

SWEET

Leave room for dessert: The newest gourmand scents are delish and—plot twist—won't send your nose into sugar shock.

BY JILL PERCIA / PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES WOJCIK

JASMINE. SEA SALT. PUERTO RICAN RUM.

Consider these your safe words when you sniff a perfume that's way too saccharine. "Gourmand fragrances are moving away from the syrupy, juvenile interpretations of the past to scents that are more sophisticated and refined," says Helen Murphy, director of the IFF Scent Design Group. So what exactly are perfumers cooking up? All sorts of yummy stuff. They're marrying sweet notes like vanilla with woods, florals, and spices. But they're also playing with more well-rounded sugars, like salt-tinged caramel and toffee.

It's actually a return to tradition, of sorts. By definition, a gourmand simply has an edible quality, says Paris-based perfumer Serge Majoullier. It can be fruity, salty, even boozy. In fact, there are five ways spring's new gourmands might just take you by surprise. So even if sugary isn't your jam, we have a hunch you'll want to submit to at least one.

FOR A COZY EFFECT...

SWEET + WOODS OR HERBS

It's all about the base. Smoky woods and smooth ambers are bottom-heavy, tend to linger, and bring confectionary notes down to earth, says Majoullier. The latest blends are like treating yourself to tiramisu over a crackling bonfire. Earthy botanicals, like patchouli or vetiver, work in the same way.

TRY: Viktor & Rolf Bonbon (\$115, at Saks Fifth Avenue; below), which marries caramel and cedarwood. Or Lancôme La Vie Est Belle Eau De Parfum Spray (\$62, lancome-usa.com; in photo at left), a praline and patchouli essence with a hint of iris.



SOMETHINGS

FOR A HAPPY EFFECT...

SWEET + CITRUS

Back in the day, perfumers would blend sugary notes with fruits like melons. (Flashback to sixth-grade sleepovers.) Now they're reaching for the tarter produce, and it smells like a much-needed vacation. "They're tangier, so they balance out the sugar, and they add a fun, tropical feel, too," explains Murphy. **TRY:** Estée Lauder Bronze Goddess Eau Fraiche Skinscent (\$65, esteelauder.com), laced with vanilla, lemon, and mandarin.



MICHAEL KORS
WHITE

GOOD ENOUGH TO EAT

Hungry yet? We had the world's top chefs whip up desserts inspired by these perfumes. Dig in to their delectable recipes at WomensHealthMag.com/fragrances.*

FOR A SULTRY EFFECT...

SWEET + RICH FLORALS

"Voluptuous white florals like gardenia, tuberose, and jasmine impart sensuality to sweet notes because they have a carnal quality—a bit dirty but sexy," says Murphy. **TRY:** Michael Kors White Eau De Parfum (\$88, michaelkors.com). This scent combines the three flowers above with tonka bean, which "has an almond-like nuttiness," says Majoullier. "The French put it into their cakes to add richness and depth."

FOR A RELAXED EFFECT...

SWEET + AQUATIC

A pinch from the sea subtracts more than it adds. Oceanic eaus "cut into the sweetness, giving the fragrance an abstract, salty feel," says Murphy. Add warm, sunny florals and you've just bottled the first 75°F day of the year. **TRY:** Maison Martin Margiela Replica Beach Walk (\$125, sephora.com), a blend of pink pepper, heliotrope, and coconut.



REPLICA
REPRODUCTION OF FAMILIAR SCENTS AND MOMENTS OF VARYING LOCATIONS AND PERIODS
Originally: Beach Walk
Provenance and Period: Calvi, 1972
Fragrance Description: Sun kissed salty skin.
Style Description: Female fragrance...
Maison Martin Margiela
PARIS

FOR A PLUSH EFFECT...

SWEET + LIQUEUR

Chocolate walks into a bar and meets alcohol. Instant power couple. Booze "ages" the candy, essentially heating it until the scent swells and gets all nice and lush. (Think of berries simmering in a pot.) **TRY:** Guerlain Elixir Charnel Gourmand Coquin Eau de Parfum (\$260, at Nordstrom). It's a cocktail of cocoa bean and—yum—rum. ■



*MEET YOUR PASTRY CHEFS: Tammy Alana, Alizé at the Top of The Palms, Las Vegas; Dana Cree, Blackbird, Chicago; Kate Jacoby, Vedge, Philadelphia; Michelle Karr-Ueoka, MW Restaurant, Honolulu; Tiffany Maclaasac, Buttercream Bakeshop, Washington, D.C.; Christina Tosi, Momofuku Milkbar, New York City