

## Episode 111 show notes and advice

### Episode description

For this week's episode, Sarah is joined by special guest, Jo Fairley. A serial entrepreneur and hive of knowledge when it comes to flower scent and perfume, Jo tells Sarah about her favourite flowers for fragrance, and their close links to childhood memories, particularly around Mother's Day.

### In this episode, discover:

- The 12 best plants to grow for scent
- Why aroma is so evocative
- Jo's botanical fragrance reading list

## episode 111 advice sheet

### An introduction to Jo Fairley (1:20)

A serial entrepreneur, Jo has been instrumental in several successful businesses from 'Green and Blacks', the chocolate company, to her latest venture, The Perfume Society.

To read more about Jo, visit her website here: <https://www.josephinefairley.com>

### Jo's 12 best plants to grow for scent (4:30)

#### Scented geraniums

Jo explains that geraniums mark her first memory of scented flowers, and are probably her first childhood memory too. Evocative of spending days in her grandmother's garden, Geranium 'Attar of roses' has always been a favourite.

#### Trachelospermum jasminoides (Star jasmine)

With a particularly heady and exotic smell, Jo says she has a couple of plants growing in her courtyard garden. Its evergreen nature and rusty-coloured leaves over wintertime are amongst its impressive qualities.

Sarah says that star jasmine also grows well in dappled shade and will live happily growing against a north or east-facing wall.

### **Sarcococca**

Dark green, shiny, small leaves, with the most pretty creamy white flowers. This plant emits a sweet exotic fragrance from the smallest blooms. It's also evergreen and the perfect plant for adding structure to a walled garden.

Jo used this plant to replace a daphne and is impressed by its height of around 3 ft in just a few years. Gorgeous in a vase by the bed, with an almost spicy incense smell, it's not too dissimilar from Daphne.

Jo explains that her sarcococca plant is in a really shady part of her garden at the bottom of a tall wall that faces north and continues to thrive. Sarah recommends planting one of these in any dark spot, or north-facing garden. It also grows well alongside Trachelospermum.

### **Sweet peas**

A smell that truly shrieks of summer, although they only flower for a few precious months over summer, a handful of these in a small vase is pure joy. And interestingly, Jo explains that no perfumer has been able to replicate this defining scent.

For stand out fragrance, Jo and Sarah recommend Sweet Pea 'Matucana' - an absolute must-have for any summer garden.

### **Roses**

Scented roses are an absolute must-have in any scented summer garden. Jo loves Rosa 'Gertrude Jekyll' and Rosa 'Gentle Hermione' – both are a gorgeous pale pink with striking fragrances.

Rosa 'Double Delight' - a favourite of Evelyn Lauder, responsible for fragrance creation at Estee Lauder. Jo says these have an incredible smell with a really fresh fragrance, evocative of lemon. Glorious yellow petals flashed with deep burgundy, crimson as they age.

## **Rhododendron**

An absolute classic that reminds Sarah of her mother, rhododendrons have a glorious smell in the springtime. Almost like an enhanced jasmine, with much bigger flowers, their scent is perfect for filling courtyard gardens.

Although this plant requires quite a lot of TLC, the scent is really worth it.

## **Daphne odora 'Aureomarginata'**

Pretty little wax-like flowers which are pink and crimson. Jo says the scent is spicy, with the complexity of incense. A little sprig of this in a vase fills any room with tremendous scent. Jo likes to move the vase from room to room as she moves through the house.

After 5 or 6 years, Jo says her daphne plants begin to fail, which is why she always aims to have a younger daphne ready to take its place. Jo prizes this variety above all others for its complex scent, which she says is like no other.

Sarah says that sprigs of daphne last up to 10 days in the vase and are wonderfully fragrant next to the bed. It's easy to strike from cuttings too, which root quickly and easily.

## **Eau de Cologne mint**

Often known as orange mint, or bergamot mint, this is a glorious herb with a powerful scent. A prolific and self-seeding plant, Jo chooses to grow her mint in a container to prevent it from taking over.

## **Polyanthes tuberosa 'The Pearl'**

A truly defining scent, Jo says she recently visited a tuberose field on a balmy summer evening as part of the tuberose harvest in the South of France and was overcome with powerful fragrance and lasting memories.

Sarah says that the trick to getting the tuberose to flower is planting them later in the season, as most of the time they don't start shooting until late May or June on a heated bench.

If you leave them in the same pot, they should flower a little bit around October/November, with more flowers the following year.

Tuberose rely on minimal root disturbance, so Sarah recommends keeping the bulbs in the same terracotta pots without moving them. Make sure to bring them into the heat to continue the growing process.

### **Tomatoes**

Although many people wouldn't necessarily consider tomatoes a must-have garden fragrance, Sarah and Jo say they couldn't live without their distinctive aroma.

For Jo, the smell is totally reminiscent of days spent in her grandmother's greenhouse, almost like tobacco, with an earthy aroma.

For more top tips on growing abundant tomatoes, don't forget to listen back to our previous episode: <https://www.sarahraven.com/podcast/show-notes-ep110>

### **Stephanotis floribunda**

Inspired by a garden at Chelsea Flower Show a couple of years ago, Jo says the key is unravelling the stephanotis from its hoop and running it along a flat surface. Similar in scent to jasmine, Jo says this is one of her absolute favourites.

### **Convallaria majalis (Lily of the Valley)**

The smell is totally incredible and excellent for ground cover too. Perfect for shady spots in the garden.

### **Book recommendations**

- ❖ 'Gardens of fragrance' by T W Henslow Geoffrey – a lovely lyrical book about scented plants that was written in the 1930s.
  
- ❖ 'Perfume In The Garden' by Roy Genders – originally published around 1955, Jo loves this book for its information on aromatic trees and fruit.
  
- ❖ Books by Isabel Bannerman – popular with the likes of Sarah and Jo, Isabel Bannerman has written a number of excellent books about gardening and scented plants, there are loads to collect.

- ❖ 'The Scentual Garden: Exploring the World of Botanical Fragrance' by Ken Druse – this book offers excellent inspiration to all gardeners. Although, as the book is based in Florida, a lot of the plants will be more suitable for North American climates.