

FIRST SNOW FRAGRANCE BY VICTORINOX QUESTIONS TO THE PERFUMER



Ane Ayo of Firmenich, one of the leading global fragrance houses.

How does a perfumer perceive their environment? Is there a technique to switching off a fine nose?

I always find my environment very stimulating. I can be inspired by anything, from something I see in the street to an interaction with a person, or even a film I enjoyed. These are subtle experiences that touch my heart and start my creative process.

When I need to forget smelling and start again, I often take a shower. Afterwards, at home, everything is neutral.

Generally speaking, is it possible to learn to become a fine, incorruptible nose or is it innate talent?

I think you do perhaps need to have a certain sensitivity or passion for fragrance. That you either have or you don't. However, in addition to that, you must train and learn the language of perfumery. I would say it's a mix of both.

**Does this ability bring advantages in other areas of life, e.g. in cooking or in the selection of wines?**

I don't see it as an advantage, but I do believe there is a big link between gastronomy and perfumery, and wine as well. Perfumers are often inspired by gastronomy which associates tastes and smells, for example in ice cream or in a patisserie. There is certainly a common language with wine makers, as smell and taste are connected.

What's the most challenging part of your work?

I believe the most challenging part of my job is finding my place as a creator. There are many talented perfumers and we each try to carve out our own voice, identity, and specialty.

What inspired you during the creation process of the First Snow scent?

When snow falls, our surroundings are instantly transformed. I was inspired by this particular atmosphere and the sensations it brings – how the winter air has a pure freshness and how the sun's rays illuminate the snow. In this snowy winter scene, there is a sense of calm that seems to make time stand still.

How would you describe the character of the First Snow scent?

First Snow envelops the wearer with its smooth, fluffy textures and a touch of powderiness balanced with a soft luminosity. In this softness there is a certain addiction!

Which spontaneous associations and thoughts do you relate with that moment when the snowflakes start falling for the first time of the season?

There is a simple joy in admiring the beauty of nature. As the cold comes, we also feel a desire to be cocooned in the comfort of our home. To me, winter is the season to take our time, to recharge our energy levels and watch as the landscape around us slowly transforms. We see everything from a new perspective.

You grew up in Spain near the ocean. When was the first time you experienced snow? Do you have special memories about this very moment? How did it feel? How did you feel? How did it smell?

It was so rare to wake up in the morning and see a light blanket of snow on the ground that it was a real event! I had the opportunity to see it much more in the Pyrenees when I visited with my parents. I remember the feeling of the cold on the skin and the soft snowflakes alighting on the ground. I would say that the scent of snow is more than a smell, it is a sensation. Olfactively, we can translate it with fresh, powdery and aldehydic notes.



Powdery scents like First Snow are the perfect companion for the colder time of the year. They are soft and gentle wrapping around you like a cashmere blanket. How does a perfect and relaxing evening in this cozy time of the year look for you?

Powdery notes give a truly comfortable feeling; they create enveloping and diffusive effects. I like to play with these kinds of notes by bringing contrast to the composition. Here, I created a softly-textured, fluffy character in a new way, by blending notes of white tea, vanilla and tonka extract. And, when I think of a relaxing, cozy winter evening, these are the perfect ingredients!

Can you describe the women who's wearing First Snow? Who did you picture in your mind creating this scent?

She is a woman who looks for pleasure and comfort in a fragrance. She likes beautiful, high-quality ingredients, but she has her own tastes and preferences too. She knows exactly what she wants!

What makes a good fragrance in your opinion?

I believe a good fragrance is one that you recognize instantly and one that you remember forever.

What is it that makes your fragrances special? What can't be missed? What's your "secret ingredient"?

I love working around the concept of addiction; I enjoy expressing strong emotions with musks.

What kind of perfume would describe your personality best?

Definitely something fresh and woody. Freshness represents my origins in Spain near the water, whilst textured, profound woodiness is a symbol of my layered culture from Spain, Germany and France.

How do you think scents influence people? How do they influence you, your mood, your feelings?

The sense of smell is the closest to the brain and connects almost immediately. Scent recalls memories; it's very powerful and personal. You instantly remember your childhood, your education and sometimes your way of being. All of this means that scents can certainly influence your mood; sometimes for the worse and sometimes for the better.

Do you still use perfume yourself and if yes, are you changing frequently?

Yes, I wear perfume when I go out. I have some fragrances that I always like, several of them. I like to try new things, so I often change. What I wear depends on my mood, the weather, the circumstances. For example, for dinner, I can wear something less fresh and instead more intense.



During your studies you completed a training with the perfumer Philippe Romano, who conveyed his sensitivity and attachment to natural raw materials. What is it you learned then and still focus on in the creation of fragrances?

Philippe Romano is a very intuitive perfumer and I think I learned to be the same. I don't overthink things; I create how I feel. That is something he taught me. He also shared his knowledge and passion for naturals. Philippe was from Grasse, and like all "Grassois", he had a sensitivity for naturals that is very unique.

Sustainability plays an important role for consumers and so it does for Victorinox and its fragrances. In this regard, what was especially important for you within the creation of the vegan formulation of natural origin of First Snow?

I optimized the sustainability credentials of this creation by using a number of ethically sourced and sustainable natural ingredients, as well as synthetic ingredients produced in a responsible way and with a low environmental impact. Firmenich perfumers can also choose from several upcycled ingredients in the palette. In First Snow, I used a quality of Virginia Cedarwood that is upcycled from the woodwork industry.

ABOUT VICTORINOX

Victorinox AG is a worldwide operating family business, which today is run in the fourth generation. The headquarter of the company is located in Ibach, canton Schwyz, in the heart of Switzerland. This is where the founder of the company Karl Elsener I set up his cutlery business back in 1884 and, a few years later, designed the legendary «Original Swiss Army Knife». Meanwhile, the company produces not only the world-famous pocket knives, but also high-quality household and professional knives, watches, travel gear and fragrances. In 2005, the company took over Wenger SA in Delémont. The Wenger pocket knives were integrated into the Victorinox range in 2013, so that the Wenger product portfolio today consists of watches and travel gear. Products are available online, in own stores as well as via a widespread network of subsidiaries and distributors in more than 120 countries. In 2019, the company with its more than 2100 employees generated sales of CHF 480 million.



ABOUT FIRMENICH

Firmenich is the world's largest privately-owned perfume and taste company, founded in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1895 and has been family-owned for 125 years. Firmenich is a leading business-to-business company operating primarily in the fragrance and taste market, specialized in the research, creation, manufacture and sale of perfumes, flavors and ingredients. Renowned for its world-class research and creativity, as well as its leadership in sustainability, Firmenich offers its customers superior innovation in formulation, a broad and high-quality palette of ingredients, and proprietary technologies including biotechnology, encapsulation, olfactory science and taste modulation. Firmenich had an annual turnover of 3.9 billion Swiss Francs at end June 2020.