



Chanel Shines a Light on Sandalwood at Jardins, Jardin

The French luxury house is hosting an immersive experience as part of the annual garden event taking place in Paris' Bois de Boulogne.



Chanel highlighted sandalwood at Jardins, Jardin in Paris this year. Photo by Juliette Valtindas / Courtesy of Chanel

GARDEN VISIT: Chanel placed sandalwood under the spotlight for this installment of the annual Jardins, Jardin garden event, which takes place this year in the Villa Windsor's park in Paris' Bois de Boulogne.

Through Sunday, people can experience an immersive visit, which is both an olfactory and botanical journey that spans 3,230 square feet, and allows visitors to see how the *Santalum austrocaledonicum* tree is morphed into a perfume ingredient.

Sandalwood has been used for thousands of years for olfactory, medicinal and spiritual purposes, such as during prehistoric ceremonies and for ancient Egyptian embalming.

There are 16 sandalwood species in the world, but only three are used for perfume-making. At Jardins, Jardin, Chanel recreated the atmosphere of Maré Island, which is found in the archipelago of New Caledonia, and where the house exclusively sources its sandalwood from two local partners.



Chanel's installation at Jardins, Jardin. Photo by Juliette Valtindas / Courtesy of Chanel





Each time a tree is cut there, Chanel puts 30 more in the ground and surrounds them with other plants, such as avocado trees. Up to 250 sandalwood trees are cut down yearly, and Chanel has offset that by sowing 75,000 plants between 2009 and 2015.

At Jardins, Jardin, a serpentine path leads visitors past sandalwood and other plants with lush foliage grown on Maré Island, to where there's dried wood and pieces of heartwood. Inside a structure, visitors can see various steps of the extraction process. First, there are bowls of ground Maré sandalwood heartwood, then sandalwood cuttings and the liquid extract of sandalwood, which gives a creamy, voluptuous smell. Chanel manages the whole value chain, from tree to bottle of finished fragrance.

Sandalwood is an ingredient that's used in numerous Chanel perfumes, including No.5, Bleu de Chanel, Bois des Îles, Égoïste and Allure Eau de Parfum. Those can be experienced in a room next door.

A quote from Olivier Polge, Chanel's in-house perfumer-creator — "I like the idea that perfume, so immaterial and impalpable, comes from something concrete, real and very artisanal, like earth, wood, flowers" — adorns a wall of the installation.

Polge himself gave a masterclass on sandalwood on site as part of a series of talks. Attendees could sample the wood's notes in many forms, including an amber sandalwood accord and a spicy sandalwood accord.

