

AUGUST 14, 2013 by **Victoria** in **New Perfume Launches, Perfume Reviews**

Comme des Garçons Blue Invasion : Perfume Reviews

Incense, sandalwood and citrus are to niche perfumery what ruffians, loners and chain-smoking philosophers are to French New Wave cinema. Incense, with its dark connotations, can be made either sultry or brooding. Sandalwood is the wood of choice to imply anything mysterious, while citrus is versatile enough to be twisted into anything you wish. It wouldn't be a stretch to call Comme des Garçons the Jean-Luc Godard of the perfume world, and as its three fragrances, **Blue Santal**, **Blue Cedrat** and **Blue Encens**, in the Blue Invasion collection demonstrate, it's possible to discover something new even in very familiar themes.



In traditional perfumery blue is the shorthand for masculine, and if you ever see blue juice in the bottle, 99% of the time, you'd be right to expect a men's cologne. Unless you're holding a bottle of *Thierry Mugler Angel*, of course. Comme des Garçons doesn't quite do the kind of about-face that Angel performs, but all three fragrances are comfortably androgynous.

Blue Santal

The most traditionally masculine of the lot is Blue Santal by perfumer Antoine Maisondieu. It mixes sandalwood with pine and juniper, landing it straight in the sports cologne department. The top note is metallic and high-pitched, all gleaming chrome and polished wood, but the milky sweetness of sandalwood then buffs down some of the sharper bits, Blue Santal becomes rounder and softer. In the end, it's still far too abrasive and rough, and the company of creamy sweetness and metallic citrus is off-putting. It lasts forever.

Blue Cedrat

The citrus in Blue Cedrat is citron, *Citrus medica*, that smells more like flowers than any other citrus variety. I brought back five large fruits from my trip to Sicily, and when I opened the suitcase, everything smelled of honeyed petals and sweet lemons. To create her blue citrus interpretation, perfumer Nathalie Feisthauer blends rose and green citrus peel into a lavish dose of cedarwood. The opening is sparkling, and the transition to the sheer petals and then to wood shavings is elegant. Blue Cedrat is abstract and polished—you won't smell like a carpentry shop, and it's versatile enough to be a perfume to wear when you don't feel like wearing fragrance. But for the price (\$125 for 100 ml), it may not be interesting enough.