

## What can I do with hydrosols?



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[www.Mintal.eu](http://www.Mintal.eu)

Hydrosols are increasingly popular and receive enthusiastic reviews on the internet. But what can you actually do with these fragrant liquids? Many people think that they can only be used by therapists. However, they are for everyone and how you use them is up to you.

This brochure gives you advice on how to use hydrosols. Experience them for yourself!

### Did you know...

- More and more artisanal distillers distill certain plants just for the hydrosols. Examples are nettle and cucumber.
- In the Middle Ages certain plants were distilled for collecting hydrosols only. The essential oil was a by-product and sometimes even thrown away.
- An eye compress made from a cotton ball with chamomile hydrosol is wonderful for tired eyes.
- Dogs suffering from stress, toothache, anxiety or travel sickness respond almost instantly to a hydrosol spray such as Roman Chamomile hydrosol.
- Over 95% of the fragrances that are used for soap, colognes, perfumes etc. are of petrochemical origin (i.e. from crude oil or gas) – despite the beautiful flowers and plants on the packaging.

**All the more reason to try a great artisanal product!**

## What is a hydrosol?

Hydrosols are also known as distillates, hydroflorates, flower waters or floral waters. We prefer not to use these last two expressions as hydrosols can also derive from leaves, roots, fruits or seeds.

Hydrosols are produced by distilling fragrant fresh plant parts, such as lavender flowers, pine needles or grated ginger root. These plant parts are placed in a large distiller cauldron filled with steam, without touching the water. This process causes active substances, mainly fragrances, to be released from the plant cells into the steam. The steam then cools to clear or colored distilled water, incorporating fragrances and other plant substances that are released by the steam.

Essential oils are volatile fragrances which are water-insoluble, meaning the oil will separate from the water, either by floating to the top of the distilled water or by sitting in bubbles on the bottom. This process can take a while, sometimes up to months. During this period the cloudy liquid turns clear. Once the essential oil is removed the hydrosol remains.

### Why haven't hydrosols been used very much so far?

- Hydrosols have not been studied extensively as far as their active substances are concerned, which is required for **medical use**.
- The composition of hydrosols is **complex** and depends strongly on the **specific preparation**: the material of the distiller (copper, glass or stainless steel), the time and temperature used for distilling, the time the liquid has been left after distilling, the water that was used and so on.
- The **quality** strongly depends on the manufacturer: an industrial distiller will typically pump the hydrosol back into the system, thereby 'milking' the hydrosol for essential oil. This type of hydrosol is no longer suitable for other uses.
- It's a **matter of trust**: there is no verification or quality mark for artisanal hydrosols. A kilo of plant material can produce a huge amount of hydrosol by using lots and lots of water. However, the more water you use, the weaker the hydrosol. A rule of thumb for artisanal distillers: a kilo of plant material will produce a maximum of one liter hydrosol. Mintal generally uses more than a kilo for a liter of hydrosol.
- You may even find so-called hydrosols which are in fact simple distilled water with a few drops of essential oil added, combined with an emulsifying agent to dissolve the oil.

### Tips for the use of hydrosols

- Beekeepers use a spray of clove hydrosol to keep the bees at distance.
- Falling asleep at the office? Try spraying rosemary hydrosol to keep you awake.



## Tips for use in the kitchen

Hydrosols smell and taste aromatic and delicious. They contain ca. 0,02% essential oil and are approximately 30 times stronger than herbal tea.

Rose water is a well known hydrosol used in mainly Arab cuisine. But you can also use other types of hydrosols in the kitchen.

- If you love the aroma of sage, mint, cinnamon or ginger in your food, a hydrosol spray will work miracles.
- For a special dinner: spray a little oregano or rosemary hydrosol on the rim of your plates for a mediterranean effect. The same applies to lemon hydrosol for desert.
- Making your own herbal cocktails or liqueur is easy with hydrosols: mix two or three of your favorite flavors with juice, herbal tea or alcoholic beverage. You can sweeten your drink with a few drops of stevia or other sweetener.

Be aware that our hydrosols contain 10-12% food grade, plant based alcohol. However, they are generally too strong to drink undiluted. Of course, there is no harm whatsoever in mixing your preferred herb with champagne!

- A flavorless soup may be spiced up with a tablespoon hydrosol made of rue, lovage, laurel or savory.
- A boring cookie or bland ice cream? A little puff of ginger or cinnamon will make it a delicious surprise!

