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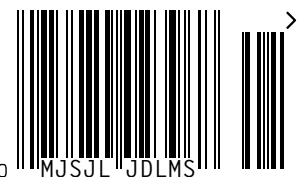
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MAKE OVER YOUR MOOD

Bust stress and improve your sense of well-being with these aromatherapy oils and blends By Cheryl Cromer

Spring is on the horizon, but what if the long, dark days of winter left you feeling tired, irritable, and unmotivated? Aromatherapy offers a respite for stressed-out souls with a range of essential oils to lift you out of the doldrums and help you greet 2018 with a newfound, positive attitude.

Any essential oil from the citrus family will raise your spirits with one whiff. But reach for **LEMON** (*Citrus limon*) when a little extra energy is required. Upbeat and bright, lemon is veritable sunshine in a bottle.

Next up is one of the most effective citrus oils for treating melancholy — zesty **BLOOD ORANGE**. Although it shares the same Latin name as sister sweet orange, *Citrus sinensis*, blood orange is often chosen for its more complex aroma and anti-depressant qualities.

Another citrusy restorative, **LIME** (*Citrus aurantifolia*) adds a zip to antianxiety blends, with natural chemical properties that act as a tonic for those battling chronic stress. Diffuse several drops of lemon, lime, and blood orange in the morning to start the day with an aromatic boost. Since these

did you know...
Depression and anxiety can reflect a temporary mood, seasonal disorder, or chronic ailment. Everyone goes through bouts of sadness, so invest in some self-care. But don't discount those low spirits. Feeling like your mood is more than a temporary lull? Consult with a qualified medical professional.

are top notes, the fragrance may dissipate quickly; so mix a few drops of each into unscented body lotion and apply after your morning shower to sustain the tart, happy scent just a bit longer.

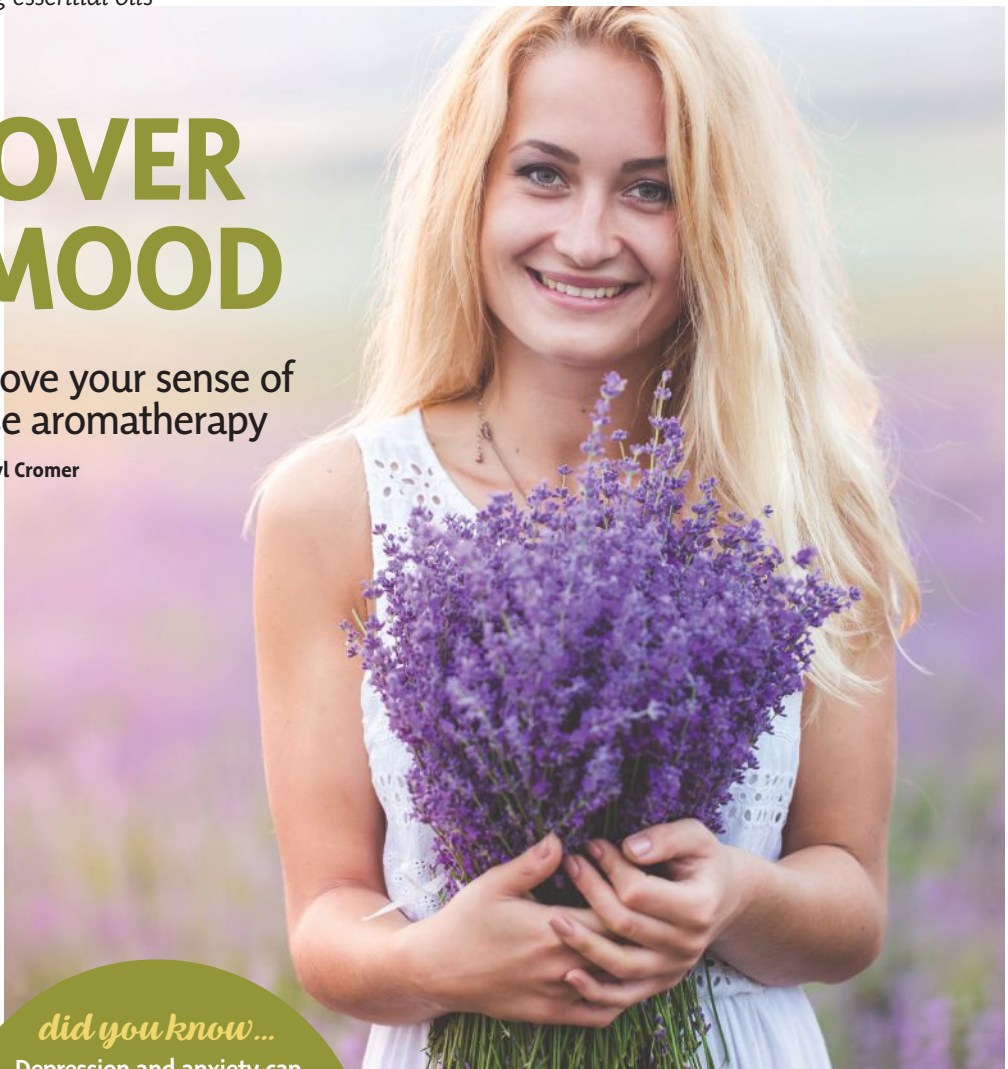
MELISSA (*Melissa officinalis*), or lemon balm, has a lemony aroma with a touch of green, almost as if it's signaling your spirit to buck up. It, too, is an

