

Forward Thinking: *Au Naturel*

From botanical beauty products to raw, vegan fast food drive-thrus, natural and organic trends are affecting fragrances and flavors

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According to the International Fragrance Association (IFRA), “There is no official regulatory definition for the term ‘natural’ for the fragrance industry. A natural product is not necessarily organic, as it can be grown with chemical fertilizers, pesticides, etc. Inversely, an organic product is always natural.”

Natural, organic, sustainable or green are popular marketing buzzwords used by consumer packaged goods manufacturers to market and promote products and services with claims such as: “no harsh chemicals,” “nontoxic” and “eco-friendly.” Because many of these terms are not officially regulated in the fragrance and flavor industry, brands and manufacturers use them freely, causing consumer confusion. While there is no globally harmonized definition of “natural” in the fragrance and flavor industry, many companies are moving ahead and creating their own interpretations of these kinds of products. The most interesting new products evolving in the “natural” segment are botanicals, organic, vegan and raw.

Botanicals and Natural Ingredients

The natural versus synthetic debate has led to a resurgence of new products using botanicals “derived from plants” and natural ingredients. The brand Miessence Botanical Perfumes offer six food-grade certified organic perfumes: *Brave-Chypre*, *Calm-Fougere*, *Delicious-Gourmand*, *Free-Citrus*, *Love-Floral*, and *Wild-Oriental*. These fragrances “are hand-blended in the traditional artisan method of natural perfumery using rare and exquisite botanical extracts, absolutes and essential oils solely as their aromatic source.” To add depth to their fragrances, the company explores all aspects of the plant, including the “flowers, fruits, blossoms, leaves, twigs, barks, resins, woods, roots, rhizomes and seeds.” Also, distinguished natural perfumer Mandy Aftel added *Haute Claire EDP* to her Aftelier collection, using notes of galbanum, ylang ylang, honeysuckle, vetiver, vanilla and sweet grass.

Tata Harper Skincare and Clark’s Botanicals are examples of skin care brands that formulate with botanicals. Tata Harper is a “100% natural and nontoxic beauty” line manufactured in Vermont on Harper’s 1,200-acre farm. According to the company, its products “contain



at least six and up to 29 active ingredients each.” Alfalfa, borage, buckwheat wax, date palm and safflower are a few unusual natural ingredients used in the line. In addition, the company is eco-friendly and uses glass packaging, treeless labels and sustainably sourced electricity. All of Clark’s Botanicals skin care products “feature jasmine absolute, a precious essential oil that naturally rebalances skin. Derived from nocturnally blooming flowers, this extract is also antibacterial, anti-inflammatory and immuno-stimulating.”

Botanicals are also now shifting to beverages. To complement the still version of Ayala’s Herbal Water collection, the company recently introduced *Sparkling Herbal Waters* in flavors of *Lemongrass Mint Vanilla*, *Cinnamon Orange Peel* and *Ginger Lemon Peel* in single-serve, 12 oz. bottles. The water is sourced from an artesian well in Virginia, and the beverages “contain the highest-quality, organically grown culinary herbal combinations with zero calories, zero artificial sweeteners, flavors, and colors, and zero chemical preservatives.” Adina Holistics recently launched *Adina Holistics Zero Herbal Elixirs* available in *Wild Black Cherry* with resveratrol and vitamins and *Mandarin Melon Berry* with maqui and vitamins, while Unilever and PepsiCo released four flavors under the 100% Natural Lipton Iced Tea brand, which promises a “simple, natural ingredient list.” Mate Veza, San Francisco’s craft beer brewer, is releasing a new limited edition *Mate Veza Morpho Herbal Ale*, described as an “organic ale brewed with yerba mate, hibiscus flowers, and bay leaves.” An atypical product on trend in the candy category is Dentyne Pure in two flavors, *Pure Mint*

with *Herbal Accents* and *Pure Mint with Melon Accents*. Both contain Neutra Fresh, a proprietary ingredient “clinically shown to purify your breath.”

Although indirectly related to the fragrance and flavor industry, an innovative concept in fashion is the We Are Ultra collective line of clothes under the Ultra label. The company uses “soy and bamboo fibers, recycled PET, salmon skin leather and a biodegradable tencel mix under ethical production standards.” The newest collection is *Ultra 10*, an interchangeable 10-piece wardrobe designed in conjunction with “sustainability leaders LOHAS, Greenovate and The Wellness Works” that is supposed to last 365 days.

Farm Fresh and Organic

According to the Shelton Group’s recent US Eco Pulse survey, consumers continue to look for natural and organic food labels. Of 1,013 respondents, the survey revealed 25% of consumers look for a “100% natural” or “All natural” label, followed by 24% “USDA Certified Organic” or “100% organic,” and 17% preferred “Grown in the USA.”

