

FT

WEEKEND

Say it with a retro twist

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BEAUTY SPOT

Isn't love about the unexpected? The allure of a promise. The pleasant surprises. The hurtful disappointments. The capacity for emotion that you can discover inside yourself on any given day. And, of course, the odd little trinket that says all the things you can find yourself too dumbstruck to say.

Which makes it all the more important that you find a trinket for that more-than-average person in your life that conveys a more than average message. It's easy enough to do, if you think about it, as easy as taking the usual route and giving it just a twist of

difference. For usual, read fragrance. It's a time-honoured favourite, a sure enough bet, still ticks all the right romantic markers. But here's the twist: get it decanted into a vintage fragrance bottle. There are at least two savvy retailers out there realising the need for something different, the yen that women (and some men) feel for a touch of retro.

First is Floris, founded in 1730 and still housed in the same premises on Jermyn Street in which it began. Head to the back of the shop and you'll find a panelled room made from wood from the Great Exhibition in

1851, right down to the pharmacist-style cupboards on the walls, and original order and recipe books dating to way back when - you can even chart deliveries to the royal household, for whom Floris still hold warrants (for HM the Queen and HRH the Prince of Wales).

With such history, it makes sense that Floris should flaunt it. And so, when they discovered in their cellar, some boxes that contained about 100 old perfume bottles, some of which date back to the 1920s, they decided that it was only right to offer them to customers again. The catch is that you also have to purchase its Ultimate Bespoke Perfume Design



service - with in-house perfumer Shelagh Foyle - at a cost of £2,500 to get one. Still, with five consultations over three months, an entirely unique blend, and 100ml of blended eau de parfum and five repeat orders, it's well worth it if

Fragrance is a sure enough bet that still ticks all the right romantic markers

you really want to send a cut-above message.

Then there's Roja Dove and his Haute Parfumerie on the fifth floor at Harrods (it's nestled behind the Urban Retreat spa). Dove feels about fragrance the way Charles Foster Kane

felt about Rosebud. So you should understand the emotion with which he has decided to part with some of his private collection of Baccarat fragrance bottles from the 1930s (there are just 12 left for sale).

Of course, Dove's offer has a slight catch too as it only comes with one of his own fragrances inside (he has three to cover the main fragrance groups) but this is truly no hardship - one whiff and you'll be sold - even on the £1,500 price tag. And there's an added bonus: delivery can be arranged for anywhere your heart desires.

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