

Survey reveals Kiwis' favourite smells

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New Zealanders' favourite smells are freshly baked bread, flowers and coffee according to a survey released this week.

The inaugural Air Wick Science of Smell Survey asked 1037 people what scents they found most – and least – appealing around the home.

Unsurprisingly, the odours of damp washing, pongy feet and household rubbish were identified as some of the most hated smells, while lavender, vanilla and citrus fruit scents were aromas people said they enjoyed.

Aromatherapist Sharon Erdrich said the results showed Kiwis had a fondness for functional fragrances which could be used in the home to conceal odours and create atmosphere.

"Lavender is used to promote relaxation, frangipani is alluringly exotic and citrus makes a room 'crisp and clean'," she said.

The survey revealed some differences between the genders, with almost half of men (44 per cent) naming the smell of coffee as one of their three favourite scents, compared with less than one third of women.

Respondents were united in their dislike for stale cigarette smoke, with 70 per cent saying it was the worst smell to have in a home. Toilet odours came a close second.

Erdrich says MRI imaging studies have shown that smell 'lights up' the brain more than any other sense.

"Our sense of smell is closely associated with memory and things like coffee and freshly baked bread remind us of the comforts of home and ignite the taste buds," she said.

New Zealanders' favourite and least-favourite smells in the home

Favourite smells

1. Freshly baked bread 2. Flowers 3. Coffee 4. Clean laundry/linen 5. Citrus fruit 6. Vanilla 7. Lavender 8. Smell of the beach/salty air 9. Frangipani 10. Smell of your partner

Least-favourite smells

1. Stale cigarette smells 2. Toilet odours 3. Rubbish 4. Damp, smelly clothes 5. Foot odours 6. Pet smells 7. Petrol 8. Strong food smells 9. Mothballs 10. Raw meat

** The Air Wick Science of Smell Survey was conducted by Colmar Brunton.*

– NZ HERALD STAFF



Lavender is one of the smells Kiwis like to have in their homes. Photo / Carolyn Robertson