I am so happy to meet you…..

I hope to meet you in person, online or over the phone soon. If this little guidebook is in front of you then I do believe we were destined to meet if only on these pages. I write this and reach out with a heart-felt desire to share with anyone and everyone what I have learned and
experienced that has made a profound difference in my life. I can truly say my business is built on a motivation to make a difference in the world, one person at a time.

You can read My Story (http://wonderswellness.com/my-story/) to get the full background of my trials, tribulations and triumphs as I sit here at age 47 launching my online wellness support business aimed for women over 40. Meanwhile, I want to hone in on how essential oils have played a huge part in my life.

First, unlike other guidebooks and blogs, I want to be clear, this guidebook is NOT an effort to sell you anything or get you to sign up for more. There is no hidden agenda. I truly want to provide well-rounded guidance and information about essential oils in general, including what makes one oil better than another so YOU can make well-informed decisions when you decide to bring essential oils into your life.

After reading this guide, if you should decide you want to invest in a few oils to get you started I will actually give you several options of different companies you can look at. Of course, I have my leanings and will tell you exactly why I prefer some lines of oils over others.

So, that said, let me tell you briefly how essential oils made their way into my life long before everybody was talking about them...

In 1996 I gave birth to my second child. I had begun my own mind-body-spirit practices in 1993 of meditation, yoga, chi kung/tai chi and was just starting to understand the importance of nutrition and natural ways of helping the body heal itself. I met a new friend whose family owned a health-food store outside of Memphis where I was living. She introduced me to numerous home-remedies and nutritional tricks and tips that helped my 3 year old son, my new baby and I recover from viruses quickly and build immunity to avoid getting sick in the first place. Many of these remedies included essential oils. She started me off with a pure-grade bottle of tea tree oil (melaleuca alternifolia), lemon oil, peppermint, eucalyptus and lavender. She taught me how to use the oils for bug-bites, scraped knees, nasal congestion, ear infections, air purifying, cleaning my house without chemical products and the list went on from there. When I no longer had to buy medicines, household cleaners or commercial products I was saving a lot of money. And my family was healthy. My kids simply were not getting sick like all their friends at school. True story. Ask my kids. They will tell you…. Even though they make fun of me for being a tree hugger , I’m the first one they come to when and if they do get a scratchy throat. They know I’ve got the goods.

So from there, I expanded my collection of essential oils.

When I married my husband in 2006 … best day of my life – with the exception of the days my 3 children came into my life… we married in The Fragrance Garden at Atlanta Botanical Gardens. It’s a special garden filled with amazingly fragrant plants - an essential oil mecca of sorts. And so fitting given my passion for plants and essential oils.

Now, 17 years later, if you come to my home you will see little bottles in every room in the house. In every cabinet, in my purse, the laundry room, the drawers. I probably look like an
essential oil hoarder! But the reason is I have developed a relationship with the oils. I always say, if there is a house fire and there is only one thing I can grab when I leave the house (after my kids and animals are safe of course) it is my case of essential oils I take with me everywhere.

Hopefully you are now intrigued to know more…. So, let me get into the nitty gritty. I don’t want to lose you with all the science of the oils and how/why they work but I do want to give you a solid foundation of what they are and why we use them.

**What ARE essential oils?**

Essential oils are the fragrant, highly concentrated natural constituents that are found in plants, representing the “essence” of the plant. They are not called “essential oils” because they are essential for you to use (although I would argue that they actually are for me), but rather because of the original term *quintessential* which comes from ancient and medieval philosophy that the fifth and highest essence after the four elements of earth, air, fire, and water, was believed to be the substance of the heavenly bodies and latent in all things.

The oils represent the very life essence of the plant. They are what give the plant its characteristic aroma and many contain anti-fungal, anti-viral and anti-bacterial properties. When used correctly, essential oils bring a wide range of health benefits.

Although they are fat soluble, they do not include fatty lipids or acids found in vegetable and animal oils. Essential oils are not to be confused with fatty oils. Essential oils are very clean, almost crisp, to the touch and are immediately absorbed by the skin. Pure, unadulterated essential oils are translucent and range in color from crystal clear to deep blue.

**Why do plants produce essential oils? What’s the purpose in nature?**

The essential oil in a plant provides protection for the host plant from bacteria, fungus, and from being eaten by animals. The aroma emitted from the plant often draws bees that will assist the plant in reproducing through cross-pollination.

Some plants have an essential oil that is actually toxic to certain insects and can act as insect repellents. You may be interested to learn that essential oils have been shown to be SO effective in repelling certain insects that there are now many commercial products that include essential oils that serve as natural pesticides.

**So… essential oils are a benefit to the planet in myriad ways.**

In addition to benefits to the plant world AND being amazingly aromatic for people to enjoy, essential oils have been used throughout history in many cultures for their medicinal and
therapeutic benefits. Modern scientific study and trends toward more holistic approaches to wellness are driving a revival and new discovery of essential oil health applications.

**How are essential oils extracted?**

Most often essential oils are obtained by low heat steam distillation although citrus oils are derived through a mechanical process. After extraction, the resulting essential oil is a highly concentrated liquid that contains the aroma and therapeutic properties of the source from which it came.

