

FREE THE PERFECT SCENT: A YEAR INSIDE THE PERFUME INDUSTRY IN PARIS AND NEW YORK PDF



Chandler Burr | 306 pages | 06 Jan 2009 | St Martin's Press | 9780312425777 | English | New York, United States

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By Chandler Burr. From the New York Times perfume critic, a stylish, fascinating, unprecedented insider's The Perfect Scent: A Year Inside the Perfume Industry in Paris and New York of the global perfume industry, told through two creators working on two very different scents. No journalist has ever been allowed into the ultrasecretive, highly pressured process of originating a perfume.

But Chandler Burr, the New York Times perfume critic, spent a year behind the scenes observing the creation of two major fragrances. Now, writing with wit and elegance, he juxtaposes the stories of the perfumes -- one created by a Frenchman in Paris for an exclusive luxury-goods house, the other made in New York by actress Sarah Jessica Parker and Coty, Inc. We follow Coty's mating of star power to the marketing of perfume, watching Sex and the City's Parker heading a hugely expensive campaign to launch a scent into the overcrowded celebrity market.

Will she match the success of Jennifer Lopez? Does she have the international fan base to drive worldwide sales? Will his pilgrimage to a garden on the Nile supply the inspiration he needs? The Perfect Scent is the story of two daring creators, two very different scents, and a billion-dollar industry that runs on the invisible magic of perfume. No one was more surprised than I was. This led me, after a chance encounter in the Gare du Nord train station in Paris with a biophysicist and perfume genius, to write a book called The Emperor of Scent about the creation of a new, radical theory of olfaction.

They were interested in my writing a piece on the creation of a perfume. Its development, from the first instant to the launch. Behind the scenes, real time, full access. I started going to houses. Not one of them would do it. I proposed the idea to an American designer. She said no. Chanel considered the project seriously but then, radio silence.

Guerlain reacted with shocked horror; it was unthinkable. Armani passed. Upload Sign In Join. Find your next favorite book Become a member today and read free for 30 days Start your free 30 days.

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Related Categories. Related Authors. Start your free trial. Page 1 of 1. As the New York Times perfume critic, Chandler Burr was able to spend a year behind the scenes watching two perfume firsts unfold. First, Sarah Jessica Parker wanted to be involved in creating her own perfume, far more than most celebrities or brands that get their names put on a perfume. Both had many reasons for wanting to get their perfume just right and this book is one of the first looks at how perfumers go about designing the perfect scent.

Well, the hype about how interesting it would be to see into the perfume industry was surprisingly! It was very cool to learn how much making a perfume is both an art and a science. The culture is rich with tradition and the people involved in the industry had funny, ironic, insightful, and thought-provoking comments about the way the perfume industry functions.

As an outsider, I liked that the author was also an outsider. I think hearing everything from his perspective, as someone who enthuses about scent rather than obsessing over it, made the story easier to relate to. At the same time, it was clear that time spent working with perfumers had rubbed off on the author, who described scents and places in vivid detail.

I would have loved to get to know all the characters he introduced in connection to the two stories. Instead, so many people were introduced and so little back-story was provided for any of them, that they all quickly blurred together. The perfume industry was an enthralling subject all by itself, but like the characters, the story arc connecting the chapters often disappeared in broader comments on the perfume industry. Finally, his descriptions deserve a paragraph to themselves.

Some were wonderful and he did do a good job describing scents. Let me just ask, what on earth is a supple character? And how is comparing someone to a Jewish grizzly bear supposed to be different from a comparison to just a grizzly bear? The bottom line is that this book covered an incredibly interesting topic and while I was disappointed in the way it was written, I liked the book and would still recommend it.

I just needed to rant a little about it first : This review first published on Doing Dewey. It seemed more interested in recounting celebrity gossip and fashion than talking about the industry. It jumped around from Paris to New York and back again, but not in an engaging way, it was just confusing.

I was utterly uninterested and couldn't even finish the book. I went back to it a couple of times over the course of a few months, but could only ever read a few pages before giving up. Chandler writes about perfume confidently, and in such a way as to educate those of us that are scent heathens. The book flowed with an easy rhythm and taught me about the perfume industry - its business practices, its heroes, its demons - and yet still remained accessible.

Well recommended to anyone who is interested in this arcane business, or who likes the business of scent. I enjoyed this immensely. It's The Perfect Scent: A Year Inside the Perfume Industry in Paris and New York of those books one carries around reading aloud from. Burr's scathing, off-the-cuff assessments of current perfumes are hilarious, as are his other asides.

Here's a favorite quote: "Perfumers are deeply strange people simply The Perfect Scent: A Year Inside the Perfume Industry in Paris and New York their sensorial perception of the world is so highly trained.

The educated olfactory capacity makes spending time with them not unlike spending time with talking Labradors. It reads almost like two separate books. The "Hermes" book is fascinating - we follow the perfumer from initial concept through the various iterations. It is in this section that Burr goes into detail about scent - we learn about the compounds that make different smells, and what perfumers actually do, and natural vs. It is wonderful. I could read pages of this.

