

Mother’s Day Gift Guide 2025: The Finest Fragrances From Her Favorite Hotels

These luxe hotels have tapped the world’s best noses to capture the essence of their destination — and conjure memories in a bottle.

By [Jennifer Leigh Parker](#), Contributor. 🕒 Covering the future of travel in all its forms.

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An aerial view of Hotel Esencia, near Tulum on the coast of Mexico. COURTESY OF HOTEL ESENCIA

When you walk into your absolute favorite hotel in the world, do you notice it has its own particular scent? A subtle cue that somehow deepens your breath, relaxes your shoulders and fills you with anticipation for what’s to come...

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Whether it’s the smell of fresh rain in the Ecuadorian cloud forests or the perfume of tequila, sand and sea salt in Tulum, fragrance possesses the elusive power to transport us — often more than any souvenir or photo can. Even the simple act of lighting a candle can become an exercise in remembering. For mom, what better gift than a fragrance that can conjure memories of that one special place? That moment in time.

Scent memories can remain vivid for decades, often outlasting memories formed through other senses. Our very anatomy supports this. "Unlike all other senses, smell information has direct access to the limbic system and especially the amygdala and hippocampus. These areas are critical for memory, emotion and associative learning. This is why odor-evoked memories are more emotional than memories triggered by other cues,” writes Dr. Rachel Herz, a cognitive neuroscientist at Brown University and expert on the science of scent.

These days, many of the world’s leading luxury hotels are leveraging this neurological connection by creating their own signature scents designed to form memory associations with their brand. Consider this mom’s curated collection.

The Scents of Place



L'Esencia Vol.1 for Hotel Esencia, Mexico COURTESY OF HOTEL ESENCIA

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[Hotel Esencia](#) is the former villa of an Italian duchess refashioned as a private jungle getaway on a secluded beach near Tulum. For this [three Michelin Key](#) award winner, Artistic Director Juan Carlos Gutiérrez recruited French perfumer [Barnabé Fillion](#) (who has worked with Aesop) to create its first limited-edition home fragrance and candle, launched this winter. In sunny yellow and stark white, this fragrance recalls the wild, tropical energy of Tulum.

“For me, this fragrance is an exercise in restraint and resonance, capturing the profound simplicity of the place through a few, carefully chosen ingredients. I worked through a process of reduction and layering, translating sensations—the wind brushing flowers at dusk, the sun reflecting on the architecture, the moisture of the morning dew—into scent,” says Barnabé Fillion.

Where to buy: [L'Esencia Vol.1](#) is available exclusively at Hotel Esencia’s boutique.

