

BY TOM BANHAM • 16 OCTOBER 2015



We were more than a little perturbed when these fragrance samples dropped onto our desk. Appearing in an anonymous bag, each was labelled for a blood type (A, AB, O and so on), the stickers wrapped around obsidian plastic that seemed, when it caught the light, as though it might actually contain something originally destined for the blood bank. We weren't sure whether to spray it on or call in Brad Pitt and Morgan Freeman.

Fortunately, we chose the former. And since we're yet to receive a head in a box, that's the tack we'd advise you take too. The scents are from a brand called, appropriately enough, Blood Concept. And its approach to fragrance differs rather from the approach most houses take. Namely, just making you smell nice.

Instead, Blood Concept's aim is to make you smell unique, by crafting an olfactory emulation of different environments. That ranges from cities – Tokyo and Milan both make an appearance – to penthouse parties, midnight milk bars and coffee shops. To achieve that the brand's perfumers reach for less common notes. So yes, you get bergamot and the ubiquitous oud, but here they rub up alongside gunpowder, aluminium and even cannabis.

And though the range doesn't smell like actual blood – a relief for those not keen on being pursued home by packs of feral dogs – each nods to the brand's overarching concept by featuring a metallic undertone; the 'blood accord'. Which makes for something eminently more wearable than other concept-driven fragrances.

Our favourite, AB, is especially so. Which is appropriate since, though its corresponding blood type is the rarest, its plasma is universal and can be donated to any patient without rejection. On your skin, that translates to a spiciness that will work anywhere.

Black Series AB has a punchy opening of juniper, cloves and black pepper, though the top notes soon fade to something a touch more floral, with violet leaves absolute and a touch of tonka bean. But it's the drydown that's richest, and most rewarding, as incense and myrrh start to take hold.

If you prefer a fire-and-forget fragrance, then perhaps give Blood Concept a miss. But if you're looking for a new signature – or just a special occasion addition to your scent rotation – then it's a damn sight more interesting than your usual fashion label licence.

Available at [averyperfumegallery.com](http://averyperfumegallery.com), priced €128 for 50ml.

### Fragrance Facts

**Bottle:** all-black, with an equally inky, oversized stopper. The kind of thing the Cure's Robert Smith might keep on his dresser.

**Top notes:** Black pepper, cloves, juniper berries;

**Middle notes:** violet leaves absolute, cinnamon, tonka bean;

**Base notes:** elemi, woody amber, incense and myrrh.

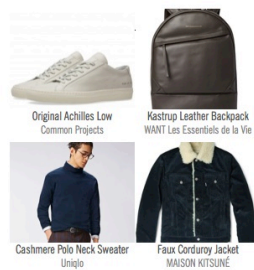
**Best for:** leaving a Gothic impression. Just don't wear around actual vampires.



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