

# susancreddy

spa & beauty therapy in practice

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## Aromatherapy

Aromatherapy massage is one of the most requested treatments in beauty salons today. It is increasing in popularity to such a degree that clients want to buy skin care and other cosmetic products that incorporate essential oils for their therapeutic effect. A client may have a massage using essential oils, then go home and burn candles, place bowls of pot pourri around the house and use a bath foam all containing essential oils. There are many [methods of use](#) for these beneficial oils and many of the manufacturers of beauty and household products are recognising how the inclusion of essential oils in their products will enhance their benefits and increase sales.

Aromatherapy massage is not only relaxing in its application but with the careful choice of essential oils it has other beneficial effects, psychologically on the mind and physiologically on the systems of the body.

Distilled essential oils have been used as medicines since distillation was invented in the tenth century.



### Treatment objectives

An aromatherapy massage may be suggested for many reasons but in general the main objectives for treatment are:

- To help combat cellulite
- It is calming and soothing
- To counteract stress
- For emotional well being – to feel uplifted
- To increase energy levels
- To aid sleep for Insomniacs
- To improve physical well being – ease aches and pains, relax tense muscles
- For relaxation
- To promote a sense of well being

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Our sense of smell is an important aspect of aromatherapy and some fragrances can have a great effect on our emotions as they stimulate the Limbic System.

Massage is the most effective way of introducing essential oils into the body and as the word suggests aromatherapy means:

**AROMA** - A pleasant sweet smell or fragrance.

**THERAPY** - Healing or caring treatment serving to improve or maintain well being.

Essential oils are extracted from many different sources, such as citrus fruits, flowers, leaves, herbs and trees, using different methods of extraction depending on the fragility of the source. The term Aromatherapy was not used until the 20th Century even though the practise dates back many thousands of years.

**The Chinese** were known to burn incense to create harmony and balance and used herbs together with the practice of acupuncture.

**The Egyptians** designed crude distillation machines, which they used to extract oil to embalm their dead. Egyptian men as well as women also used infused oils and herbal preparations as a fragrance.

**The Romans** also used fragrant oils in their bathing and massage rituals, and to perfume their hair, bodies, clothing and bed linen.

**Jewish people** used oils for anointing and it is well documented that Frankincense and Myrrh were given to Jesus as gifts at his birth.

**The Greek** physicians made special preparations, which were used for perfume, to calm inflamed skin and for wound healing.

## **European influences**

Renee-Maurice Gattefosse was a French chemist who worked in his family's perfume business and it was he, in the 1920's, who used the term aromatherapy, after discovering by accident, after burning his hand, that lavender helped to heal the burn and reduce the scarring. Dr Jean Valnet was a French doctor and scientist who used essential oils to treat medical and psychiatric disorders. His findings were published in 1964 as Aromatherapie. Marguerite Maury applied the findings of Valnet to beauty therapy using essential oils to personalise the treatments for her clients.