

# HEALING ESSENTIALS AROMATHERAPY NEWSLETTER MAY 2014



## Issue #13 Essential Oils of Sweet Orange, Blood Orange, Petitgrain, and Neroli.

In March and April the heavenly, uplifting fragrance of orange blossoms filled the surroundings of Ojai's East End. On walks through the orange groves it seems like being in heaven. All citrus blossoms including tangerines, lemons, and grapefruit have a beautiful fragrance. In fact the botanical name for grapefruit essential oil is *Citrus paradisi*.

There are many citrus essential oils such as grapefruit, lemon and lime, but this newsletter will focus on the orange tree which produces at least 5 essential oils: Neroli, Sweet Orange, Blood Orange, Petitgrain and Bergamot. Though all of these essential oils have similar properties, in many ways they are very different. So we'll look at them each individually.



The orange tree is a small tree native to China and was cultivated there as far back as 2500 B.C. There is evidence in literature that the Greeks and Romans knew about the orange tree though it was prized more for its beauty than for its fruit. In the twelfth century the Moors brought the orange tree from Syria to Africa to Spain. It was introduced to the Americas by Columbus and was primarily grown in the West Indies and Florida. Currently oranges are widely cultivated in North America and the Mediterranean regions of Spain, Italy, and France.

Orange Tree: The word 'orange' comes from the Sanskrit *naranga*, later in Arabic *naranj* and in Spanish *naranja* which became *orange*.

**\*Monthly Special: Citrus Body Butter: 2 oz. \$8.00\***

**Contains Essential Oils of Bergamot, Orange, Neroli, Petitgrain, Lavender, Nutmeg, and Vanilla in a rich cream base. Very lovely citrus blend with spicy hints of Nutmeg and Vanilla.**

## Sweet Orange Essential Oil (*Citrus sinensis*)



**Sweet Orange Essential Oil** (*Citrus sinensis*) comes from the orange peel. Distillation method: cold pressed. One hundred orange peelings yield 1 milliliter (20 drops) of essential oil).

**Description of essential oil:** **Color:** Rich yellow orange. **Consistency:** **Note:** Top. **Aroma:** reminiscent of cutting into a fresh orange; bright, uplifting to mind and senses. **Blends well with** Clove, Lavender, and Frankincense.

**Properties:** anti-depressant, antiseptic, anti-spasmodic, carminative, digestive, lymphatic, hypotensive, calming to the nervous system, **The Chemical constituents** of citrus oils vary widely however most contain the chemical **limonene**. Limonene has been researched to inhibit the reproduction of tumor cells. Orange essential oil is 95 % limonene.

### Uses of Sweet Orange Essential Oil:

- ❖ **Children's Remedy:** Children love the fresh fragrance of orange as well as tangerine, and mandarin. Helps to relax to sleep.
- ❖ **Cardiovascular:** Calms heart palpitations. Improves circulation.
- ❖ **Dermatologic and Cosmetic:** soothing to aging, dry, acne prone skin.
- ❖ **Gastrointestinal:** well known for settling the digestive system. Relieves, flatulence, cramps, irritable bowel, and constipation. Appears to have a normalizing effect on peristalsis. Recipe: 1 drop of orange in 8 oz. glass of water to relieve GI distress.
- ❖ **Nervous System:** Calming to nervous system. To treat anxiety, blend with lavender, neroli, and sandalwood.
- ❖ **Subtle Energy:** Uplifting to mind and emotions.

**Safety:** Generally considered non-toxic, large amounts of Orange oil are not healthy to ingest or apply topically. In addition, it should not be applied to skin that will be exposed to direct sunlight as it may cause sensitivity.