Because the focus is on one perfumer, the details about his life and history are important to help us understand where he is coming from, and where he gets his inspiration.

This section would get 5 stars from me. The "Lovely" section is basically just a celebrity puff piece, and if I were cynical I would suggest that it is a marketing ploy to help sell more bottles of Lovely. SJP is so natural! So real! So interested in scent! She is not at all like those other celebrities! If this section was a stand-alone book, I'd have thrown it aside after about 20 pages and given it one star.

Therefore, I split the difference and gave it 3 stars. Quibbles: He does use a lot of French. Which would be fine, but then he insists on translating it in the very next sentence. Look, we understand that the person speaking is French. It is distracting. There really is *The Perfect Scent: A Year Inside the Perfume Industry in Paris and New York* too much personal description.

Padding the book, maybe? I don't care that a perfumer looks like a "sylvan faun". What does that have to do with chemistry?

This book could have been great, but wasn't. An info-packed book about the making of two very different perfumes. Burr has the connections to take the reader inside meetings with the higher-ups of Hermes and Coty. He also has the education *The Perfect Scent: A Year Inside the Perfume Industry in Paris and New York* know all the scientific terms for what we are actually smelling in a fragrance Burr's writing style is two-sided.

He writes with attention to the most minute detail, which is great when describing a boat trip down the Nile with the perfumer from Hermes. Not so great as we are forced to attend the umpteenth meeting in a little conference room as people take turns positioning leaves on a piece of plastic for a display stand. Do we need to know the comments and opinions of each person in the room? Burr can be witty as he describes famous scents he hates Hugo Boss in particular and he is good at describing the scent of various synthetics.

But be warned that "anus" is his favorite word and he uses it describe many innocuous scents. I would recommend this book to someone who had a real interest in the actual making of a fragrance. I could do without Burr's fawning over the people he meets, and the too detailed descriptions of the many, many meetings read like *The Perfect Scent: A Year Inside the Perfume Industry in Paris and New York* notes of a highly conscientious court stenographer, so for that reason I wouldn't recommend it to someone who just wants a casual read.

I'm not *The Perfect Scent: A Year Inside the Perfume Industry in Paris and New York* sure why I find his books so fascinating--is it the subject matter or his writing? Either way, I finished it in one day, and immediately went online and ordered a bunch of perfume samples so I could find out what he was talking about.

The Perfect Scent: A Year Inside the Perfume Industry in Paris and New York by Chandler Burr

[View Larger Image](#). [Ask Seller a Question](#). Publisher: Henry Holt and Co. Dust Jacket Condition: Near Fine. But Chandler Burr, the New York Times perfume critic, spent a year behind the scenes observing the creation of two major fragrances.

Now, writing with wit and elegance, he juxtaposes the stories of the perfumes--one created by a Frenchman in Paris for an exclusive luxury-goods house, the other made in New York by actress Sarah Jessica Parker and Coty, Inc. We follow Coty's mating of star power to the marketing of perfume, watching Sex and the City's Parker heading a hugely expensive campaign to launch a scent into the overcrowded celebrity market.

Will she match the success of Jennifer Lopez? Does she have the international fan base to drive worldwide sales? Will his pilgrimage to a garden on the Nile supply the inspiration he needs? The answer lies in Burr's informative and mesmerizing portrait of some of the extraordinary personalities who envision, design, create, and launch the perfumes that drive their billion-dollar industry. Burr, who earned a master's in international economics and Japan studies from the Paul H.

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Times perfume critic, spent a year behind the scenes observing the creation of two major fragrances. Now, writing with wit and elegance, he juxtaposes the stories of the perfumes -- one created by a Frenchman in Paris for an exclusive luxury-goods house, the other made in New York by actress Sarah Jessica Parker and Coty, Inc.

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Well recommended to anyone who is interested in this arcane business, or who likes the business of scent. This was a more enjoyable read than I'd been expecting. Ellena's work, I generally find it too bitter to be wearable. However, while I sometimes found Burr's writing style to be occasionally irritating, the content was quite entertaining and very informative about modern perfumery as an industry.

I have a passing interest in perfume, so when this book popped up in the Early Reviewers group, I thought I'd give it a shot. Sure enough, this was the book I snagged.

As it turns out, *The Perfect Scents* was a pleasant surprise. The book flips back and forth between the creation of two very different perfumes: one, the luxury house Hermes' *Un Jardin sur La Nil*, and the other, Sarah Jessica Parker's perfume, *Lovely*. It's not just a straightforward telling, however. As Burr himself warns us in the prologue, "The years I spent following these two stories were mapped in scent. Also, but perhaps not as intentionally, just like a scent, the narrative tends to drift and float slowly towards its conclusion; there *The Perfect Scents: A Year Inside the Perfume Industry in Paris and New York* some slightly self-indulgent pit stops in restaurants and parties and street corners in Paris and New York both.

