

If you are looking for quality essential oils that are vital and of the grade that one would use therapeutically, there are a few points to keep in mind. This list below was adapted from Aroma Web ~ online essential oil educators and providers of helpful resources:

- At first, some individuals are understandably leery of purchasing essential oils online. Be assured that there are many reputable essential oil and aromatherapy retailers and suppliers that sell their essential oils online. Buying online gives you the opportunity to shop with many more reputable companies than if you were limited to only those businesses within your locale. Reputable companies are experts in properly bottling and packaging their oils for shipment.
- When shopping for essential oils, watch out for words such as “fragrance oil,” “nature identical oil,” or “perfume oil.” These words indicate that what you see is not a pure, single essential oil. I've seen companies label fragrance oils (that can be combinations of essential oils and chemicals or just plain chemicals) and perfume oils as being suitable for aromatherapy. This is a tipoff that the vendor knows little about aromatherapy. Beginners need to watch out for retailers/suppliers who inaccurately use the term *aromatherapy* for their own sales gain.
- There is no governmental regulating body that grades or certifies essential oils as "therapeutic grade" or "aromatherapy grade." Not all companies use these terms with any form of deception in mind, but some do. Therefore, it's important to understand the background behind this terminology and evaluate these suppliers based on other factors and the tips shown below.
- The term “pure essential oil” is also a term overused in the aromatherapy industry. The term can clue you in that at least the retailer/supplier is aware of the importance of seeking out pure oils, but don't rely solely on a vendor's use of the term "pure" when deciding to purchase. Pure essential oils can be distilled from poor quality crops, be sitting in someone's inventory or on a store's shelves for years, be stored in a way that damages the oils, or be

mishandled by vendors so that oils are accidentally mixed during bottling. So, don't get overly impressed by a vendor that labels their oils as "pure."

- When purchasing oils online, it is not uncommon for larger sizes of essential oils to be shipped in plastic containers to avoid breakage and reduce shipping fees. Essential oils, however, can dissolve plastic bottles and the quality of the oil can deteriorate more rapidly. Some vendors also sell larger quantities of oil in aluminum bottles. Aluminum is said to be acceptable if the inside of the bottle is lined.
- Seek out vendors that provide detailed information about their oils and that give you confidence in their knowledge and background. Pay attention to the educational background that they provide and their length in business.
- If you are comparing online vendors, send e-mail to them asking questions that you have. If you don't have any, think of something to ask so that you have a reason to write them. Find out how helpful and knowledgeable they seem.
- Watch out for vendors that sell each of their "essential oils" for the same price. This doesn't guarantee that the oils are not pure or of good quality, but it really does scream of concern. Generally speaking, Neroli, Jasmine and Rose, for instance, should cost a lot more than Geranium and Ylang Ylang and anyone reputable in selling essential oils should realize that and should be aware that selling all oils for the same price is a red flag to knowledgeable consumers. A good quality Patchouli usually costs more than Eucalyptus. The basic, common citrus oils including Sweet Orange oils are some of the least expensive oils.
- When buying essential oils locally, watch for oils that have dust on the top of the bottles or boxes. This is an indication that the oils have been sitting around. As time passes, most oils oxidize, lose their therapeutic properties, and their aroma diminishes. The bottles should be sealed so that the oil couldn't be contaminated by other customers.

- Buy oils from retailers/suppliers that provide the essential oil's botanical (Latin name), country of origin or method of extraction either on the bottle or online. The country of origin for oils is also important because the climate and soil conditions can affect the resulting properties of the oil. Is that rose oil steam distilled or is it an absolute? Any good aromatherapy vendor should realize the necessity for providing this information.
- Several corporations sell essential oils via MLM and distributor arrangements. Essential oils offer many impressive benefits, however, if the claims you hear are 'too good to be true' or if they sound like they could be dangerous please be prudent and be aware. Essential oils can do incredible things, *and* they are quite potent. When in doubt do your own independent homework using multiple sources, and confirm usage and safety information.
- Educate yourself about the FDA guidelines for essential oils and aromatherapy products. For more information, read [FDA Regulation of Aromatherapy Products](#).
- Wild crafted and organic essential oils can provide some superiority, but note that many growers and distillers that are smaller cannot afford the "organic" certification. Their oils may never-the-less be naturally organic.
- Be careful when buying essential oils from companies that primarily sell to the food & beverage or perfumery industries. Some vendors that primarily sell to these industries may have different goals in the purchase and sale of their essential oils than the goals of vendors that sell oils specifically for therapeutic aromatherapy use. The restaurant and perfumery industries desire essential oils that have a standardized (consistent) aroma or flavor. The oils sold by these sources may be redistilled to remove or add specific constituents (natural chemicals found in the oils). These re-distillations or adulterations are generally not as beneficial. However, it can be tempting to shop with such vendors as their prices can be cheaper. If desiring to buy from such a vendor, inquire first to ask about their methods.

- Most of us need to watch how much we spend. It's very tempting to buy essential oils from the companies that sell them for the lowest price. Price alone isn't an indication of quality, but it can be. Knowledgeable vendors that spend countless hours locating quality oils, pay the expensive fees to test their and provide the results to customers and provide free samples upon request should rightfully be charging more for their oils than retailers that stock oils that they've sourced from the cheapest sources.
- When choosing to try a particular vendor, place a small first order and ask for additional samples (don't ask for a sample of everything, honestly ask for 2-4 samples of oils that you are sincerely interested in purchasing). The goal is to find out if this is a vendor that you are pleased with without wasting your money on large orders that you might not be happy with.
- Be cautious about purchasing oils from *traveling* vendors that set up shop at street fairs, farmer's markets, craft shows, festivals or other limited-time events. Some traveling vendors at these events may know their customers have no recourse against them after the event is over. I want to be very careful here as there indeed are highly reputable, experienced sellers at such events, and some vendors do have a well respected, strong, local and permanent presence in the area of the show/festival. When considering a purchase, ask the vendor for details about their experience and where their business is physically located. Ethical and experienced vendors are generally happy to answer detailed questions about their products/oils and tend to fully respect the importance of qualifying questions. They ought to be more than happy to share their background with you.

<https://www.aromaweb.com/articles/howtobuyessentialoils.asp>

