

Perfumery Notes—Chypre

Chypre

By Henri-Michel Hoffmann, Upper Montclair, New Jersey

The island of Chypre (Cyprus) is located in the easternmost part of the Mediterranean Sea and lies on the navigation line followed, from the most ancient times to our day, by ships going from the Middle East to Greece and Italy. Thus it is understandable that this island became a focal point for the trade of odorant materials produced in these areas of the world, and that Cyprus became one of the first important perfume centers. Gums such as labdanum and ciste, fragrant oils and pomades of rose, jasmine and cassie were blended there with resins imported from Arabia such as incense, myrrh and oppoponax. These rather heavy creations were exported to Athens and Rome.

Toward the end of the 19th century, fragrances presenting some common characteristics and using some of these resins appeared on the market under the generic term of "Chypre." We do not know whether these introductions were dedicated to men or women. According to some historians, men were offered a fragrance which would be tailored to their activities and cover the smell of tobacco and petroleum or gasoline they were carrying around them. For other historians, women were given these fragrances largely for the same reasons. We will see later that this very important group of fragrances includes almost as many men's as women's fragrances.

Very soon every parfumeur wanted his own version of Chypre. The materials most often used were bergamot, orange, rose, jasmine, orange blossom, carnation, sandalwood, labdanum, myrrh, vanilla, musk, civet, castoreum, ambergris and, sometimes, honey notes. (See Formula 1.) There was nothing really different in these

bouquets and only by varying the proportions between the constituents was the perfumer able to differentiate one creation from the others. It was not until the last quarter of the 19th century that perfumery went through a basic change with the appearance of the first synthetic products, new tools for the perfumer's trade. (See Formulas 2 and 3.)

In 1917, after a less successful attempt by Houbigant with "Chypre Ideal," Coty more or less defined the general type which became the "classic Chypre." The main new components used in this accord were the oakmoss in its different forms, sometimes, as in Coty's Chypre, enhanced with a special ingredient probably no other than the first quinolones. The classical Chypre consisted essentially of an accord of

Citrus notes—bergamot and orange
Floral notes—rose, jasmine and carnation
Woody notes—sandalwood, vetivert, patchouly
Mossy complex—oakmoss absolutes
Amber notes based on ciste and labdanum—musk
Animal notes—civet, castoreum.

Several variations on this combination used herbaceous notes such as lavender, armoise, clary sage and even thyme and marjoram.

Because of its structure which lends itself to many modifications and because of its popularity, the classical Chypre developed into a wide number of varieties. In fact, the creation of new types has gone through an evolution which paralleled the discoveries of new synthetic odorants.

Chypre de Coty (1917)

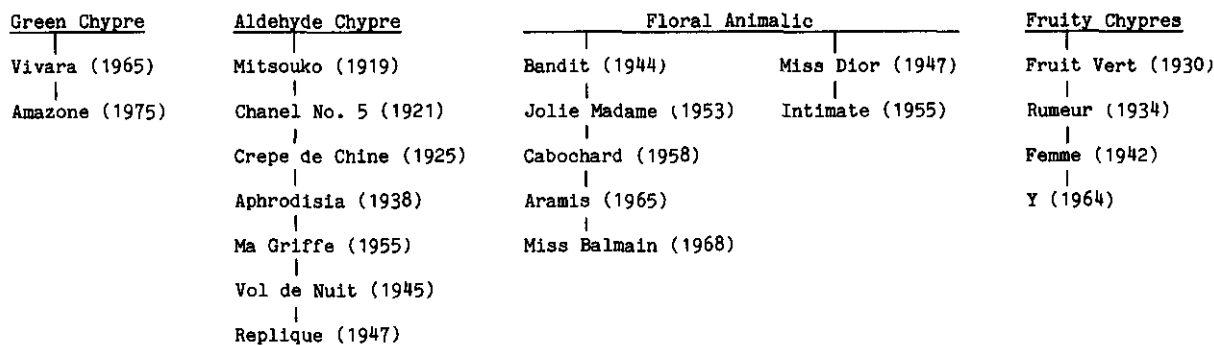


Figure 1

If we try to classify these variations, we can take two different approaches: the chronological sequence or the odor group classification. It is generally accepted that the best, if not foolproof, system is the odor group organization. I will recommend a four group list, omitting Coty's classic Chypre as the precursor of the family since it did not contain any of the key ingredients appearing in the different groups. These groups will be

- Aldehydic Chypre—Formula 4
- Floral Animalic Chypres—Formula 5
- Fruity Chypre—Formula 6
- Green Chypre—Formula 7

illustrate the development of new green notes in the last decade which made it very tempting for perfumers to try them in accords with Chypre background.

