



# Scents & CREEDibility

**Irwin Creed, master perfumer of the House of Creed, recently traveled from France to Bangkok to search for a few flowers, explain why creating fragrances is akin to winemaking, and launch the distribution of Creed perfume through Zen CentralWorld department store.**

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Irwin Creed, a studious looking 26-year-old with an unmistakable French accent, is the Creed family's seventh generation perfumer. Pouring over his family tree – a series of somewhat yellowed black-and-white portraits which look like they belong in a museum – I see that this young man is the descendant of two James's, four Henry's and one Olivier (Irwin's father) Creed. With his keen, inherited sense of smell, it was inevitable that Irwin would pick up the 'scent' left by his ancestors, and follow in their trail.

But his great-grandfathers in their wildest imagination would probably never have fathomed that Irwin's inherited path would one day lead him to the Far East, where the young perfumer is on a whirlwind trip marketing the Creed brand to the region.

The House of Creed, established over 200 years ago, has long catered to a highly exclusive clientele of blue-blooded royals, distinguished statesmen and celebrities. This perfumers' VIP list is as long as it is illustrious: from Winston Churchill, Humphrey Bogart and Marlene Dietrich, to more recently, Richard Gere, Robbie Williams and David Beckham.

The rich history of this esteemed perfume brand dates back to 1760 in London, when James Henry

Creed founded the House of Creed. It rapidly became a favorite with the Court of England and Queen Victoria, who appointed Creed as official supplier to the crown. Shortly, the House of Creed was chosen by all the Courts of Europe, including Napoleon III. Creed's creations were recognized for their quality and originality.

In 1854, the House of Creed moved to Paris, where the business has remained headquartered to this day, passing the art of perfume making down from father to son. More than two hundred exclusive fragrances, all handmade, have been created by the Creed family over the centuries.

If they have such a longstanding reputation, why have I never heard of Creed perfumes I wonder?

"Maybe that's normal because we don't push to be too popular. We don't want to be in the mass market," Irwin says.

Besides stubbornly refusing to cater to a mass consumer audience, the House of Creed is a dying breed of family-run businesses which has managed to escape the clutches of the large, commercial luxury goods conglomerates. Instead, the father and son team have chosen to concentrate their efforts



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on the craftsmanship that goes into producing their unique fragrances.

“We don’t advertise much. We would rather tell people about our perfumes. That’s more interesting than an advertisement with some guys and girls on it,” Irwin explains. “If you see the budgets of some of the major brands, it’s shocking to see how much of their money goes into advertising.”

Instead, the House of Creed has always operated on the strength of its high-quality ingredients. The master perfumers have perfected the use of the infusion technique, now abandoned by modern industry, to preserve the originality of their fragrances. As a result, they manufacture their own infusion of several ingredients such as vanilla, civet, musk and ambergris. All Creed perfumes are created from high-quality essences and contain the highest percentage of natural components out of all of the French perfume industry.

“More than 60% of our perfumes are natural essences which are the most expensive part of the perfumes,” Irwin explains. “In some big-name luxury brands this figure stands at a scant 10%,” he scoffs.

“You don’t go out with the bottle around your neck. It’s about the perfume,” the Frenchman says in his *très* cute Inspector Clouseau-ish accent. “Those who really like our perfume couldn’t care less if we’d stick it in a Perrier bottle. We want to show our customers that we make perfumes, not that we are bottle or packaging designers. That’s the most *importante*.”

Creed perfumes are made from natural ingredients from all around the world. Not unlike winemaking, there’s an art to sourcing and choosing the right components. It’s not an uncommon sight to see Irwin and his father off in the farm fields sniffing Bergamot or some other floral fragrance. Just as the taste of a fine Bordeaux wine changes depending on the climate of a particular year, no two batches of Creed perfume turn out exactly the same. “You can have two fields of the same flower, yet they each have their own distinctive fragrance. That’s what keeps perfume making so exciting,”

says Irwin, who plans to visit the flower market while he is in Bangkok to sniff out a few floral novelties and see what scents catch his fancy.

The House of Creed is not only very selective when it comes to choosing their ingredients, but also their clientele. These superior craftsmen only sell their fragrances to the best. In London, Creed connoisseurs make their way to Harrods and Selfridges, while in New York it’s strictly Bergdorf Goodman.

In Bangkok, Zen CentralWorld has the exclusive honor of being the only department store in Thailand to carry these sought after fragrances. For Thai perfume enthusiasts, Creed has carefully selected eight fragrances – men’s, women’s and unisex – that exude the best aromas in a tropical climate.

With over 200 years of experience, and a special hereditary flair, we know that Irwin, like his father and forefathers before him, has chosen the perfect essences to captivate Bangkok’s steamy days and evenings. Now we look forward to seeing what new wonderful perfumes this creative innovator will formulate after his trip to the local flower market.