**Quality of oils**

It is very important to use essential oils that are pure and high quality. A pure, therapeutic-grade essential oil should have a balanced, broad fragrance profile and should smell clean. A pure essential oil should not feel slick or oily, but rather, it should absorb cleanly and completely into your skin. You want to know where your oils come from, how were they harvested? Are they wild harvested? Organic? Beyond organic? Tested for purity?

**Using Essential Oils Safely**

- Be sure to use only pure, therapeutic-grade essential oils and follow all label warnings and instructions.
- If redness or irritation occurs when using essential oils topically, apply a vegetable oil - such as fractionated coconut oil or olive oil - to the affected area.
- Essential oils should not be used in the eyes, inside the ear canal, or in open wounds. In the event of accidental contact with the eye, dilute with vegetable oil NOT water.
- Do NOT consume an essential oil internally unless labeled with a Supplement Facts box with specific dietary supplement, use instructions, and warnings.
- Discontinue the use of an essential oil if you experience severe skin, stomach, or respiratory irritation or discomfort.
- When using on children, apply a very small amount of the oil to test skin or other sensitivity. Do not use oil on a child’s hand as they may transfer to their eyes or mouth.
- Consult your physician before using essential oils if you are pregnant or under a doctor’s care or have other safety questions regarding essential oils.

**Why Use Essential Oils?**

Using essential oils can change the way you live your life and contribute to wellbeing. Here are just a FEW reasons using essential oils can benefit your life and wellbeing:
• Research indicates there is a powerful connection between our sense of smell and brain function. Recent studies, for example, demonstrate that the essential oil of rosemary improves memory function and the aroma of citrus oil alleviates anxiety and depression.
• Many essential oils when diffused into the air can eliminate air-born pathogens as well as odors, purifying the air.
• They have restorative and calming properties and can be used effectively with massage and beauty therapy.
• Nearly all essential oils have anti-microbial, anti-septic, anti-bacterial, anti-viral and anti-fungal properties providing a pure, natural means of disinfecting and cleaning.
• Many essential oils can be taken internally with powerful medicinal and health-boosting properties – but NEVER take an essential oil internally unless it has the nutritional label on the container and is certified as pure.

Which Oils to Buy if Just Starting Out, And What To Do With Them?

**Peppermint:**
1. Massage several drops on your abdomen, place a drop on wrists, or inhale to soothe motion sickness or general nausea.
2. Inhaling peppermint oil helps curb appetite by triggering a sense of fullness.
3. Massage 2-3 drops mixed into some coconut oil onto chest or drop into a humidifier to help clear sinus and lung congestion.
4. Inhale peppermint oil when feeling sleepy to increase alertness.
5. Pure grade peppermint oil can be swirled with a toothpick into a cup of hot water to make peppermint tea to soothe upset stomach.
6. Mix peppermint oil in coconut oil and apply to body for cooling moisturizer.

**Lemon:**
1. Use lemon oil on a soft rag to polish wood surfaces.
2. Drop lemon oil on top of a sticky price tag. Wait 2 minutes and the sticker will come right off.
3. Clean your granite or other porous stone with lemon. It disinfects and absorbs for a deep clean and refreshing smell.
4. Dilute lemon oil in water in an atomizer for natural odor remover for bathroom.
5. Mix lemon oil into castile soap for natural dish AND hand soap.
6. Add 5 drops to small amount of oatmeal and a bit of water for a homemade facial scrub. Will soften and cleanse skin.

**Lavender:**
1. Add a drop to your pillow to aid in restful sleep.
2. Applied to itchy bug bites - lavender soothes the skin.
3. Mix baking soda and lavender, sprinkle on carpet and vacuum to remove pet odor.
4. You can add lavender to some warm olive oil and gently massage around the ears (not inside the ears) and near glands in the throat to soothe earaches and sore throat.
5. Add lavender to the bath for a relaxing soak and muscle tension relief.

**White Fir:**

1. For achy, inflamed joints mix with coconut oil and massage into affected area.
2. For grounding effect, inhale White Fir and apply to bottoms of feet during times of stress.
3. For natural deodorant, mix with small amount of coconut oil and baking soda and massage under arms.
4. Rub into wood surfaces for a natural shine and fresh, woody aroma.

**Melaleuca Alternifolia (Tea Tree):**

1. Melaleuca oil can be used to help with Athlete’s Foot and toenail fungus. Put the oil on the affected area with a cotton swab.
2. Apply melaleuca essential-oil to acne with a swab. Leave it overnight and rinse the next morning.
3. Use melaleuca as a flea repellant. Put a few drops of tea tree oil in areas where your pet sleeps and it will help keep the fleas away.
4. For eczema or dermatitis, dilute in coconut oil and apply a small coating over the area.
Where Do You Find High Quality, Pure Grade Essential Oils?

I do not recommend running out to your neighborhood store and buying any essential oil off the shelf. I DO recommend you do some research, talk with people who are knowledgeable about essential oils. Look for oils that are pure, organic or beyond organic. You want to find essential oils that come highly recommended by people who are not just trying to make a buck but by people who have an authentic passion to share what they know and love about essential oils.

If you would like to consult with me personally, I would be happy to set up a 15 minute phone chat to discuss your options in terms of best way to move forward with your own essential oil journey. I will be happy to tell you about several essential oil sources I have had personal experience with and point you in the direction of several helpful resources so that you can make an informed decision. You can email me directly or give me a call to schedule your free consultation.

Be well!

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