Unlike some other reviewers, I found this to be more enjoyable than not. The key is to recognize that the subtitle of the book lies a little in this regard; *The Perfect Scents* is not just a story of the perfume industry, it is the story of the author following the story. Personally, I favored the portions of the book that focused on Hermes and its perfumer, Jean-Claude Ellena. It is in this section that Burr digs into the archaic industry that is perfume, as well as the modern way in which it is made.

As he follows Ellena, we get a very good view not only into centuries-old perfume tradition, but also into the labs and warehouses where perfume is created today. As some have noted, Burr does use a lot of French in these sections, but I never found it bothersome in the least. Nor was I put off by copious molecular descriptions I found it all fascinating but I can see how some people would be. The other half, which follows Sarah Jessica Parker and her committee-like posse of directors through the creation of her own scent, is not quite as interesting, perhaps because it is infinitely more recognizable.

The French perfume industry has been a cloak-and-dagger affair since it began, but an office building in New York City? Nothing particularly mysterious about that. Still, it's a good look at the million dollar industry and the social presence that celebrity perfumes have become. I'm also taking the portions in which Burr actually interacts with Parker with a grain of salt; he makes it pretty clear that he had to jump through hoops to get this gig, and I'm willing to bet he's not going to jeopardize it by describing it even remotely negatively.

All told, I got the sense that *The Perfect Scents* was almost but not completely honest; it doesn't tell the reader everything, but gives them a nod and a wink, asking them to read between the lines for themselves.

Nonetheless, it is a terribly interesting look into the secretive world of perfume. Definitely recommended. The fast-paced story bounces between Paris and New York. Readers will be treated to mounds of information about the business and science of perfume. While the development of a formula involves "techie" chemistry, Burr is able to present the details without losing readers. He also has a superior ability to describe scents in words. The description of natural musk muscone is a fine example: "Muscone is found, at a concentration between 0.

Extract the rich secretion, separate out the little bit of muscone from it, and by itself this one molecule has the warm, sensual, rich scent of clean warm skin.

It's only this molecule not the full, richly stinking, animalic Tonquin musk secretion that perfumers call the scent of musk. You saw the material-the silken, shadowy wood smell-it had immense, gorgeous form, and yet it was transparent, if not invisible, and you saw every bit of skin underneath. *Bois d'Ombrie* was an olfactory garment.

It sat on you like the most gorgeous Givenchy haute couture piece, and yet it became part of you somehow. For example, Ellena notes: "They say cooking is an art and pastry is a science.

The Perfect Scents: A Year Inside the Perfume Industry in Paris and New York is a math, specifically an algebra. All these interactions. There are memorable characters, excitement, historical insights, and wonderful descriptions of various locations, including Egypt. Quite frankly, I had never given much thought to perfume.

I am paying attention now! The nuances of illusion that perfumers create are fascinating. There are a few caveats. The book could be somewhat shorter. There are sections that feel patched together, possibly from previously published articles. I found the use of French in the text distracting. Those who can read French will naturally examine the English translation *The Perfect Scents: A Year Inside the Perfume Industry in Paris and New York* follows the French to find out if it is translated correctly.

Some of the translations are banal: "She paused again, then said, 'Non, je ne pense pas. Proper names and nouns are included, but there is very little analysis of the thematic substance of the book.

The Perfect Scent provides a delightful introduction to the multi-billion dollar perfume industry. It is a "good read" and full of information about the power of scent. I was surprised by how much I liked this book. This book covers a year in the life of the production of two perfumes, one ultra luxury scent by Hermes and the other a celebrity scent by Sarah Jessica Parker.

Burr had an inside view and takes the reader along. I love perfume, but hate the price. Burr does a very good job of explaining everything that goes into the process of creating a scent and wow is it expensive! Burr is a wizard of description, and his descriptions of the different perfumes and all of the individual scents that go into them was absolutely delicious. You will be amazed by how disgusting some of the scents are that go into very popular perfumes.

The author keeps the pace brisk, with a few small exceptions do we really need to know ALL of the details of Paris Hilton's perfume contract? He is kind to all of his subjects and I appreciate that while he doesn't portray any of these The Perfect Scent: A Year Inside the Perfume Industry in Paris and New York as perfect he has an appreciation for their humanity and highlights their positive qualities.

This isn't a book that takes the usual easy route of dishing on or being contemptuous of celebrities or rich people. Instead the writer does a rare job of exploring the job of creating luxury and its place The Perfect Scent: A Year Inside the Perfume Industry in Paris and New York the world that is respectful of these people and the art they are trying to bring into the world.

This is a fascinating tale that is in its own way heartfelt and moving. And I learned some things I didn't know, which I always consider to be a plus. If you're interested at all in perfume, you'll enjoy this book. Here at Walmart. Your email address will never be sold or distributed to a third party for any reason.

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