## Blood Orange (*Citrus sinensis*)

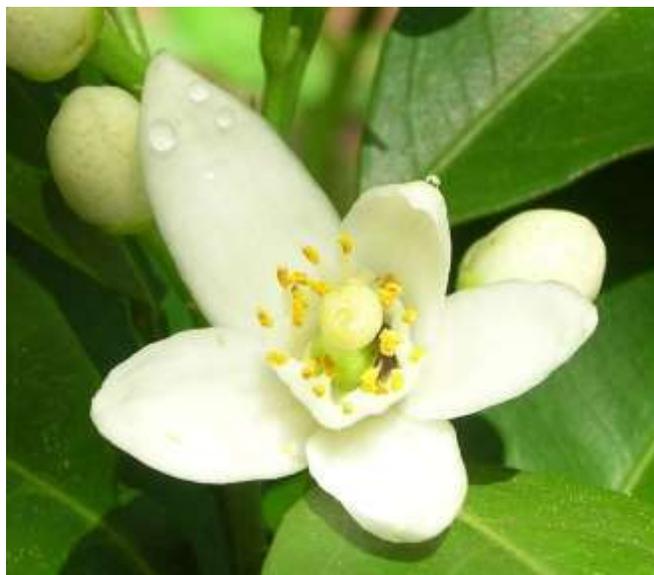


**Botany of Blood Orange:** Blood oranges are a natural mutation of *Citrus sinensis*, although today the majority of them are hybrids. High concentrations of *anthocyanin* give the rind, flesh, and juice of the fruit their characteristic dark red color. *Anthocyanin*, the red pigment is an anti-oxidant and is rare in the citrus family. The blood orange, with its distinct color and flavor, is generally considered the most delicious juice orange. Blood oranges were first discovered and cultivated in Sicily in the fifteenth century. Since then they have spread worldwide, but are grown especially in Spain and Italy.

**Description of Blood Orange essential oil:** **Color:** deep red orange. **Aroma:** radiant, tangy, citrus scent. **Note:** middle. **Blends well with:** lemon, lavender, clary sage, myrrh, nutmeg and clove.

**Properties and Uses** are similar to Sweet Orange Essential Oil.

## Neroli Essential Oil (*Citrus aurantium*)



**Neroli Essential Oil** (*Citrus aurantium*) is produced from the very fragrant flowers of the bitter orange tree. The essential oil is difficult to obtain and very expensive. It is one of the key ingredients in many perfumes.

**Description of essential oil:** Method of extraction: flowers are steam distilled. **Color:** pale-yellow. **Aroma:** powerful light floral top note. **Chemical** constituents are very complex.

**Properties:** similar to Sweet Orange Essential Oil. It is considered one of the most effective sedative and antidepressant remedies and is recommended for treating anxiety.

*"Neroli... reaching down into the soul to stabilize and regenerate. It provides relief and strength for long-standing psychological tension, exhaustion, and seemingly hopeless situations."*

**Chemical Constituents:** A complex blend of many bio-chemicals including limonene, linalool, geraniol which are sedating and anti-viral.

### Uses of Neroli Essential Oil:

- ❖ **Cardiovascular:** regulates heart rhythm and is used to treat hypertension and palpitations. .
- ❖ **Dermatologic and Cosmetic:** relieves dry skin and used in skin preparations.
- ❖ **Gastro-Intestinal:** relieves spasms of GI tract. Beneficial to treat diarrhea especially due to nervous tension.  
**Recipe:** add 1 drop of neroli to a teaspoon of honey to relieve stress, depression, and/or diarrhea.
- ❖ **Nervous System:** Neroli is well known as an anti-depressant, calming and sedative to the nervous system.
- ❖ **Subtle Energy:** In spite of its sedative effects, Neroli can be joyous and uplifting.

## Bitter Orange Tree (*Citrus bigaradia*) yields Petitgrain and Neroli



**Petitgrain Essential Oil** (*Citrus aurantium*) is obtained from the bitter orange tree (*Citrus bigaradia*) which also gives us Neroli, and in fact there is a 'family' resemblance between the two oils.

**Petitgrain is steam distilled** from leaves and/or the young tips of twigs, but in earlier centuries the oil was extracted from the unripe oranges, picked when they were still green and no bigger than a cherry, hence the name 'Petit Grains', meaning little grains. This source of oil proved uneconomic, as it reduced the later crop of mature oranges drastically, but the old name remained.

