

# SPRITZ TO REFRESH IN SUMMER!

MINDY GREEN, M.S.

Spritzing the skin with cool herbal liquids is a delightful and sensual experience. On the hottest summer day, you can refresh mind, body, and spirit with just a few pumps of a mister bottle.



separated. (Lavender, geranium, and many other floral waters are difficult to find and expensive, but rosewater and orange water are readily available at natural products stores and Middle Eastern delis.) Combined with the essential oils of fragrant herbs, flowers, resins, roots, and seeds, those liquids metamorphose into light, refreshing fragrances that can nurture both body and soul.

The skin, which is made up mostly of water, craves moisture to keep it young and supple. Arid climates, air conditioning, and plane travel dehydrate it, and constant washing depletes the combination of sebum and perspiration that helps seal in moisture. Provided that you've consumed enough water to feed the skin from the inside (one to two quarts per day, depending on your climate), misting the outside helps plump up skin with moisture to give it a youthful glow. You can mist your face as often as every 30 minutes in dry, hot weather if you wish.

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During the blistering days and sultry nights of nature's peak season, maintaining your cool can be a challenge. What better way to cool off, calm down, or light up those hot summer nights than with an herbal spritzer made from nature's own perfumes? Spritzers are like a breath of fresh, cool air and can be customized to revitalize scorched summer skin and alter your mood. Simple and fun to make, spritzers can be created by anyone with an ounce of adventurous spirit.

You don't have to be a cosmetic chemist to formulate your own spritzers. All you need are a few guidelines, a bit of imagination, and simple ingredients such as aloe vera juice, a watery beverage made from the inner gel of the aloe vera leaf; herbal tinctures; or aromatic hydrolats, the recondensed steam-water left over after an essential oil has been distilled and

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Formulated slightly differently, room spritzers are a hot trend these days, popular in stores, spas, and hotel lobbies. Scented mists may be used to add fragrance to linens, clothing, even curtains. I have found that these spritzers are less allergenic and more appealing than many commercial plug-in fragrances and chemical aerosol sprays, and they can alter the mood in a room or other enclosed space. When spritzed in the car, they may even help soothe road rage in heavy traffic.

## Which Spritz?

Making your own spritzers is an easy way to begin the adventure of perfume blending. Listen to your intuition and develop an

adventurous attitude. Your choice of ingredients may be inspired by an event that moves you emotionally, a poem, a holiday, or your appreciation of a bit of nature such as a waterfall or a wildflower meadow.

Though odor preference is a deeply personal issue, perfumers associate certain fragrances with different personality types. Hopeless romantics may be attracted to the poetic odors of florals, balanced with a hint of green and a slight, soft woody note. Outgoing individuals may be drawn to exhilarating citrus odors with a splash of spicy green, while shy and understated folks may prefer single scents or a simple floral with a hint of fruit that seems to reflect their innocence. Vamps can utilize the purported aphrodisiac powers of certain earthy scents, with a hint of the seductive florals, whereas those who are assured may favor scents that sparkle, perhaps a brilliant combination of floral and citrus bouquets.

## The Nose Knows

"Smell is the sense of the imagination,' the eighteenth-century philosopher and writer Jean-Jacques Rousseau once said. Manipulation of mood with fragrance is as old as the art of perfumery. Tied to smell, the most mysterious of all the senses, it is elusive and difficult to articulate yet profound.

As volatile substances float up the nose, something scientifically comprehensible yet seemingly magical happens. The fragrant molecules bind to odor-receptor sites in the nose and enter the limbic system, the most primitive area of the brain, where memory and emotion are processed. Depending on the constituents of the molecules being inhaled, different neurochemicals are released in the body; those can affect mood, sexual desire, appetite, and a host of other physical and emotional reactions.

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Fragrances are also believed to inhibit the growth of the airborne bacteria that can cause colds. In *The Art of Aromatherapy*, Robert Tisserand writes that an emulsion spray of 2 percent eucalyptus kills off 70 percent of airborne staphylococci; bergamot is reportedly effective against respiratory-tract infections, and lavender is said to inhibit diphtheria, typhoid, and tuberculosis.

## Face & Body Spritzer:

Cool down with this facial mist.

1. Mix 10 drops essential oil blend with 1/4 cup rosewater or orange flower water, herbal tincture, aloe vera juice, witch hazel (especially good for oily skin), and/or filtered water and 1 teaspoon grain alcohol (vodka or Everclear) to disperse the essential oils. (The alcohol is optional.)

Tinctures of calendula, echinacea, plantain, or gotu kola—all known for their anti-inflammatory and healing properties—may be added to pump up the formula.

Close your eyes when spraying your face. Don't use citrus oils on skin exposed to sunlight because they can cause photodermatitis and increase pigmentation.

## Spritzer Blends:

**Lighten Up: Beat the blues with this tress buster.**

- 10 drops lavender oil
- 5 drops grapefruit oil
- 3 drops Roman chamomile oil
- 2 drops clary sage oil

## Sultry and Smooth

- 10 drops sandalwood oil
- 4 drops jasmine oil
- 5 drops mandarin oil
- 1 drop vetiver oil


**This refreshing mist will remind you of a cool stroll through a misty forest.**

- 7 drops rosemary oil
- 6 drops fir or pine oil
- 5 drops orange oil
- 2 drops birch oil

Mindy Green is an esthetician and massage therapist who has worked in the natural products and complementary health care industry for 35 years. Mindy holds a master's degree in Health and Human Services and has founded and owned several herb and aromatherapy businesses.

An environmental activist, she loves learning and teaching on the subject of all things botanical, and is dedicated to contributing to the awareness of global health.

To learn more about Mindy Green visit her website:  
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