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# Valley Vogue

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Friday, May 16, 2008

## Perfume: Do You DIY?

One area of fashion that is often neglected is the world of fragrance. Personally, I can't leave the house without spritzing myself with some sort of *eau de parfum*. For me, it's like sealing the deal on your outfit — I'd feel naked without it. Come to think of it, I might even have a mild obsession with perfume: I have an entire shelf full of fancy bottles, from Gucci to Givenchy, BCBG to Burberry. (My newest fixation? *See* by Chloé.) But the problem with being a slave to all of these big names is that wherever you go, you're bound to smell like someone else at the party. I've actually had to retire my Dolce & Gabbana *Light Blue* because of this quandary. So it seems, there comes a point in every woman's (or man's) life when you need a breath of fresh air... or a whiff of a fresh scent.

So, does perfume-making fall into the DIY category? Perhaps, maybe, I'm not really sure. I've never attempted mixing my own fragrances. Even in 9<sup>th</sup> grade when every other girl in the class swore that blending CK *Be* and *Tommy Girl* was like heaven for the nose, I staunchly begged to differ. But I'm talking serious perfume-mixing here — as in buying a slew of oils and going drop by drop to find just the right balance to suit your fancy. To be honest, I don't think I have the patience for it... and I'd probably get a headache pretty quick. But if you think you have what it takes to be your own *parfumerie*, then maybe you should have a

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word or two with Larry Siena, a Wappingers Falls resident who *has* perfected his own potion — *and* mass-produced it.



*Palio, by Lorenzo Siena Fragrances*

Larry Siena (who's been teaching high school in Westchester County for the past 30 years) created his own men's cologne about two and a half years ago — though his love affair with fragrance began many moons ago, when he would mix scents for personal use. But several years ago, people began stopping him on the street to ask him, "what are you wearing?" and "where can I get this?" These incidences prompted the idea of mass-producing his fragrance.

So how do you go from stirring together a shot glass worth of oils to starting your own fragrance company? Siena approached a handful of companies with his cologne, *Palio*, to find someone to manufacture it. However, he ran into serious trouble trying to break into the industry. "It's pretty much a closed market," he says. "People were receptive, but they all gave me the same story. It's a very controlled market; the large fragrance companies have it locked up." After months of searching for a manufacturer and numerous rejections, about two years ago, Drom International — which also produces Derek Jeter's cologne

— agreed on the spot.

But before you start pounding on the doors of every perfume manufacturer that comes up on a quick Google search, understand that Siena — though he doesn't claim to be a chemist — has a valuable understanding of the industry. "My wife and I have traveled extensively over the years and had always found time while touring to visit the European fragrance houses," he says. "I know what works well together."

The oils that make up his "classic" scent that "transcends time" include citrus sparkles, fresh pineapple, ivy greens, and mint leaf for the top notes; iced lavender, rose, muguet, and star jasmine for the mid notes; and sandalwood, patchouli, and white musk for the base notes. "It's a bit soft, a little powdery, but definitely manly," says Siena.

Siena will soon be launching a second men's fragrance, *Palio Gold*, as well as a perfume for women, which should be ready by next spring. A lot of smaller specialty stores in Manhattan have expressed interest in carrying his line, though at this point, it's only available via his E-commerce site, [www.LorenzoSienaFragrances.com](http://www.LorenzoSienaFragrances.com). The 3.4-ounce glass bottle retails for \$80.

So treat your dad on Father's Day, your brother on his birthday, and your husband on your anniversary with this unique scent — he'll happily stand out among all of the other men in the room doused in Burberry.