



# SMELL OF THE WILD

Brown medicine bottles packaged in scented soil and burning sticks you waft over your beard: the world of wild cologne is a curious and trepidatious one. We sent **G.M. Norton** to test nerve and nostril...



WORDS: G.M. NORTON ● PHOTOS: JESSE WILD



**O**h how I love to see lush fields of green, wild moorland, forests stretching over rolling hills and dales, jagged coastlines and towering mountains.

During my childhood, my world didn't extend very far. Initially it was to the end of the road with strict instructions not to wander beyond. But when the weekend arrived, my mother and father would scoop up my brother and I and head off in a motorcar armed with only a map and some homemade sandwiches.

Our excursions never took us to a wilderness as such; perhaps just to the local woods. But it was our adventure. Being an 80s child, my favourite TV show was *The A-Team*, so a

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favourite game was to recreate their exploits, running amok in the woods. My elder brother would assume the identity of Hannibal, the leader. I'd be The Face, as he seemed to be quite good with girls.

Today, the Great Outdoors still continues to fire my imagination. A big spoonful of nature is just what the doctor ordered; working wonders for the mind, body and soul, so it's no surprise we turn to nature for the fragrances we splash on our bodies. To feel connected to the world we live in.



## SISKIYOU BACKPACKER'S COLOGNE by Juniper Ridge

Juniper Ridge proclaim they “put the mountains in a bottle”. Upon opening a box of scented soil concealing a small brown bottle, akin to something the doctor might prescribe, I couldn't help thinking the mountains must have been on the titchy side.

After applying to my skin, I smelled like orange peel, which I liked. It certainly has a home-brewed, fresh, natural scent; perfect for a sunny day. I wouldn't say it captures the mountains, but to be fair, I'm not sure bottling a mountain is attainable. Although ships have been forced into bottles, I suppose.

**Scent** Ginger, cedar, citrus, conifer

●●●○○ 3/5

£32.50, [juniperridge.com](http://juniperridge.com)



## NO.2 OAK MOSS by Musgo Real

This Portuguese number reminds me of a hot summer's day. It's an outdoorsy scent; light, fresh and manly, without being overpowering. It also reminds me of my favourite barbershop – distinctive, clean and uplifting.

My beloved was certainly drawn to it. So much so that she made a mental note of its name for future buying reference, along with the other items in the range including the shaving cream and soap. My only niggle is, once I go full Musgo, will I be able to come back? I'd happily wear this cologne at home, in the office, for a picnic in the park or painting the tiles red. Heaven in a bottle.

**Scent:** Spice, coriander, lime, moss and hay

●●●●● 5/5

£30, [labourandwait.co.uk](http://labourandwait.co.uk)





## EUCRIS by Geo. F. Trumper

Strong, powerful, sophisticated. No, I'm not setting up a profile on a dating website, I'm merely attempting to describe this cologne, which I imagine was worn by a decadent dandy when first stocked in the famous London barbers in 1912. This was James Bond's favourite scent, mentioned in Ian Fleming's 1956 novel *Diamonds are Forever*.

Eucris has earned a permanent place on my bathroom shelf. Whenever I douse myself in it, I feel ready for anything. Now, do excuse me, I must head for the hills and pretend I'm a spy on a secret mission, with henchmen disguised as hikers hot on my heels.

**Scent** Sandalwood, musk, moss, jasmine, cumin and coriander

●●●●● 5/5

£44, [trumpers.com](http://trumpers.com)

## ENGLISH FERN by Penhaligon's

Following on from Eucris is another historical fougère fragrance: the 1910 English fern. It smells of a walk in the English countryside. Clean, fresh, woody, without falling into the musky or pungent categories. Traditional without being old-fashioned, if you will.

It starts with a sharp fern scent, then, once it settles down, it reminds me of Pinaud Clubman talcum powder. Not a bad thing.

If you'd like to be reminded of your childhood adventures in the woods, or wish to smell like an Edwardian gent (and why wouldn't you?), then I'd heartily recommend a bottle of Penhaligon's finest.

**Scent** Clover, lavender, patchouli, sandalwood and oak moss

●●●●○ 4/5

£85, [penhaligons.com](http://penhaligons.com)





## CAMPFIRE COLOGNE

A cologne that isn't liquid based. Oh no, that is so 1910! Campfire Cologne is a box containing several sticks of wood and a box of matches. The idea is you light the sticks then waft the scented pieces of wood over you.

Unfortunately, I failed. I used the whole box of matches supplied, plus some of my own. Despite this, I only managed to produce a few singes; certainly not enough to waft over my person. I'm not cut out for this camping lark.

Despite harming my masculine credentials, I'm still a fan of the product. The packaging is superb with humorous instructions: 'With stoic determination, remove one match, earnestly strike and introduce to the sticks'. Marvellous!

●○○○○ 1/5

£15, [menssociety.co.uk](http://menssociety.co.uk)

## EAU DE PARFUM by Captain Fawcett

Nothing screams outdoorsy like Captain Peabody Fawcett, the intrepid (but fictional) Edwardian explorer. Following a doomed expedition in 1905, no trace of the Captain was found until some of his possessions were discovered in a house sale in 1997. The story goes that the fragrance travelled with the Captain on his expeditions and is now available for the first time in over a century.

With its moss and sandalwood notes, the scent was pleasant and demonstrated impressive longevity. Compared to the stalwart scented offerings from Trumper, Musgo and Penhaligon's though, my nose found it a little lacking.

**Scent:** Bergamot, cardamom, coriander, sandalwood and moss

●●●○○ 3/5

£39, [captainfawcett.com](http://captainfawcett.com)



More from G.M. Norton  
on his online periodical  
[nortonofmorton.com](http://nortonofmorton.com)