

From the stockroom to the bedroom

Stop blushing and start carrying natural love aids

Pamela Bond

Every love life needs a little lift now and again. After all, nearly half of American women—43 percent—and more than one-third of men suffer from

some kind of sexual dysfunction, reports the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (1999). And not only can it damage a relationship, it can damage your customers' health as well: Research shows that sex may ease stress, relieve pain, strengthen hearts and lengthen lives.

So to give your customers' sex lives a boost we've tracked down the best tools—lubricants, massage oils, bath salts, candles and more—to help turn a humdrum day into a fun, passionate night. No, these products won't necessarily be the dream come true and fix serious conditions, but they can enhance romance—naturally.

Naturally? Yes, you heard right. Turns out that a lot of conventional sensual aids are flat out unhealthy. Plug-in vibrators emit electrical and magnetic fields, which some studies have linked to cancer, though more research is needed. Certain candles contain toxic paraffin. And lubricants can be chock-full of potentially allergenic petrochemicals, such as propylene glycol (used in antifreeze), polyethylene glycol (in oven cleaner), not to mention synthetic preservatives, such as parabens (linked to breast cancer). "It's not uncommon to get burning, itching, redness and swelling from these [lubricant] ingredients," says Wendy Strgar, founder of Good Clean Love in Eugene, Ore. "After using these products, you end up in the bath for an hour or two afterward." Talk about dampening the mood.

But natural alternatives offer a soft touch for the most sensitive tissues of the body while still perking up bedroom behavior in a big way. Blushing yet? For some customers, sex is a sensitive subject. You can help. "Try to make them feel comfortable about their sexuality and not feel shameful about it," suggests Cynthia Lamborne, owner of Nectar Products in San Diego and creator of the Crystal Wand. "If you give them something that offers pleasure and also has a deeper value to heal their sexuality, they can have a more quality experience with their partner or with themselves." Plus, a lot of these intimacy companies donate to charities and use recycled or recyclable packaging. Could this all be the true meaning of "sustainable" love? Take an uncensored peek at our picks to find out.

In the bedroom
Good Clean Love All Natural Personal Lubricant

You won't find propylene glycol, polyethylene glycol, parabens, animal products, or other baddies in this water-based lubricant. What you will find: a simple, effective mix of aloe vera, xanthan gum, agar agar (seaweed) and three natural preservatives (benzoic acid, vegetable glycerin and sugar enzymes). Available in four flavors (yes, they're edible). www.goodcleanlove.com

Zestra Feminine Arousal Fluid

You may have heard female customers complaining about medications, menopause and stress lowering their libidos. Have them try Zestra, a hormone-free topical fluid made from blood-pumping borage and evening primrose oils, as well as libido-lifting angelica-root extract. Research supports its use for improving women's sexual function. www.zestra.com

Love Nectar's The Crystal Wand

You've likely heard the rumors about the G-spot—the source of deeper delight and creative power for women that was named after its discoverer, Dr. Ernst Grafenberg. To investigate its existence, Cynthia Taylor Lamborne designed the electromagnetic radiation-free Crystal Wand to reach and stimulate this pleasure place. According to Lamborne, individuals or partners can use the S-shaped Lucite wand to open and release tissues that may have retracted due to trauma or pain. The result? It can help women rediscover their innate sexuality, she says. Men can also use the tool to increase blood and oxygen flow to the prostate gland for better health and greater sexual satisfaction, the company says. Comes with discreet velvet carrying pouch. www.lovenectar.com

Emerita Joy Box

Customers can bring the love home with this keepsake box containing massage oil, stimulating response cream, warming lubricant and candles, all free of parabens and petroleum byproducts. www.emerita.com

Good Clean Love Oil

Instead of overpowering people like some perfumes do, love oils respond to every individual's chemistry and thus create a completely unique and changing scent depending on who wears them. Let your customers sample all three fragrances (Origins, Caribbean Rose and Indian Spice) to find their truest pleasure. www.goodcleanlove.com

Plantlife Enhance Romance Massage Oil

A combination of nongreasy oils (almond, grapeseed, olive and vitamin E), soothing flower extracts (calendula and chamomile), as well as a proprietary blend of pure essential oils, this pleasant-smelling massage oil will surely captivate lovers. www.plantlife.net

In the bath

Little Moon Essentials Passion Aromatherapeutic Mineral Bath

Bath for two? Organic beet powder turns the bath water the color of passion—red—and floating flowers set the stage for romance. Essential oils (like ylang-ylang, a reputed aphrodisiac) relieve tension and renew the love, and mineral salts leave skin glowing. www.littlemoonesentials.com

Little Moon Essentials Love Magnet: SOS Moisturizing Exfoliant for Bath and Shower

One way to help your customers clean up their love lives: Suggest they give their partner an exotic rub-down with this pure scrub made from exfoliating, organic raw sugar, moisturizing apricot-kernel oil, avocado oil, organic olive oil and essential oils of ylang-ylang, spearmint and more. The 100-percent edible scrub gives new meaning to the phrase "smells good enough to eat"—and, indeed, it tastes a bit like bubblegum. Little Moon Essentials donates to environmental and community causes and uses recycled packaging whenever possible. www.littlemoonesentials.com



Flower Peddler Romancing Herbal Bath Tea

Your customers fill the mesh tea infuser (included) with the herbal blend of calming chamomile flower, romantic rose, vitality-boosting jasmine flower, passion flower and more. Then they steep the package—and their bodies—letting the fragrances stir up sensuality. www.flowerpeddler.com

Anywhere

Aura Cacia Heart Song Essential Oil Blend and Aromatherapy Candle Lamp

It's no secret that stress can take away "that lovin' feelin'." Here's one idea for lighting up night life: Diffuse the Heart Song blend of essential oils in a mood-setting candle lamp. The gentle scents of lavender, rosewood, geranium and rose will help unwind and foster feelings of romance and affection. www.auracacia.com

Love Nectar Semi-Precious Gemstone Vaginal Weight Lifting Egg

The notion behind the egg: If exercise enhances the health of the rest of the body, why not the private parts? Tool-free Kegels can be done to power-up "down there," but the crystal egg gives the muscles something to squeeze against, which, according to Lamborne (the designer), speeds up the toning of the vaginal muscles, perineum and lower abdomen. The purported effect: more pleasure for the man and woman and enhanced flow of sex hormones. Made of stones from the quartz family, the egg is meant to balance and center. Includes information on beginning and advanced exercises. www.lovenectar.com

Naked N.K.D. Origins Candles

These 100-percent soy candles (read: no paraffin) set the ambience for romance and are naturally scented for every desire. Sweet Fire blends cinnamon and spice to heat up the love life. Silver Lining has a hint of ivory musk, which only adds to passionate pursuits. And an array of other scents is available in tin or glass containers. www.nkdpure.com

Ecco Bella Bourbon Vanilla Eau de Parfum

Some things are meant to last. The lingering blend of Bourbon vanilla (from the island of Madagascar), cocoa, rose and jasmine may inspire creative and sensual thoughts and actions from anyone who takes in the perfume's bouquet. Made with real essential oils from flowers, fruits, herbs and spices—all in a natural grain-alcohol base. Etched-glass bottle reeks of sophistication. www.ecobella.com

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