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BASIL

An unusual, but refreshing addition to a perfume, this herb has a complex scent of its own. It combines sweet, spicy notes with a cooler, aniseed aroma that works well alongside citrus scents – as Jo Malone Lane Basil & Mandarin cologne (£40, jomalone.com) demonstrates perfectly. Basil is also one of the key ingredients in Clarins Eau Ressourçante (£32, clarins.co.uk), a fragrance that harnesses the soothing powers of basil essential oil to help create a sense of calm and relaxation.

Penhaligon's Lavandula EDP (£105, penhaligons.com) uses top notes of basil with earthier lavender and clary sage to create the perfect day-to-evening scent.



SAGE

Generations have used the mild peppery scent of sage oil to protect and heal but it fell out of favour until now. "Sage is rare in perfumery," says master perfumer Christine Nagel, who created Jo Malone Wood Sage & Sea Salt cologne (£40, jomalone.com). "But its ambiguity means it works for men and women." Amouage Dia Woman EDP (£170, amouage.com) has sage as a top note to balance floral elements, while L'Artisan Parfumeur Caligna EDP (£70, artisanparfumeur.com) is a woody scent with sage at its heart.



VERBENA

Verbena adds a fresh and zesty lift to fragrances. "The herbaceous scent of Verbena and Lavender de Provence Cologne (£20, crabtree-evelyn.co.uk) will bring a ray of sunshine to a cloudy day," says perfumer Fran Brown of Crabtree & Evelyn. L'Occitane Frisson de Verveine EDT (£42, uk.loccitane.com) mixes verbena from Provence with spring water to create an invigorating scent, and Woods of Windsor Bergamot & Neroli EDT (£17.99, woodsowindsor.co.uk) combines grassy verbena with citrusy bergamot.



ROSEMARY

Many herbal scents have their roots in Italy. "Monks used plants to make health-giving elixirs," explains Lawrence Roullier White. "Then people began to use them as perfumes." Made with rosemary, lavender and citrus fruits, 4711 Original Eau de Cologne (£10, roullierwhite.com) was a Carthusian monk's 'miracle water' and Le Couvent Des Minimes Eau Des Minimes Cologne (£19, boots.com) is inspired by healing waters, too. Rosemary is also found in the natural perfume Florascent Aqua Aromatica Regia EDT (£65, pravera.co.uk).



MINT

"Herbal notes are often associated with happy times spent in the garden," Fran Brown says. Perhaps none more so than mint. Union Quince Mint & Moss EDP (£125, roullierwhite.com) sets mint amid sweet quinces. Inspired by Jean Paul Guerlain's garden, Guerlain Aqua Allegoria Herba Fresca EDT (£42, johnlewis.com) uses peppermint with clover leaf and pear blossom. Mentha Citrata by Acqua di Stresa (£74, Harvey Nichols) blends mint with bergamot and violet from the mythical Garden of Hesperides. ➔