excellent anti-depressant. Steep the dried herbs to make lemon balm tea for a soothing afternoon treat. And add a few drops of this rare restorative essential oil to a cotton ball and tuck into your pillowcase before climbing into bed to help still the mind and encourage restful sleep.

The perfect choice from the herbal family of essential oils is **CLARY SAGE** (*Salvia sclarea*). The English name clary originates from the Latin *sclarea*, which is derived from *clarus*, the word for "clear." And that's what this earthy, woody oil does — clears away stormy moods. Since the aroma can be a bit

strong for some, blend clary sage with a citrus oil to mask the odor while still enjoying its euphoric properties, which helps battle the blues.

Speaking of the blues, diffuse negativity with **BLUE TANSY** (*Tanacetum annuum*), an herbal essential oil with a slight, sweet floral overtone that, like blood orange, will add more substance and depth to your blends. Blue tansy oil gets its unusual cobalt color from one of its components, called chamazulene. Be sure to choose the right oil, NOT common tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*), which can be toxic. True blue tansy has completely different chemical properties with valuable aromatherapy benefits.



GET HAPPY MIST

For immediate pay-off, create an aromatic environmental mist. Blend oils with distilled water in a 4 oz. glass bottle and keep your blend handy for a good mood anytime, anywhere. Close your eyes, spray your space, and breathe deeply.

24 drops lemon
28 drops blood orange
20 drops lime

For a relaxing massage oil, blend essential oils in 1 ounce sweet almond or similar carrier oil. For bath salts, mix essential oils with 1 cup Epsom salts. Makes 2–3 applications.



BLUES BUSTER MASSAGE OIL

10 drops blood orange
6 drops clary sage
5 drops blue tansy

RESET AND RENEW BLEND

10 drops blood orange
5 drops Melissa
6 drops lavender

ANTI-ANXIETY BLEND

10 drops blood orange
8 drops blue tansy
6 drops lavender

Healthy Tip: Experiment with your essential oils to achieve that right aromatic blend just for you. Start out on the lighter side — these recipes suggest a dilution of 3%, the perfect starting point. You can always add a drop or two more. Just follow your nose!

No list of stress-busting essential oils is complete without **LAVENDER** (*Lavandula angustifolia*), the go-to for quelling anxiety and calming overwrought emotions. Whether inhaled or applied topically, lavender has a sedating quality that will instill a sense of peace. Lavender essential oil is universally used by aromatherapists to enhance any blend, but especially those aimed at balancing the mood and uplifting the spirit. Combine a few drops of lavender with blue tansy and diffuse aurally to help melt anxiety and create a mellow atmosphere.

Cheryl Cromer is an Atlanta-based writer specializing in aromatherapy and the spa lifestyle. She has more than 17 years' experience as an artisan aromatherapist. When she's not writing or creating blends, Cheryl enjoys traveling, interior decorating, and life with her Pembroke Welsh Corgi, Elle.

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