## Recipes

### ***Cocoa delight with hydrosol of mint and chamomile (8 servings)***

(source: [www.netelvuur.be](http://www.netelvuur.be))

**Ingredients:** 250 ml cream, 4 large egg whites, 50 gr sugar, 100 gr dark chocolate, 1 tbsp mint hydrosol, 2 tbsp chamomile hydrosol

*Add half of the sugar to the cream and half to the egg whites. Whip both cream and egg whites in separate bowls until stiff peaks form. Melt the chocolate au bain marie and mix with the whipped cream a little at a time. Add hydrosols and fold in the cream mixture carefully. Leave to set in the fridge.*

### ***Beetroot with sauce of rue hydrosol (4-6 servings)***

(source: IEZ)

**Ingredients:** ca. 750 gr beetroot, 1 diced onion, 1 tbsp all-purpose flour, 100 ml soy cream, 1 tbsp rue hydrosol

*Simmer the whole beetroots until tender, peel and slice. Fry the onion, stir in flour en add ca. 100 ml water to make a roux. Cook, stirring, until the sauce thickens and add soy cream. As soon as the cream is dissolved, take pan off the heat and add hydrosol. Pour the sauce over the sliced beets.*

### ***Creamy carrot soup with ginger and cinnamon hydrosol (4-6 servings)***

(source: M. Erlichmann, from: S. Catty: Hydrosols, the next aromatherapy)

**Ingredients:** 1 liter of vegetable stock, 4 medium sized carrots (grated), 1 parsnip (grated), 1 large diced onion, 1 tbsp ginger hydrosol, 1 tbsp cinnamon hydrosol, freshly ground black pepper or 4 drops of essential oil of black pepper, finely chopped parsley or coriander leaves

Bring stock to a boil and add vegetables. Simmer for 20 mins without covering the pan. Leave to cool and blend with a hand blender. Add hydrosols and pepper. Add parsley or coriander before serving.



## Skin- and haircare

Generally hydrosols have a skin-friendly pH of 5 to 6. Birch hair water is a well known application of hydrosol. Infant skincare with lavender hydrosol is gaining in popularity.

Before using hydrosols as skincare, be sure to first check for allergic reactions on a small patch of skin. Allergies to natural products do occur, even if they are quite rare.

- As a cleanser: pure, applied with a tissue or cotton ball or combined with a natural oil, warmed in your hand and mixed with the hydrosol.
- Add a splash of hydrosol to the water in your washing basin to make washing your face more pleasurable. You may also add ca. 3 tbsp to a warm bath.
- Use hydrosol in a spray as an air freshener. Spray the radiator to moisten and enrich the air.
- As hair water: massage your scalp and hair after shampooing and before combing or brushing your hair. We developed hair water with birch, walnut, willow catkins and mulberry bark.
- Witch hazel is distilled only for the hydrosol. Witch hazel is used in creams and baths to bring relief from hemorrhoids and varicose veins.
- You may spray the insides of your shoes with your own choice of hydrosol, but mugwort is traditionally used for tired feet. Eucalyptus and southernwood protect against mosquitoes.
- To relieve sore or itchy patches, small lesions or mouth ulcers: spray 4 to 10 times a day with lavender, chamomile, curry plant or yarrow.

### **More information:**

[www.biofficinatoscana.com/blog/idrolati-di-biofficina-toscana-quali-novita/](http://www.biofficinatoscana.com/blog/idrolati-di-biofficina-toscana-quali-novita/)

[http://specchioedintorni.it/rimedi-naturali/2014/01/18/cosa-sono-idrolati-come-si-usano-proprieta-acque-aromatiche\\_6029](http://specchioedintorni.it/rimedi-naturali/2014/01/18/cosa-sono-idrolati-come-si-usano-proprieta-acque-aromatiche_6029)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herbal\\_distillate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herbal_distillate)

[www.ethnobotany.nl](http://www.ethnobotany.nl)





## The project

*Mintal* is a project by Eva, Tedje, Herman and Martijn; aiming to develop and produce exciting new flavors (e.g. in herbal cocktails) and natural fragrances for kitchen or bathroom.

We work from origin to product, meaning we grow and harvest or collect the raw plant materials, both in the Netherlands and in Italy. Most of the plant materials used originate in Italy, at the permaculture farm Trifoglio in the Apennines where Tedje and Herman live and work. This is where we harvest homegrown crops, wild and semi-wild plants.

We distill either the fresh herb or herbs dried naturally on wood. The distillation process takes place in our Fragrance House. Here we produce herbal fragrances in **artisanal copper distillers** with **mountain water**. After distilling we use the herbs, essential oils and hydrosols to prepare fresh, handmade cosmetics and seasonings. *We do not use any chemical or toxic additives before, during or after cultivation and processing of our plants and products!*

The hydrosols we sell on markets are stabilized with 10-12% pure food grade alcohol. The alcohol may turn a clear hydrosol milky. On request we also produce alcohol free hydrosols. The shelf life of alcohol free hydrosols is shorter than those containing alcohol. Depending on the plant material, shelf life of alcohol free hydrosols may vary from 0,5 to 2 years.

**Perfume oils** and **massage oils** consist of 10-25% essential oil, supplemented with food grade alcohol (for the sprays) of soy, almond or jojoba oil (for the roll-ons).

Each of our products is **unique**: they differ from year tot year and from season to season. We only produce very limited amounts as we do not want nature to suffer for our cosmetic needs.

Some of our extraordinary and unique fragrances include elder, cow parsley, walnut leaf, willow catkins and water mint. But of course we also produce delicious scents from rosemary, lavender, sage and other well known herbs.

We process all our essential oils in perfume, shampoo, hair water and other natural products. We do not sell essential oils separately.

We are working towards certified organic produce.



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***development and production of herbs, fragrances and flavors***