

Boswellia carterii / *Boswellia thurifera*

FRANKINCENSE

The earliest record of frankincense is a relief in a magnificent temple in Upper Egypt, built in the 15th century BC by Queen Hatshepsut. The relief illustrates an expedition to Punt, on the coast of modern-day Somalia, to collect the precious gum. Frankincense was used extensively in temple rituals, and as a perfume and medicine. It is a key element of incense and plays a part in holy rituals today.

SCENT
Balsamic, rich, sweet, warm

NOTE
BASE MIDDLE TOP

EXPENSE RATING
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CAUTIONS
See page 16.



Main constituents:
monoterpenes, olibanin, pinene,
camphene, limonene, resinous substances

THERAPEUTIC PROPERTIES

Frankincense, called olibanum in the Arabian Peninsula and Ethiopia where it originates, is noted for remarkable healing effects on the skin and respiratory tract. Chinese healers used it to treat infected sores and leprosy.

In 1981 some German scientists investigated the "mind bending" effects of inhaling the aroma, and found that a psychoactive substance is produced when the gum is burned. Frankincense also deepens breathing, which can result in calmness, and this could explain how using it as incense creates a state conducive to prayer.

EMOTIONS & MIND

I'll never forget my excitement when, walking in northern Kenya, I came across a frankincense tree and was able to pick off some of the pale yellow resin. Its rich, rejuvenating fragrance helped me to complete that day's hike.

ACHES & PAINS

In India, frankincense has been, and still is, used to treat rheumatism.

RESPIRATORY PROBLEMS

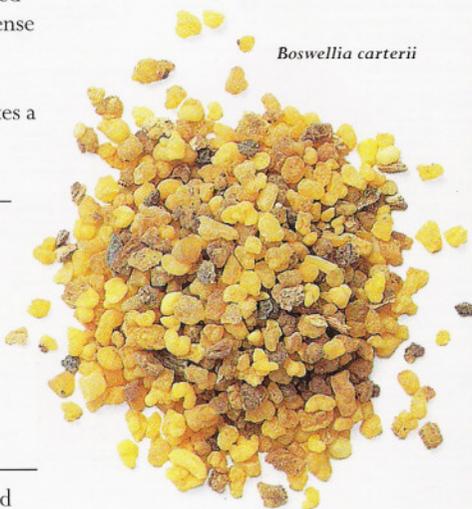
Anti-inflammatory, antiseptic and anti-fungal. The oil causes the bronchii of the lungs to dilate, and may relieve the

discomfort of lung infections. Once inhaled, it acts upon mucus, enabling sputum to be expelled from the body. Use diluted oil in a chest massage.

SKIN & BEAUTY

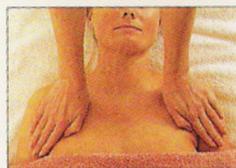
Traditionally, frankincense has been used as a perfume base. An Asian friend perfumes her damp hair with the fragrance of the burnt oil. I add

the oil to face products for its lovely perfume and because it is thought to have rejuvenating properties. Add it to a massage oil or cream for dry or ageing skin (see page 80).

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DROPLETS OF GUM RESIN form when the bark of the frankincense tree is scraped. They harden and solidify, then oil is obtained from the resin.

CHEST MASSAGE



A chest massage with frankincense can deepen breathing (see pages 58–59).

OIL COMBINATIONS



Sandalwood

Geranium

Rose

SANDALWOOD OIL enhances the woody, resinous scent of frankincense oil, while geranium and rose oils sweeten the aroma.