In line with the Eco Pulse study, restaurants continue to tout their organic menu items by highlighting the specific farm’s products, such as at Blue Hill New York and Blue Hill at Stone Barns. Blue Hill’s menus feature a “know thy farmer” section to introduce customers to the fresh products served. Furthermore, the restaurant serves a “Farmer’s Feast, a five-course tasting inspired by the week’s harvest.” San Francisco’s Aziza restaurant “showcases the abundance of organic produce and free-range meat, game and poultry from local farms and ranches that practice ecologically sound, slow and sustainable agriculture,” while the Manresa restaurant located in the Santa Cruz Mountains has an exclusive partnership with Love Apple Farms, which uses biodynamic practices.

There is no shortage of organic food and beverages. Made is a new line of certified organic drinks that are naturally gluten-free and kosher and blend fruit juices and green tea. *Strawberry Lemonade*, *Blackberry Peach*, *Blueberry Lemonade*, *Pomegranate Lemonade* and *Raspberry Peach* are the company’s current flavors. The R.W. Knudsen Family added *Organic Lime* and *Organic Coconut* to its *Sparkling Essence* line.

Two notable alcoholic products are Thatcher’s Organic Artisan Liqueur and Simply Naked wines. Thatcher’s Organic Artisan Liqueur is handmade using farm-fresh, organic ingredients and available in 11 flavors that range from fruits and flowers to spices and gourmand directions. Unique variants include *Yumberry*, *Elderflower*, *Tres Chiles* and *Dark Chocolate*. Constellation Wines US just released *Simply Naked*, a line of unoaked wines that are “designed to express the true varietal character of the wine without the influence of oak barrels.” To ferment and age the wine, the company uses 100% stainless steel barrels and high-quality, premium Californian fruit. According to the company, chardonnay features tropical fruit, citrus and pear with layers of melon, fig and honey while the cabernet sauvignon has flavors of plum, black cherry and cinnamon spice with chewy tannins.

Eros Greek Yogurt, exclusively sold at Whole Foods, is made with “organic, low-fat cow’s milk from small family farms where the cows are Certified Humane Raised and Handled.” Available in five flavors—*Plain*, *Honey*, *Vanilla*, *Blueberry* and *Strawberry*—all products are GMO-free, gluten-free and kosher. Berkley and Oakland’s Tara’s Organic Ice Cream offers 112 gourmet, certified-organic ice cream flavors, such as *Adzuki Black Sesame*, *Edamame Lemon*, *Genmaicha Tea*, *Nasturtium* and *Sweet Corn*.

A novel, sustainable concept is Texas-based In.redients grocer, “the first package-free, zero-waste grocery store in the United States.” Customers bring their own reusable containers and bags to shop for fresh local and organic groceries, which in turn reduces waste created by unnecessary packaging.

Beauty products follow suit with a focus on organic skin care and offer an array of original approaches to differentiate and educate consumers about their brands. According to Mintel Beauty Innovation, there were “500 North American skin care product launches with organic claims followed by 151 hair care products and 157 cosmetics.” *Intelligent Nutrients Certified Organic Health and Beauty* products are based on “food-grade ingredients and certified organics with cosmetic chemistry—substances the body recognizes and readily assimilates as nutrients in the body.” The philosophy behind the brand is “if it’s good enough to go on your body, it should be good enough to go into your mouth.”

Inspired by his creation of healthful smoothies made from organic fruits and vegetables, Adrian Bryce Diorio founded Bryce Organic Skin Care, a line with products that are “made fresh to order without any mass production from fresh, hand-selected fruit and vegetable purées, specific to individual states and regions” produced in Massachusetts. *Massachusetts Watermelon Gelee*, *New York Finger Lake Grapes Fruit Acid Peel* and *Vermont Pure Maple Treatment Masque* are a few examples of unusual variants in the line. To support the environment, the company uses recyclable and minimal packaging, as well as natural and energy efficient lighting in their facilities.

Native Maui organic tanning lotions and sunscreens are “biodegradable, free of synthetic preservatives, 100% paraben-free, 100% nontoxic, and reef safe and contain Z-Cote, a finely milled, micronized clear zinc oxide.” The company “uses only natural preservatives including organic carnauba wax, Hawaiian beeswax, and candelilla wax to naturally waterproof.” Scents include *Ginger-Pear*, *Cocoa-Plumeria*, *Cocoa-Nilla*, *Cocoa-Lime*, *Pomegranate-Avocado*, *Passionfruit-Papaya* and *Mangorita*. Many of these variants are fortified with each fruit’s botanical extract.

