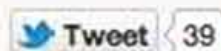


BEAUTY, FEATURED | Comments: 13
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Enter to Win a Natural Aftelier Perfume in a French Glass Pendant!

With all the concerns about how we absorb chemicals through our skin, we're happy to know about Mandy Aftel's **Aftelier** natural perfumes. Aftel hand-blends her fragrances using pure essences. To start your new year sweetly, we're giving one lucky winner a chance to win her choice of Aftelier perfume in a French glass pendant!

The French *flacon* pendants (\$80 each) are suspended on golden ribbon and hold 3.5 ml of perfume. Each can be filled with any

fragrance: Secret Garden, Cacao, Candide, Cepes and Tuberose, Fig, Honey Blossom, Lumiere, Parfum de Maroc, Shiso and Tango. To enter, simply fill out [this form!](#)

While many perfumers talk about natural scents, they often use synthetics. Not Aftel — and that's why each perfume is a different color; when real base ingredients are used, even the hue comes from the source.

Aftel has written several books about scent and fragrance: *Essence and Alchemy* (Gibbs Smith, 2004), a history of perfume; *Aroma: The Magic of Essential Oils in Foods and Fragrance* (Artisan, 2004), with chef Daniel Patterson, and *Scents & Sensibilities: Creating Solid Perfumes for Well-Being* (Gibbs Smith, 2005).

We love Aftel's **solid perfumes** — especially the ones that come in vintage watch cases and patch boxes (which 18th-century women used to carry paste-on beauty marks). We noticed the new doubles, made to be worn by themselves or layered, such as the fir/rose combo. "The fir smells like a forest of jammy sweet fir trees, and the roses smell truly like a bouquet of roses — because it's what they are," Aftel says.

Some impressive **chefs and bartenders** use Aftel's **chef's essences**. (Her culinary essences are even in the White House kitchen!) Starting in February, you'll be able to buy some of her kitchen essences from **Williams-Sonoma**, in stores and online. Williams-Sonoma will carry black pepper, nutmeg, Makrud lime leaf, fresh ginger (which we like in hot water with honey), and litsea cubeba, which smells like the best lemon-drop candy of our childhood.

Big spenders can buy custom Aftelier perfumes for \$1,600. (To keep it in perspective, Aftel's ingredients can cost up to \$14,000 a kilo.) For bespoke scent, she might reach back in time. "I have a collection of over 100-year-old essences," she says. Aftel's vintage collection includes jasmine, rose and cassia.

Aftel also makes face creams, body oils, scented teas and candles. As an authority, Aftel knows that fine scents come in layers for complexity, depth and balance. "To make a good perfume you need top, middle and base," she notes.

With so much going on, what next? "More of this," Aftel says. "I am so lucky, to do what I love."



One lucky winner will receive an Aftelier pendant with the fragrance of her choice.