

## **Grapefruit the Great Fruit** **by David Stewart, Ph.D., R.A., D.N.M.**

The Latin name for grapefruit is *Citrus paradisi*, which means, Fruit of Paradise. There were no Grapefruit trees in the Garden of Eden, but considering the many virtues of the fruit, maybe they should have been there.

Grapefruit (also known as pomelo) is a hybrid, a fruit-bearing tree created by the union of *Citrus sinensis* and *Citrus maxima* (also called *Citrus grandis*). The first of these (*C. sinensis*) is the common sweet orange. The second (*C. maxima* or *grandis*) is a large somewhat sour fruit called the pummelo that is closely related to the lemon.

The odd name for this rather large ungrapelike fruit seems to originate from the fact that grapefruits grow in clusters of 12-24, like huge bunches of grapes. At least, that is the theory held by most botanists. Other authorities say that to them the taste of grapefruit is very much like the taste of grapes and, thus, could be another possible source for the name. Personally I don't find the taste of a grapefruit to be anything like that of a grape. So I favor the bunch theory for the name.

### Where Did Grapefruits Come From?

Historians and botanists are not certain of the origin of this cross between species and do not know exactly why, how, and by whom such a marriage was ever made. It did not exist in ancient times. The best guess is that it originated in Jamaica some time after Columbus landed in the West Indies in 1492, although some argue that it originated in the islands of southeastern Asia where pummelo trees are indigenous and common. One thing is certain: the versatility and benefits of grapefruit truly are amazing.

Grapefruit has long been considered a helpful food for weight loss. It is a refreshing, satisfying snack one can enjoy with no concern over calories. Grapefruit oil can also be used as an appetite suppressant, when mixed with drinking water, put on the tongue, or simply inhaled. Grapefruit oil also dissolves fat and has been used to address cellulite.

It is also said to help with acne, digestion, fluid retention, and disorders of the liver, kidneys, vascular, and lymphatic systems. It has also been used to assist in drug withdrawal.

Its fragrance is mood elevating and has been used as an anti-depressant. It has also been applied for migraine headaches, pre-menstrual tension, fatigue, and jet lag.

### Five Drops in an Olympic Pool

One of the amazing facts about the fragrance of grapefruit oil is that the distinctly characteristic aroma that identifies and sets grapefruit oil apart from all other citrus oils is from a trace compound. All citrus oils are composed mostly of the same compound, a monoterpene called d-limonene. It is d-limonene that gives them all the common smell of citrus. Yet it is not difficult to distinguish fragrances between orange, lemon, lime, tangerine, mandarin, and grapefruit oils. The differences are in their minor and trace compounds.

Grapefruit oil is over 90% d-limonene, but it contains something not found in any other citrus oil. It is a sulfur compound, whose strange name is 1-p-menthen-8-thiol, that dominates the smell of grapefruit. Without it, grapefruit would not smell like grapefruit. Yet, this compound comprises only one part per billion of the whole oil. That is equivalent to less than five drops in an olympic swimming pool. It would take highly sophisticated laboratory analysis equipment to detect such a tiny amount of a compound in an oil, yet your nose is sensitive enough to instantly detect this trace ingredient and your body makes use of it in receiving the therapeutic benefits unique to grapefruit.

### Importance of Retaining Trace Compounds in an Oil

This is yet another example of why only therapeutic grade oils, which retain all of the trace compounds, should be used for healing purposes. Food and perfume grade oil companies care only about compounds in an oil that provide taste and odor. Therefore, such producers do not exert the extra effort to preserve minor or trace components unless they contribute to taste or smell. The healing properties of an oil almost always involve the minor and trace compounds, which do not always contribute to taste or fragrance, but are essential for therapeutic action.

The fact that a trace compound like 1-p-menthen-8-thiol can be detected in a grapefruit by the human nose, when present in such a minute concentration as 1 ppb, is proof that our bodies do sense, interact, and utilize the trace compounds in an oil that must be there for the healing properties of an oil to remain complete and intact.

### The Smell of Feminine Youthfulness

Recent data have discovered yet another attribute of the multifaceted fragrance and properties of grapefruit.

A study of smells shows that the scent of grapefruit on women make them seem younger to men, causing them to underestimate the age of women by an average of six years. However, the fragrance of grapefruit on men does nothing for them.

The study by the Smell and Taste Institute in Chicago explored the question of what makes a woman smell young. The smell of pink bubble gum made women smell young, but too young. The odor of bubble gum caused men to think of women in their childhoods as little girls, not as younger, yet mature in their womanhood.

Institute director, Alan Hirsch, said he smeared several middle-aged women with broccoli, banana, spearmint leaves, and lavender but none of those scents made a difference to the men, including the floral fragrance of the lavender, which is often used in feminine perfumes.

However, the scent of grapefruit altered men's perceptions. Hirsch said that when male volunteers were asked to write down the ages of women with a grapefruit odor, the age they perceived was considerably less than reality.

So there you have it, ladies. The fountain of youth may be in the aroma of grapefruit juice, at least for women. Men have been smearing colognes, after shave lotions, aromatic oils, and other manly potions on their bodies for thousands of years, in attempts to make themselves more attractive to the opposite sex. As yet, science has found no fragrance to make men seem younger than they really are.

Maybe scientists should test the oil blends of Hope®, Valor®, and Chivalry® on men to see how women respond. I don't believe these were included in Hirsch's study.

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