

BEAUTY

Exclusive: Luxury fragrance house, LilaNur Parfums by Good Earth's founder Anita Lal comes to India

"I wanted to bring the great perfume traditions of India and France together, from Madurai to Grasse, pairing the jewels of the Indian landscape with the world's greatest perfumers," says the veteran

BY ISHA SUTARIA

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'Born in Madurai, and crafted in Grasse', LilaNur Parfums is a fine fragrance brand that marries the rich heritage of India with modern innovation. For centuries, attar perfume oils have been employed in India to enrich the body and the spirit. In a bid to preserve this very emotion, LilaNur Parfums has partnered with the Firmenich Innovation Lab in Grasse to create scents that are unmatched in their artistry and evoke a sensory journey of timeless elegance. Driven by their mutual passion for fragrance and Indian flora, Anita Lal and her co-creator Paul Austin have created India's first luxury fragrance house.

Vogue engages in a conversation with Anita Lal, founder of LilaNur Parfums, exploring the sources of her inspiration and her vision for the forthcoming years as the brand makes its way into India early next year.



What inspired you to venture into the fragrance industry?

As someone with a lifelong passion for fragrances and the flora of India, I've never understood why India's rich contribution to perfumery has always been such a well-kept secret. Due to India's biodiversity, it grows and supplies many of the most prized ingredients used in haute parfumerie today and yet, very few people seem to be aware of this.

I've also always admired the alchemy of French perfumery. With LilaNur I wanted to bring the great perfume traditions of India and France together, from Madurai to Grasse, pairing the jewels of the Indian landscape with the world's greatest perfumers. Bringing the very specific olfactory stories of India to life and to niche consumers around the world. Scent has been so deeply interwoven in our lives throughout history—I think our time has come to share our sensory stories with the world.

With this global collaboration, how does LilaNur Parfums aim to cater to the Indian market while also maintaining a global appeal?

The most exciting, and fastest growing segment of the global perfumery market is in niche perfumes. Today's consumers are looking for exceptional, authentic and innovative fragrances with a distinct point of view. LilaNur Parfums pairs iconic Indian ingredients with the world's greatest perfumers to bring the Indian story to the forefront of niche perfumery. We don't particularly look at our development through the lens of "global vs local appeal". Rather, our mission is to inspire and engage a universal fragrance-loving audience across cross-geographical and cultural divides.

Which one is your favourite fragrance? Could you highlight the inspiration behind it?

Each fragrance in the collection had deep meaning to me. Malli Insolite, is such an innovative and beautiful take on our iconic jasmine sambac, one of the most expensive and prized ingredients used in perfumery. Paul and I worked with Honorine Blanc, the extraordinary French-Lebanese Master Perfumer, to create a scent that feels like a salty, coastal Kerala breeze blowing over a field of lush jasmines. Honorine has a deep love of India and its ingredients and after spending so much time in India, it shows in her perfumery. Malli Insolite—or Surprising Jasmine—is both nostalgic and thoroughly modern at the same time. It keeps the nose intrigued and the soul soothed all at the same time.

Consumers today demand ethical and sustainable practices—how does LilaNur Parfums approach these aspects in its production processes?

We believe that community is at the heart of culture, and at the heart of India's floriculture are the communities of flower growers and harvesters. One of our goals is to improve the lives of the flower harvesters, who are so integral to our process. We wanted to create year-round work and income for them—since jasmines bloom only seasonally, one of our pilot projects involved supporting the planting of a rose crop to ensure that this community would have continuous income generation. This rose is being used for the first time in our Gul Rouge fragrance. We've also been working closely with Devika Krishnan and Jasmine CE to train a group of flower pickers to make table accents using upcycled perfumery ingredients.

What is your personal vision and evolution trajectory for LilaNur Parfums?

LilaNur Parfums's goal is to inspire the world with its flora and rich scent culture while sustaining and ensuring the longevity of its communities. We have a greater purpose than just commerce—first and foremost want to celebrate and raise awareness about India's role in perfumery, both ancient and modern, and with that, the commerce follows.

