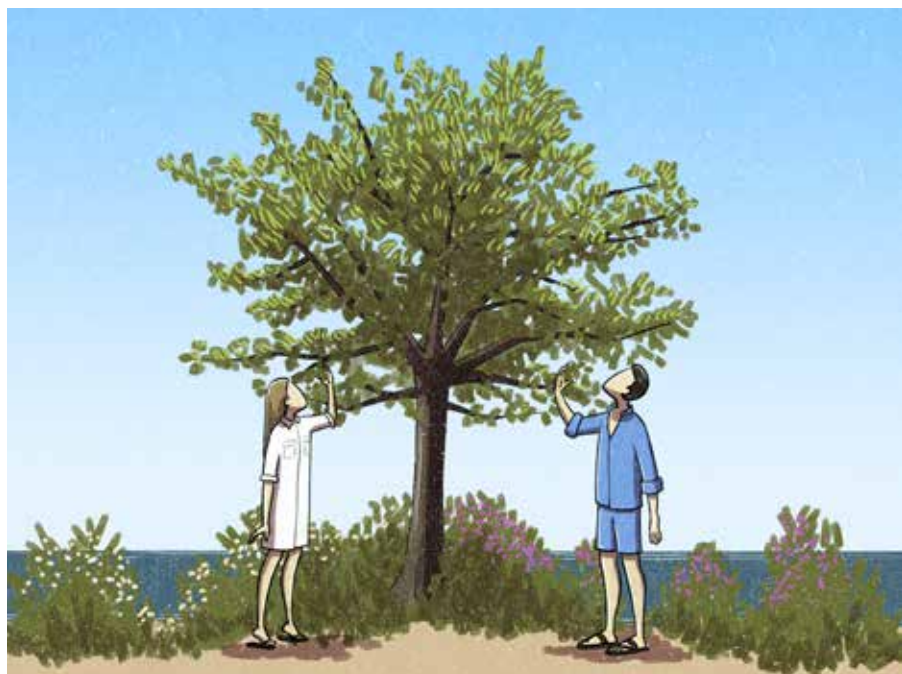


THE VINSON VIEW

Quality maniac and master shopper Nick Vinson on the who, what, when, where and why



SMELLY FACTS

We develop a sense of smell at 13 weeks inside the womb.

We can smell the food that our mothers consume from the womb.

Smell tends to be our predominant sense until the age of ten.

Scent and emotion are strongly linked in the brain.

We often smell things before we see them, even if we don't realise it.

Our lives are cluttered with overbearing synthetic smells, especially from cleaning products and washing powders. Declutter and remove negative smells and replace them with positive natural smells.

Replace your Dutch hothouse flowers with blooms that really smell.

01 Win by a nose

Picky Nicky discovers the power of smell is not to be sniffed at

When I was eight I holidayed in Fiji. At 30, I returned to the South Pacific island and the second the plane doors opened, the local smell, heady with frangipani, instantly brought back memories of that visit 22 years earlier. Which left me stunned, as I had no idea that my olfactory memory was quite so powerful. I finally understood why at Design/Miami one December when I was introduced to Dawn Goldworm, founder of olfactory branding company 12.29, and we got talking about smell, scent and fragrance. Goldworm had created a scent for the design fair that year, and she is often called in by banks to help make people feel secure, hotels to make people feel at home, or stores to make people feel like spending. I learnt that smell tends to be our predominant sense until we are ten years old (which explains the Fiji moment), and that scent and emotion are tightly linked in the brain.

There are two other places that I have visited where I just can't get enough of the local smell. One is at the top of the Monte San Vigilio at the Vigilius Mountain Resort (W*64), designed by Matteo Thun in local larch wood and surrounded by larch trees. The air 1,500 metres up is pretty clean, and I just wanted to swallow as much of it as possible. The other is Comporta, in Portugal, which I visited this summer. On my first day back in London, I bumped into

my Marylebone neighbour Lyn Harris of Perfumer H. She told me she had been busy capturing the very essence of Portugal in a series of new scents for Claus Porto, Portugal's first ever soap and fragrance factory. Exchanging notes on how fabulous Comporta was, she confirmed it was a mix of Mediterranean pine and eucalyptus that drove me crazy, but added that there were dry herbs like camomile, lavender and thyme growing wild on the ground (missed by me) and that combination, along with the warm, temperate climate, is what 'hits you in the face'. Harris also explained that it's the absence of clutter (the smell version) that gives you the ultimate olfactory experience, and when you smell, it hits the limbic part of the brain, which releases so much emotion.

Aside from the beauty and cleaning industry, plus the world of wine (I love the bouquet of a good wine in a large bowled, stemmed glass almost more than the taste) this important sense seems overlooked – even flowers don't smell anymore (thanks, Holland). Everything today seems so focused on look and feel. Think about how much we experience online or through a smartphone – and yet there will probably never be a swipe to sniff action. I will be following Lyn Harris' lead to tune my olfactory skills and train my nose. ★



02

Croc star

I can't wait to be sporting a polo with Jean-Paul Goude's reinterpretation of the Lacoste motif, an oversized cone-hatted crocodile on a unicycle. lacoste.com



03

Wax lyrical

Lyn Harris has created a new candle range for Claus Porto. Naturally, my favourite is Eucalyptus-Encens, featuring pine, cedar, cypress and eucalyptus. clausporto.com