blood thinning medication like aspirin, due to the blood thinning action of the methyl salicylate.

Be aware of contraindications like pregnancy - during the first trimester oils should not be used at all and after use only gentle oils like Lavender, Sweet Orange, Mandarin and Chamomile and that too with expert advice.

Essential oils can be used for kids too, but not all! So be well-informed and take expert advice before using them on children and infants. For example, Lavender and Rosemary oils are very



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effective for calming anxiety during exams and making the child energetic.

Exercise caution when using oils with sun exposure. It is important to dilute essential oils with carrier oils like virgin coconut oil, sweet almond oil, olive oil etc. before using them.

Some oils that work for a friend may not necessarily work the same way for you and that is okay.

If used sensibly and in an informed manner, there are multiple uses of essential oils in your household. Always buy your oils from reliable sources.

Look for essential oils in cobalt blue or an amber brown glass bottle, as essential oils will break down plastic and are light sensitive and will break down over time when exposed to light.

Traditional oils, fragrance oils, and essential oils are not the same thing. ✦



MELANIE JANE Nightingale qualified as a holistic therapist in 1998 and studied at the Grasse Institute of Perfumery. She is an associate of the Federation of Holistic Therapists. Her talents are increasingly being appreciated by the business world, and she now regularly hosts corporate wellness workshops, which are exclusive team building events and a unique way to be a part of the UAE's Happiness Initiative. Visit: [www.bymelaniejane.com](http://www.bymelaniejane.com) OR [www.masterclasseswithmelanie.com](http://www.masterclasseswithmelanie.com)

