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PULSE

That Smell'st So Sweet

After all the smelling salts and perfumed-hankie waving in the movies "Elizabeth" and "Shakespeare in Love," consumers may be ready for the 1990's version: portable aromatherapy products to re-odorize your personal space.

Sniffware's Sniff-boxes (above right) — small tins of essential oils that resemble lip balm (\$4.99 for a two-pack at Cosmetics Plus; also from 888-811-7270) — release fragrances that the maker claims will enhance sleep, inhibit appetite, provide focus or clear sinuses. Felissimo, at 10 West 56th Street, sells Whiffers (top, \$25), personal inhalers that look like short pens, in varieties like the Wall Street Whiffer, for clarity and alertness, and Heartmending Whiffer, for

"emotional wholeness." Fresh has travel incense in 17 scents that are supposed to evoke four moods — cheerful, sullen, seductive, calm (\$16 at Barneys New York). It comes in a sleek silver tube resembling a cigar holder (left), and the cap doubles as a stand. Even Glade now has an aromatherapy room freshener: Simple Escapes (\$1.99 at groceries), in purse size.

Dr. Helen Khang, a physician of Chinese medicine at Sirene Day Spa on the Upper East Side, said that portable aromatherapy can work "as a temporary remedy, but not a cure." To maximize effects, she suggested inhaling deeply in a fairly closed, confined area, though a sniff box can also be whipped out in an olfactory emergency on the subway.

• ELLEN TIEN