As we all know, it is very difficult to organize such a classification and this type of endeavour is always open to objections, for who can tell when a Chypre variation ceases to be Chypre to become an aldehydic or a floral fragrance, or for that matter, a fougere or a green bouquet? However, I tried to point out in Figure 1 that when the general structure is perceptible as a Chypre, whether it is aldehydic, floral, fruity or green, it belongs to the Chypre category.

Aldehydic Chypres

The first aldehydic variation was Guerlain's Mitsouko (1919) with aldehydes and high fruity notes on a Chypre modified by an oriental background. The second was so important, not so much by its conception, but by its commercial success that it became the leader of a new group.

The fragrance was Chanel No. 5 (1921). We could describe it as citrus, aldehydic, floral, mossy woody, amber animalic—the typical structure of a Chypre. The aldehydic complex is so obvious that it becomes the statement of the accord: the floral blend, jasmine, lilac, carnation, enhanced with ylang ylang is more prominent here than in the aldehydic Chypres that followed.

In 1925, with Millot's Crepe de Chine, we see a more classical Chypre with a carnation floral note and modified with some aldehydes. And also with Molyneux numero cinq, an approach to Chanel No. 5, we see that the basic Chypre is more noticeable but with the same aldehydic characters.

In 1938, we have Faberge's Aphrodisia, a very aldehydic and floral Chypre theme. In 1945, came Vol de Nuit, a complex of aldehydes and Chypre accords on a definitely oriental base.

In 1944, Carven's Ma Griffe marked a new milestone through the use of a new accord of aldehyde C-10, gardenia and a touch of citronella note. The gardenia complex dominates the floral blend of jasmine and carnation. The mossy note is based on a tree moss absolute with its somewhat green piney effect.

Since 1944, a dozen aldehydic Chypres have been created, sometimes very floral such as Guerlain's Chant d'Aromes (1962) or Avon's Wishing (1963), or sometimes very woody such as Coty's Masumi (1969).

Floral Animalic Chypres

In this category, we have two basic types: the animalic mossy quinoline with heavy use of isobutyl quinoline giving an almost leathery effect, and the animalic floral type where a civet

Perfumery Notes—Chypre

Formula 1. Old-Fashioned Chypre

	<u>Grams/Kilo</u>
Bergamot natural	124
Carrot seed oil	5
Cassie absolute	10
Civet absolute	6
Clary sage oil	20
Clove bud oil	16
Estragon oil	3
Geranium Bourbon oil	78
Jasmin absolute	198
Labdanum absolute	31
Lavender oil	16
Musk tonquin tincture, 5%	62
Oakmoss absolute liquid	46
Orange flower absolute	10
Orange oil from Portugal	100
Orris absolute liquid	3
Petitgrain bigarde	40
Rose otto	30
Sandalwood oil	50
Tonka bean absolute	60
Tuberose absolute	10
Vanilla absolute	16
Ylang ylang extra	56

Formula 2. Chypre Type

	<u>Grams/Kilo</u>
Angelica seed oil	5
Benzoin resin	50
Bergamot oil	215
Cinnamyl acetate	25
Clary sage oil	30
Coumarin	90
Estragon oil	25
Heliotropine	20
Isoeugenol	35
Jasmin absolute	10
Labdanum absolute	25
Lavandin oil	50
Methylionone	50
Musk ambrette	20
Musk ketone	30
Oakmoss absolute	60
Orris concrete	15
Patchouly oil	20
Sandalwood oil	50
Vanillin	20
Vetyvert oil	60
Ylang ylang	95

Formula 3. Chypre

	<u>Grams/Kilo</u>
Benzyl acetate	50
Benzyl salicylate	70
Bergamot oil	225
Cinnamic alcohol	50
Coumarin	70
Heliotropine	100
Isoeugenol	35
Musk ketone	50
Oakmoss absolute	50
Patchouli oil	10
Rhodinol	80
Sandalwood oil	70
Vetyvert oil	75
Ylang ylang oil	65

castoreum amber note is predominant in the background. The prototype of the first is Piguet's Bandit (1944), that of the second is Miss Dior (1947).

Bandit, with a very floral jasmin character on a powerful mossy note has been the precursor of a series of fragrances such as Balmain's Jolie Madame where the floral notes are a blend of gardenia and tuberose on a more subdued mossy effect, and of the more famous Gres' Cabochard (1958) with a green hyacinth gardenia tuberose complex on a mossy quinoline and somewhat animalic Chypre. Following the lead, with some variations we find Diorling (1936), Miss Balmain (1968), and Empreinte from Courreges (1971) among many others.

Miss Dior presents us with a toned down aldehydic nuance on a floral blend backed by an amber animalic Chypre. The animalic tone is obtained with civet absolute and cistus labdanum oil. This accord has inspired many perfumers and we can mention here Revlon's Intimate (1955) with a touch of fruity notes, Avon's Occur (1963) with a more noticeable aldehydic character and Matchabelli's Cachet (1970) with the intriguing amber animal character playing up to the top of the fragrance with the aldehydes.

