

HOMEMADE

WITH WENDY HALL



Bring lavender into your life

THE calming, healing and purely charming properties of lavender have long been recognised and it's easy to incorporate a little of that magic into your home.

Talking to Tere Bonner from Aloomba Lavender Farm near Stanthorpe is a great way to learn about these beautiful plants and glean a few ideas on how to use the flowers or the essential oils that are extracted from them.

Here are four of Tere's suggestions.

THE LAVENDER BOTTLE/WAND
These were popular centuries ago and were often placed with linen to impart a fresh fragrance.

They're easy enough for children to make and will last for years in drawers, wardrobes or as decorative pieces. So raid the garden, grab a ribbon and get busy.

Use the long sturdy stems of varieties such as *Allard's lavender*, which grows well in many Queensland gardens.

Cut an odd number of long stems (5 is a good starting point) and leave overnight or up to 24 hours so the stems soften. Strip all the leaves away and use a narrow ribbon to tie the bunch together near the flowers.

Next, fold the stems back over the flowers to create a kind of cage, then use the ribbon to weave the bottle-shaped wand.

Cut the ribbon and hold it in place with a second piece of ribbon tied into a bow, and trim the stems.

Lavender bottles can be as neat or as rustic as you like.

For visual step-by-step instructions type "lavender bottles" in a YouTube search.

LAVENDER BATH SALTS

Add a few drops of good quality lavender oil and a few drops of food colouring to Epsom salts (available at most supermarkets) and store in a decorative bottle.

Tere suggests using plastic bottles to avoid glass breakages in the bathroom.

ROOM DIFFUSER

Top up your reed diffuser with a



mixture of two teaspoons of lavender oil added to a small quantity of vodka or gin (which dissolves the oil).

Tere says this mixture can be used in a bottle with wooden satay sticks (available at supermarkets) as reeds.

LAVENDER SACHETS

What's not to love about a sachet of beautifully scented lavender?

These are best made with the dried flowers of English lavender or *Intermedia* lavender varieties.

Simply fold a square of fabric in half and sew along one end and the long side, then re-fold so that the seam runs down the back of the sachet. Fill with dried lavender and bunch with a ribbon to close.

Those feeling really crafty can get busy with some beading or embroidered embellishing.

Visit abombalavender.com.au or crystalidgelavenders.com.au for dried flowers and pure oils, including medicinal and culinary products.

Calming scent: Peter Bonner harvests lavender at the Aloomba Lavender Farm near Stanthorpe (above) and steps in making a lavender wand.



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