

# Whiffs of wonder

From ancient temples to modern perfumes, the fragrance of sandalwood has graced the finest spaces with its divine aroma. But did you know that not all sandalwoods are created equal? From the 'King of Woods' in India to the sweet whispers of Hawaiian groves, each variety carries its own story, scent, and secrets. Get ready to dive nose-first into a world of exotic aromas with **Advika Singh, AIS VKC Lko, XII C** to explore the various types of sandalwood across the globe.

## Indian Sandalwood

**Scientific name:** Santalum album

**Native regions:** China, India, and Indonesia

**Common names:** Chandan, true sandalwood, Srigandha, etc

**Characteristics:** Known as the "King of Woods," Indian sandalwood grows to a height of about 10 metres and has leathery leaves in pairs. Both trees and roots contain a yellow aromatic oil, called sandalwood oil, the odour of which persists for years.

**Uses:** Indian sandalwood is not just widely used in perfumes, essences, and incense but, its wood is ideal for crafting intricate carvings and high-quality furniture. The sandalwood paste has medicinal uses, and is also used as a beauty enhancer and skin protectant.

**Fragrance:** It has a deep, sweet, and woody scent with undertones of amber, and leather.

## Hawaiian Sandalwood

**Scientific name:** Santalum haleakalae

**Native regions:** Endemic to the Hawaiian Islands

**Common name:** 'Iliahialo'e

**Characteristics:** Hawaiian sandalwood is a small, multi-stemmed tree, typically bushy in appearance, and reaches heights of 5–10 meters. It thrives in open, dry forests and woodlands, contributing significantly to the unique ecosystem of the Hawaiian Islands.

**Uses:** Its nuts are consumed as food, while its oil is valued for medicinal treatments, waterproofing, and as a fragrant scent for clothing and bedding. The wood is used in crafting musical instruments and tools.

**Fragrance:** Hawaiian sandalwood exudes a rich, woody, and sweet aroma with subtle hints of exotic fruits and flowers.

## Australian Sandalwood

**Scientific name:** Santalum spicatum

**Native regions:** Semi-arid areas of Australia

**Common name:** Waang or Dutjahn

**Characteristics:** Australian sandalwood typically grows to a height of 3–4 meters, with rough, grey bark. Its wood is fine-grained, yellow, and dense, known for retaining its aromatic properties for decades.

**Uses:** Its essential oil is widely used in skincare products to treat acne, blemishes, and other skin conditions. It is also valued for its anti-inflammatory properties, helping to relieve muscle and joint pain. Additionally, it boasts antibacterial and antifungal benefits.

**Fragrance:** Compared to Indian sandalwood, Australian sandalwood has a lighter, more delicate aroma, with subtle notes of citrus and floral undertones. Its scent is often described as fresh, green, and gently woody.

## Red Sandalwood

**Scientific name:** Pterocarpus santalinus

**Native regions:** Red Sanders is a native species to Andhra Pradesh

**Common name:** Red Sanders, Red Saunders, Rakta Chandana, etc

**Characteristics:** The Red Sandalwood tree can grow to a height of 5–8 meters. Its wood is exceptionally hard and dark red in colour. The sapwood is white and scentless, while the heartwood ranges from yellowish to brown and has a strong fragrance.

**Uses:** Red Sandalwood is highly valued for its timber, which is used in carvings, furniture, poles, and house posts. It is also exploited for the extraction of santalin, a red pigment used as a dye and colourant in food, as well as in medicine and cosmetics.

**Fragrance:** The wood of Red Sandalwood releases a sweet, woody aroma, similar to incense, especially when freshly cut or sanded.

## African Sandalwood

**Scientific name:** Osyris lanceolata

**Location:** South Africa, Zimbabwe, Northwest Africa, and the Southern half of the Iberian Peninsula

**Common name:** Watta bush, camwood

**Characteristics:** African Sandalwood oil contains approximately 32% santalols and 35% santalyl acetate. It is a pale yellow to golden-yellow liquid, known for its smooth, tenacious, and woody aroma.

**Uses:** Due to its therapeutic properties, African Sandalwood oil is commonly used as an astringent, antiseptic, emollient, and a sedative.

**Fragrance:** African Sandalwood offers a warm, woody scent with earthy undertones.

