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## Into the souk

**The Arab beauty ritual is one of the most sensual in the world — and now it's over here**

by Hazel Curry

Those keen to sample such treats will be pleased to hear that an authentic hammam is due to open in London this summer. The Bayan Loutra (0845 130 2929) is an enormous place with a tearoom, a crèche and treatments such as the black-seed facial (£90), which leaves skin looking fresh and positively glowing. A hammam session will cost £100. If this sounds a little pricey, there are many other Turkish baths around the country (visit [www.victorianturkishbath.org](http://www.victorianturkishbath.org) for details), or you can even create your own hammam at home.

New to the UK are products from Les Bains du Marais (from the Parisian hammam of the same name). You can buy the body oil (£22.50), available in jasmine or orange blossom, and black soap (Savon Noir; £12) from The Studio (020 7722 1478). The London-based beauty therapist Arezoo is launching her own black soap as part of a home hammam kit later this year. Originally from Iran, Arezoo is famous for hair removal, a big Arabic beauty practice. Anyone who waxes or shaves regularly will love her new cream for preventing and treating ingrown hair, called simply Arezoo (£13; 07768 903090).

Arab beauty involves a lot of bathing and oiling — Morocco is famous for its native argan oil, which is crammed with essential fatty acids. Elisabeth Dancey, a London-based specialist in aesthetic medicine, uses and sells it (£45; 020 7821 8257). If you want a more authentic source, you can order it from the Palais Rhoul (about £20; [www.palaisrhoul.com](http://www.palaisrhoul.com)), one of the best

hammams in Marrakesh.

As well as the bath and bodycare companies, the make-up industry has gone all Arabic, too: Guerlain's new Secret Gold (£33) is an all-over copper powder that comes in a tagine-shaped pot, and the company's fabulous kohl, in its traditional Arab stick-and-dip packaging, is now available in Secret Glow (£17; 01932 233874).

Indeed, Arabic looks set to become a big make-up trend later this year — several autumn catwalks featured ancient Egyptian looks.

The Middle East has always had a high regard for scent, and many ingredients used by the perfume industry are cultivated there. Most of Serge Lutens's scents are inspired by Morocco — his latest is Fleurs de Citronnier (£46, from Harrods; 020 7730 1234), a lemon-blossom blend, and his best is Ambre Sultan (£46). Other celebrated Arab scents include Gobin-Daudé's Jardins Ottomans (£58, from Liberty; 020 7734 1234), a unisex perfume inspired by the citrus groves of Marrakesh, and Aqaba (£63.50; 020 7730 2322), a brilliant blend of frankincense, cinnamon, cardamom and peach.

Finally, Arabic beauty wouldn't be Arabic beauty without drowning yourself in the scent of desert roses. The Organic Pharmacy Double Rose Rejuvenating Cream (£16.95; 020 7351 2232) is made with roses gathered by Persian nomads. Red Flower's Moroccan Rose candle (£10; 0845 009 2450) and Ren's rose bath oil (£19.50; 0845 225 5600) are made from Moroccan roses.

Now all you need for perfect Arab bliss is Omar Sharif to run your bath.