In April 2011, Om Aroma & Co., the makers of “fresh organic skin care products that are locally produced in New York and free of parabens, formaldehyde, synthetic fragrances/dyes, and chemical fillers,” opened its flagship boutique and beauty lounge in New York’s West Village. The beauty lounge offers a selection of services, including Om’s signature Yoga Facial that includes the “Emotion Face Mapping Massage to unblock emotional tension.”

The French company Codage, which translates to

“made-to-measure,” is a beauty nutrition system that “offers 100% natural ingredients—plant, marine and mineral extracts. The company is committed to selecting ingredients from organic farming, fair trade and is involved in sustainable development and biodiversity.” Through www.mycodage.com/an, consumers customize their own skin care products by choosing “my NUTRI-OUT, concentrated actives that deeply nourish the skin from the outside and my NUTRI-IN, dietary supplements that nourish the skin from the inside.”

Raw, Vegan and Foraging

The term “raw” or “living” commonly refers to food that is not cooked above 115°–118°F and usually includes fruits, vegetables, sprouts, nuts and seeds. Raw foodists believe eating unprocessed and uncooked food preserves the food’s natural enzymes and aids in digestion. In 2004, supermodel Carol Alt began popularizing the raw lifestyle with her book *Eating in the Raw: A Beginner’s Guide to Getting Slimmer, Feeling Healthier and Looking Younger the Raw-Food Way*. Traditionally vegetarians and vegans gravitate towards this lifestyle, but it is slowly moving into the mainstream. David Wolfe, a health, eco, nutrition and natural beauty expert, offers a raw nutrition certification course through the BodyMind Institute.

In response to this movement, restaurants such as Plant Food for People, a vegan fast food drive-thru, and Pressed Juicery, a juice shop, truck and subscription-based delivery

service that features cleanse programs, are appearing in California. Pressed Juicery’s juices are produced “on a hydraulic press, which extracts the finest produce straight from the pulp, minimizing oxidation and releasing vitamins, minerals, and enzymes” and lasts for three days.

Top chefs from renowned restaurants around the world are reacting to this trend. Copenhagen culinary consultant Alessandro Porcelli created Cook It Raw (www.cookitraw.org), a collective of leading chefs who gather for an annual meeting in “an interesting corner of the globe.” According to Porcelli, “Cook It Raw has now become a meditation on nature. By raw, we don’t just mean uncooked, but also wild food and primary ingredients from nature.”

An evolution of the raw concept is wild food foraging, “the act of looking or searching for food or provisions.” “Wildman” Steve Brill offers New York City Park tours (www.wildmanstevebrill.com), while Wisconsin’s Sam Thayer (foragersharvest.com) is a speaker and writer on this subject, as well as a maple syrup producer, wild rice harvester and owner of a small organic orchard. Daniel Patterson of San Francisco’s Coi restaurant is at the forefront of the restaurant foraging movement. According to Patterson, “Our food is made with the best ingredients we can find in our area: cultivated plants grown from heirloom seeds; wild-harvested leaves, flowers, barks and roots; local fish, seaweeds and coastal grasses; pastured meat, poultry and eggs from small farmers.”

Like many trends, this lifestyle began with food. However, it is now being translated into personal care products. *Raw Essentials* by Carol Alt is “100% raw, [because] the ingredients are never heated above 115°F and retain all the vitamins, minerals, nutrients and antioxidants providing maximum nourishment to the skin.” The range is categorized in an assortment of eye, face and body care products. Hurraw! Balm is “all natural, vegan, made from premium raw, organic and fair trade ingredients” with flavors such as *Black Cherry*, *Root Beer* and *Green Tea*. Hurraw’s newest variants are *SPF Sun Balm* formulated with red raspberry seed oil, sea buckthorn oil, pomegranate seed oil and non-nano zinc oxide, and *Moon Balm* made with avocado oil, rosehip seed oil, meadowfoam seed oil and argan oil. This environmentally conscious company uses oval tubes made of recyclable #5 plastic, 100% recycled paper to print on and 100% post-consumer paperboard wholesale packs for shipping.

Natural: Here to Stay

Regardless of what “natural” means, it is here to stay, and organic, sustainable, and green fragrance and flavor products will continue to launch. Fragrance and flavor suppliers and consumer packaged goods manufacturers will continue to explore botanicals, natural ingredients and organic materials to refine and develop their products to meet the growing demands of consumers for natural products, and brands will continue to search for new ways to produce and communicate natural products, including raw and vegan creations, to differentiate themselves.