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# Cult Perfumes: The World's Most Exclusive Perfumeries



## Synopsis

Even in times of economic hardship, perfume is an affordable luxury, recognized for its ability to make us not only smell good but also feel great. No woman's dressing table or bathroom cabinet is complete without at least one bottle. *Cult Perfumes* is the first book to explore the most exclusive boutique perfumeries producing some of the world's most captivating scents. Tessa Williams documents more than 25 perfumeries and brands, ranging from the pharmacy of Santa Maria Novella in Florence, established by Dominican fathers in 1221, and the classic English company Floris, founded in 1730, to the new eponymous range created by the famed fragrance expert Roja Dove. Williams goes behind the scenes at each perfumery to interview the perfumers and explore the evolution of the company, the ethos behind the brand, and its signature scents. With a concise illustrated introduction to the history of perfume-making and features on iconic perfumes, future cult classics, and the so-called 'noses' who keep the brands attuned to today's popular scents, *Cult Perfumes* will be as alluring to lovers and collectors of perfume as the fragrances it presents.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"An elegant and fascinating book. An absolute delight. Everything anyone needs to know about smelling delicious - and much much more!", DAISY WAUGH. "This is a beautiful book for anyone who loves perfume. Thank you for igniting a passion for perfume in me", JOANNA GOSLING, author and BBC News 24 presenter. 'The richly scented world of the artisan parfumeur is lavishly

illustrated in Tessa Williams' elegant tribute to modern and traditional fragrances' - SAGA MAGAZINE 'Cult Perfumes is an extraordinarily engaging treat about an aspect of fashion sensed but not seen - The presentation of subjects and subject matter in the book is first rate, complete with glossary and photographs of superb quality - If you have a highly trained olfactory sense, you best rush out and buy this book and enjoy. For the rest of us [it] is a delightfully intriguing story for both reference and enjoyment.' - NEW YORK JOURNAL OF BOOKS 'With stories behind the most exquisite scents from around the world and a full glossary of the unique terms used to describe the senses and smells - it's an interesting read and a very glamorous book to own - it really does show a fashion enthusiast the integrity in the beauty world and the skill of perfumeries.' - FASHION WEEKLY

TESSA WILLIAMS is a journalist, actor, and presenter. She has written for Vogue, Elle, Marie Claire, Elle Decoration, The Times, The Independent, the Sunday Times, and the Financial Times. Today based in Scotland, she lived in France while working for Femme magazine and writing a regular column for the Riviera Times.

This book is a feast for the eyes with bottles of modern perfumes. It also includes images of perfumes from companies' histories with their antique labels. Be warned, however, that the author tends to fall too easily for the marketing hype for some fragrance companies. Made-up, fantastical corporate "histories," complete with so-called noble and royal patrons, are far too common on the promotion of perfumes. In this day and age, the hype can easily be exposed with research, unlike 100 years ago where would-be patrons were far more trusting and with fewer resources to judge truth. The book examines all manner of luxurious perfumes from older companies (or revived ones) to the Johnny-come-lately companies purporting to offer the most luxurious of perfumes. Take each article/feature individually and judge for yourself. At a glance, the book seems like a marketing vehicle for fragrance companies. I just concentrated on enjoying looking at the pictures of the perfumers and the bottles.

Not as well done as I expected it to be. The text seems a bit superficial to me, and I expected based on the title that the selection of fragrances would be more focused and better curated.

A fascinating and informative book with magnificent, extensively researched images of perfumeries from the Persian Gulf, to Mysore India, Florence, Grasse and Paris. Tessa Williams draws the

reader into this intriguing scent world with links to nature – rain, civet cats (musk), tuberose (favorite perfume of Salvador Dali), trees, ferns and resins. Cult Perfumes is a history book chronicling the favorite perfumes of kings and emperors, the medicinal house of monks in C13 Santa Maria Novella Florence, and the extraordinary careers of today's perfumers – scent composers and channelers – with trainings in painting, chemistry, genealogy, philosophy, ancient history, photography and classical music. We learn about the heart note that forms the middle note of the perfumer's basic triadic chord as well as the devastating affliction of anosmia (loss of sense of smell) that can befall a scent artist. Alongside this luxuriant world, we learn about the glassmakers whose sculptures are the chosen containers of these perfumes. Exquisite cut glass bottles, designed from the domes of mosques, the Orient Express, flower engravings as well as exotic crystal and gold, complement their interiors. A perfect holiday gift that brings a message of Peace and Love.

Nice big glossy book. Evocative writing. While no book can possibly keep up with all the niche lines, this one has many. Some are missing. It was great to read about the artists behind the fragrances, and the backstory that led them to create their lines. The only possible improvement would be "scratch and sniff" pages, but I say this with tongue firmly planted in cheek.

Beautiful coffee table book concerning the major perfume houses in the world! A history book of perfumers. This is not a 101 book on perfume.

I am a member of the IPBA and now Admin. of IPBA Australian Chapter. this book was a great means of research and of course a feast for the eyes in bottle design. Thoroughly enjoyed this book.

Very informative and affirming - turns out I owned many of the perfumes in this book. Especially loved the history of Santa Maria Novella - a long time favorite. I bought it as a gift for my daughter, but I read it too, as we both love fashion and great perfumes.

Awesome book with great information on niche houses.

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