**Petitgrain Essential Oil Description:** Good Petitgrain oil has a fresh, flowery light perfume, resembling that of Neroli although less bitter. **Chemically,** it shares many of the constituents of Neroli, though with a higher proportion of linalool and linalyl acetate making it strongly anti-viral. **Blends well:** From the fragrance point of

view, it blends very well with Rosemary, Lavender, Geranium and Bergamot. A delicious blend of Neroli, Orange and Petitgrain oils has a wonderful aroma bringing together the fruit, flowers and leaves of the orange.

#### Uses of Petitgrain Essential Oil:

- ❖ **Cardiovascular:** Although calming to the heart and GI tract, one should not use Petitgrain as a substitute where there is a serious indication that Neroli is needed, such as in panic and anxiety states, tachycardia, insomnia. .
- ❖ **Dermatologic and Cosmetic:** Petitgrain is wonderfully refreshing bath oil, with deodorant properties, and can be used in a final rinse after shampooing to give the hair a delicate aroma. It is particularly refreshing blended with Rosemary for both these uses.
- ❖ **Nervous System:** Therapeutically, Petitgrain also resembles Neroli, though it is less sedative. Being neutral oil it can be blended equally well with sedative or stimulant oils, depending on the effect that is being sought.
- ❖ **Respiratory:** It is very good massage oil, and may be used to control nervous asthma in people with irritability anxiety and depression.

#### Bergamot: *Citrus bergamia*



**Bergamot Essential Oil:** *Citrus bergamia*. The citrus fruit of the small bergamot tree is not edible because the pulp is too sour. As a result the tree is cultivated for its essential oil. Originally grown in southern Italy, Bergamot is now produced in the Ivory Coast, Morocco, and Corsica. Bergamot essential oil was made famous by the development of Eau-de-cologne originally made in Italy and is still used extensively in perfumery. It is cold pressed from the peels

**Essential Oil Description:** **Color:** Light green. **Aroma:** citrus and sweet with a warm spicy floral quality, reminiscent of neroli and lavender. **Note:** middle. **Chemical Constituents:** high in linalyl acetate with the effect of calming, and 33% limonene slows tumor growth. The presence of Bergaptyene is phototoxic to skin.

**Blends well with:** Basil, Lavender, Marjoram sweet, Lemon, Black Pepper, Clary Sage, Cypress, Frankincense, Geranium, Jasmine, Mandarin, Nutmeg, Orange, Rosemary, Sandalwood, Vetiver and Ylang-ylang

**Properties:** analgesic, antiseptic, antidepressant, antiviral, digestive, relieves indigestion, and flatulence, restorative to skin, sedative, tonic. Gentle, floral uplifting. Promotes self-confidence.

#### Uses of Bergamot Essential Oil:

- ❖ **Immune System:** Has been found to inhibit the Herpes simplex I virus. Combined with tea tree and lavender effective for cold sores and shingles.
- ❖ **Dermatologic and Cosmetic:** Used in many skin care creams due to its refreshing nature. It is ideal to help calm inflamed skin, eczema, and psoriasis. Very popular to use in perfumes as it lifts and stabilizes them
- ❖ **Gastro-Intestinal:** Relieves colic, flatulence, and indigestion.
- ❖ **Nervous System:** It is also a favorite oil of aroma-therapists in treating depression. The gentle floral scent is both uplifting and sedative. May be taken internally one drop at a time mixed with honey as a tea.
- ❖ **Reproductive / Urological:** Recommended for treating cystitis.
- ❖ **Safety:** Phototoxic on the skin. Avoid exposure to the sun after using Bergamot in massage.

Patricia Wing, RN, IAC, Clinical Aromatherapist

References:

1. The Complete Guide to Aromatherapy, by. Battaglia, S., P. 169-170, 236-238, 241-242, 248-250.
2. Information on the history of Bergamot, Orange, Neroli, and Petitgrain was adapted from Wikipedia.
3. Essential oil information adapted from the Wholesale Essential Oils website.