

A nice evening yet again. We have become a group of friends and my Northern accent causes great amusement as the many nationalities try to impersonate me. Japanese, German and Algerian versions of the Mancunian accent was highly amusing to me!!!!

On our return to the chalet we see a starlit night like I have never experienced before. So many stars!!! It's amazing! And with only the light from a mobile phone we see our first snake across the path. We also hear the sound of wolves as they have been reintroduced into France.

I am glad to find my room and I'm happy the centipede in residence is settled near the door and not in my bed. A wonderful day of beauty and good company. Good food, wine and heavenly surroundings.

Friday is a full day of lectures. We have so much information to cover. Aromatherapy and carrier oils are the first topic. Although I have much knowledge, it is always nice to get a different slant on the subject from another teacher. Malte has a very spiritual perspective, which is interesting and some of the words resonate with my own beliefs and feelings about aromatherapy.

We revisit the work of many famous authors and their suggestions for blending from a chemical basis. Franchome and Penoel are

among them. I studied aromatology with Penoel in the 1990s. I remind myself to dig out my notes upon my return.

We look at many different recipes and suggestions for blends. Later we continue looking for medicinal plants in the garden and find thyme of the linalool type, sage, sativ, and juniper berry.

Saturday is our final day. Time is endless in Provence no beginning and no end just sheer natural rhythm of day and night. I have lost track of the days. We have the option of a late start and a day with Malte or we can visit Avignon. I choose to stay at la Combette. We sit under the linden blossom and talk about the connection between plants and man and, more importantly, the essential oil connection. Integrated aromatic medicine is the way forward for the wise but will the world open its eyes to this concept?

After lunch we take sencha tea with the small group who remained at home and we explore more of the land. Varsher has produced a wonderful presentation of our nine days in Provence, and as I watch it I feel moved by the beauty that she has captured and the memories we will share in the photographs she has taken. Later in the evening she will present the film to Malte, Fabien and the rest of la Combette household as a thank you for the exceptional hospitality they have shown us.

Before dinner, Stephania, Ilyas and I walk into

Aurel to explore. It is a beautiful village with steep streets that appear to be carved out of the rock. In the background is the white-peaked Mount Ventoux and surrounding the village are valleys of lavender. The main growing area for lavender fields in Provence lies around the foot of Mount Ventoux and the Gourdes. It blooms from the last week in June until the beginning of August when harvest time begins. So July is the best time to absorb the lavender fields in all their glory. I am sure that you know the benefits of lavender essential oil as it is such a universal oil with so many therapeutic properties, and the French lavender in my opinion has a superior quality due to the altitude it is grown at.

We stop at a café and to my surprise meet a father and daughter who were originally from Blackburn – two more Northern folk in Provence?

We went back to la Combette for our final meal together as the next day we would start our journey home.

Back in the UK, I reflect on the magical trip to Provence and how I long to share my experiences with my students and friends. I intend to return in July 2014. I would love for you to join me. **CHW**

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# Aromatherapy

## awareness week 9-15 June



### Clinical aromatherapy and back pain

Once again the International Federation of Aromatherapy are coordinating Aromatherapy Awareness Week from the 9 to 15 June. Prompted by the startling statistics that one in six people are affected by back pain in this country, the IFA decided to focus

the theme of the Week this year on raising the awareness of how effective Clinical Aromatherapy is with this condition which is responsible for approximately 7.6 million lost working days per year.

The therapeutic benefits of essential oils have

been known since ancient times and have been successfully used by medical practitioners in other countries of Europe since the early 20th century. Since 1985 the IFA have been heavily involved in research in the UK and they have a strong body of evidence on the therapeutic benefits of Clinical Aromatherapy on back pain as well as its associated health problems.

In previous years during the Awareness Week, IFA therapists have been interviewed on local radio, mentioned in local press, given demonstrations at exhibitions, in their local community centres, doctors' surgeries and NHS hospital clinics, as well as offering discounts for treatments in an attempt to communicate the message to a broader audience.

The Awareness campaign is a unique opportunity for all Clinical Aromatherapists to do something pro-active to raise the profile of the health benefits of Aromatherapy with the public, other health professionals, and also corporations who have to deal with the effects of the millions of lost working days per year.

The IFA realise that therapists often need encouragement and support to get involved in press and publicity and the IFA PR team have formulated a professional support package for their members to give them the confidence they need to speak with a collective and informed voice to any sector of the community. **CHW**

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