Fruity Chypres

Fruit Vert by Floral (1930) was the first attempt at a fresh green fruity note, modifying a still noticeable aldehyde complex on a chypre background. It was followed by Lanvin's Rumeur (1934) which denotes a fresh fruity mossy accord.

We had to wait until 1942 for Rochas Femme to see a really fruity Chypre based on a fairly heavy peach character on a woody background more

Perfumery Notes—Chypre

Formula 4. Chypre Aldehydic

	<u>Grams/Kilo</u>
Aldehyde C-11 undecylenic 10% dep	20
Aldehyde C-12 M.N.A. 10% dep	10
Amyl cinnamic aldehyde	15
Benzyl acetate	60
Benzyl benzoate	50
Benzyl propionate	20
Benzyl salicylate	110
Bergamot oil	70
Cedar leaf oil	5
Cedrenol	30
Cedryl acetate crystals	25
Citronellol	65
Costus synthetic 1% dep	5
Coumarin	15
Eugenol	50
Geranium Algerian oil	30
Heliotropine	30
Jasmin floral base	30
Labdanum resin	20
Methyl ionone gamma	45
Methyl isoeugenol	20
Methylnaphthylketone beta	5
Methylphenylcarbinyl acetate	15
Musk ketone	15
Musk Xylol	40
Oakmoss absolute green	40
Orange sweet oil	60
Patchouli oil	25
Sandalwood oil	10
Styrax oil	10
Terpinyl acetate	50
Vanillin	5

Formula 5. Floral Chypre

	<u>Grams/Kilo</u>
Aldehyde C-9 10% dep	2
Aldehyde C-10 10% dep	15
Aldehyde C-11 undecylenic 10% dep	30
Benzoin Siam absolute	3
Bergamot oil	50
Cedryl acetate crystals	23
Civet absolute 10% dep	6
Ethyl methylphenylglycidate 10% dep	2
Hydroxycitronellal	64
Ionone alpha	3
iso-Jasmone 10% dep	9
Jasmin absolute	36
Labdanum absolute	8
Lavender oil	47
Linalool synthetic	19
Methylionone gamma	35
Methylphenylcarbinyl acetate	19
Musk ketone	23
Neroli	19
Oakmoss absolute green	28
Orange flower absolute	5
Patchouly oil	57
Phenylethylalcohol	147
Rose absolute	25
Rose otto	2
Undecalactone gamma 10% dep	9
Vanillin	6
Vetyvert Bourbon	15
Vetyveryl acetate	39
Ylang ylang extra	3

towards a vetivert theme than the previous fragrances. The fragrance "Y" from Saint-Laurent (1964) could be considered as a variation on *Femme* with a decidedly green fruity top note.

I think that the potential of the fruity variations in floral Chypres has not been fully exploited and this is an area which deserves more development.

Green Chypres

In the green family of Chypres we are again confronted with the decision: What is still a Chypre and what is not? The borderline between Chypre and pure green fragrance is difficult to delineate.

Personally, I think that the only fresh green fragrance, even somewhat floral, is *Vent Vert* and that all the others are floral or Chypre variations with a noticeable green accord.

The major green Chypre are Pucci's *Vivara* (1965) with a dominant green aldehydic note contrasted with a jasmine floral character on a mossy woody background, Givenchy III (1971) and Estee Lauder's *Alliage* (1971). *Alliage* is a very interesting approach to the Chypre gamut, with its green fruity somewhat piney/pineapple top note on a very floral fruity jasmine middle note. The background is an unmistakably animalic Chypre base on a costus effect. Another interesting green floral Chypre on a rich rose

Formula 6. Chypre-Fruity

Grams/Kilo

Aldehyde C-10 10% DPG	1
Aldehyde C-11 10% DPG	10
Aldehyde C-12 M.N.A. 10% DPG	1
Basil Comores oil	5
Benzoin Siam absolute	10
Benzyl acetate	40
Bergamot oil	64
Cardamom seed oil	3
Castoreum absolute 10% DPG	5
Cedrenol	80
Cedryl acetate crystals	20
Ciste distilled 10% DPG	5
Civet absolute 10% DPG	15
Clove bud oil	30
Coumarin	15
Decalactone gamma	10
Galbanum absolute	3
Hydroxycitronellal	30
Immortelle absolute 10% DPG	5
Jasmin absolute	80
Labdanum absolute	2
Lemon oil	20
Methylionone gamma	80
Methylphenylcarbiny l acetate	5
Methylphenylcarbiny l propionate	18
Musk ambrette	20
Musk ketone	25
Oakmoss absolute green	15
Orange flower absolute	5
Orris liquid	5
Patchouly oil	25
Pentadecanolid 10% DPG	30
Pepper black oil	3
Rose absolute	50
Rose otto	40
Sage clary oil	20
Sandalwood oil	25
Styrax absolute	10
Undecalactone gamma 10% DPG	10
Vanilla bean tincture 3%	70
Vetyveryl acetate	50
Ylang ylang extra	40

blend is Halston (1975). One can argue that the Chypre character is so well hidden that one could barely recognize it, but still, the general theme is there.

