

holiday scents for your home

Ah, the holidays: They bring tidings of great joy—and often, stress. Arm yourself from an arsenal of aromatherapy blends that can help you stay centered amid the holiday bustle.

What better way to welcome holiday guests than with the scents fir, pine, or spruce? Breathing in these refreshing oils will help open airways, clear your mind, and tame tension, making them the perfect go-to this December.

GRAND FIR (*Abies grandis*) smells just like a holiday tree you remember from childhood. It lifts the mood, and along with invigorating **DOUGLAS FIR** (*Pseudotsuga douglasii*), it can help boost low spirits. Blend the fir oils with the woody notes of **SCOTCH (SCOTS) PINE** (*Pinus sylvestris*) for an aroma that's cleansing for body, mind, and spirit.

To disperse the aroma, mix a few drops of each oil in an aromatherapy diffuser, or add the oils to water in a saucer, and place it on a sunny windowsill to let the sun warm the blend. To create a home mist, mix 8 drops of each oil with distilled water in a four-ounce glass spray bottle and shake gently.

The spruces, including **WHITE SPRUCE** (*Picea glauca*) and **BLACK SPRUCE** (*Picea mariana*), help build stamina by bolstering the adrenal glands, which take a hit from the challenges of holiday travel, erratic schedules, and cold, dry weather. Spruce acts as a tonic for energy and relief for achy muscles, and when combined with **LAVENDER** (*Lavandula angustifolia*), it packs a powerful one-two punch to blue moods.

Create a massage blend by mixing 8 drops each of white spruce and black spruce with 12 drops lavender essential oils in a one-ounce bottle filled with a carrier oil such as grapeseed or calendula.

Massage Oils

I like to simmer up a big quart jar of cinnamon tea and keep it in the fridge for ease of access. Pour 4 cups water into a small saucepan and add 4 good-quality (organic) cinnamon sticks. Cover and simmer for 10 minutes, then doctor with stevia (a sweetener that won't affect your blood sugar), unsweetened nut or soymilk, and a dash of vanilla. If you battle high blood sugar, drink this tea 20 minutes after your meal. And if you battle low blood sugar (hypoglycemia), drink it throughout the day on an empty stomach.



Emotional Support Blends

Cypress (*Cupressus sempervirens*) can help curb anxiety. Diffuse several drops of cypress with equal amounts of lavender before bedtime to promote sleep. For a massage blend, mix 8 drops each of cypress, cedarwood (*Juniperus virginiana*), and lavender with 1 ounce of a carrier oil in a glass bottle. Roll the bottle between your palms to warm. Apply to wrists, temple, and chest.

To leverage cedarwood's detoxifying properties, apply in a circular motion to the stomach and lower back over the kidneys.

Did You Know?

Cypress is one of several essential oils mentioned in both the Old and New Testaments. It's known to evoke courage and promote feelings of stability.

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