Chypres for Men

As I mentioned before, many Chypres fragrances were created for men, among them the famous Aramis (1965) inspired by Cabochard, which in turn gave Revlon's Braggi (1966) with a heavy patchouly note (Formula 8). In fact, we can classify the men's Chypre notes into three sub-groups:

The Fresh Group akin to the fixed citrus on the fougère—in this group we have Revlon's That Man (1961) itself inspired from Rochas' Moustache (1949) which was a lavender fougère, and more recently, Revlon's Chaz (1975).

The Animalic Group which gave us Aramis (1965), Braggi (1966) and Pucci's Signor Vivara (1970).

The Fruity Group in which I would place Scanlon's Kanon (1966) and Avon's Oland.

Coming close to the aldehydic Chypres, we could mention Swank's Royal Copenhagen (1970) and Maurer and Wurtz' Tabac Original (1959).

Formula 7. Green Chypre

	<u>Grams/Kilo</u>
Aldehyde C-10 10% dep	26
Aldehyde C-11 undecylenic 10% DPG	7
Aldehyde C-12 lauric 10% DPG	26
Armoise oil	9
Benzoin Siam absolute	7
Benzyl benzoate	39
Bergamot oil	146
Castoreum tincture 10%	13
Civet absolute 10% DPG	26
Clove bud oil	13
Coumarin	26
Ethylene brassylate	36
Galbanum absolute	13
Galbanum oil	7
Hydroxycitronellal	65
Ionone alpha	52
Jasmin absolute	19
Labdanum absolute 10% DPG	23
Lemon oil	10
Linalool synthetic	58
Linalyl synthetic	96
Methylionone gamma	90
Methylphenylcarbinyl acetate	3
Musk ketone	23
Myrrh absolute	9
Oakmoss absolute green	26
Patchouly oil	32
Phenylethylalcohol	28
Rose otto	10
Sandalwood oil	5
Trimethyl undecylenic aldehyde 1% DPG	12
Undecalactone gamma 10% DPG	13
Vanillin	6
Vetivert acetate	26

So much for the past of the Chypre family, now what can we expect for the future? It seems that the creative perfumer has overlooked the general Chypre family, with the exception of a few green approaches, during the last decade. Since we have witnessed the renaissance of the Floral blends and the renewal of the Oriental popularity we can foresee that the next type the trade is going to revive will most probably be the Chypre. The recent development of many new aromatic materials covering different areas of odors will give the creator new ways of translating the Chypre, of giving it a modern character.

Formula 8. Chypre for Men

	<u>Grams/Kilo</u>
Aldehyde C-10 10% dep	5
Aldehyde C-11 undecylenic 10% dep	5
Armoise oil	15
Basil sweet oil 10% dep	20
Benzoin Siam absolute 50% dep	20
Benzyl acetate	15
Benzyl benzoate	30
Bergamot oil	40
Castoreum absolute 50% dep	20
Cedryl acetate	72
Civet absolute 1% dep	5
Costus synthetic 1% dep	10
Cumin oil 1% dep	5
Eugenol	15
Galaxolide 50	50
Galbanum oil	5
Grisalva 1% dep	15
Hercolyn D	41
Hexylcinnamic aldehyde	90
iso Butylquinoline 10% dep	3
iso Propylquinoline 10% dep	2
Jasmal	35
Labdanum absolute	20
Lavandin oil	30
Lemon oil	30
Linalyl acetate	50
Methylionone gamma	135
Methylcedrylketone	27
Methylphenylcarbinyl acetate	15
Musk ketone	30
Oakmoss absolute decolorized 50% dep	32
Olibanum absolute	9
Patchouli oil	54
Sandalwood oil	18
Sandela GD	27
Thyme oil white 1% dep	5

The availability of fragrant materials such as the evernyls, the many new woody and amber notes will undoubtedly inspire the perfumer. It is reasonable to think that since the Floral blends and the Orientals have known a renewed favor recently, the first attempts will be to Floral and Oriental Chypres thus keeping a certain air of familiarity with recent successes.

Address correspondence to Henri-Michel Hoffmann, 126 Mount Hebron Road, Upper Montclair, New Jersey 07043, U.S.A.

