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Bridestowe Lavender **Estate** has found its "signature" scent, which will soon be release in a luxury perfume. The Sunday Examiner's MANIKA DADSON reports.

ONE would assume finding the signature scent for a lavender farm would be easy - make it smell like lavender.

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However, Bridestowe Lavender Farm, has proved it is not as simple as it sounds.

It has taken four years of distilling, blending and trial and era for the North-East farm to create its perfectly blended fragrance, called Bridestowe 100.

The luxury perfume is a unique blend of four lavender clones, all grown on the North-East **site** and is expected to hit the shelves in November.

Bridestowe **Estate** managing director Robert Ravens said the perfume was a credit to the **estate's** original owners, the Denny family.

"Our fragrance, Bridestowe 100, really is a tribute to them and their sheer discipline and logical thinking in creating the lavender plantations," Mr Ravens said.

"It took Tim Denny 28 years (from 1947-1975) to find five perfect plants from the thousands of seedlings germinated at North Lilydale in 1922.

"These five plants were selected for propagation at Nabowla, and are the substance of every plant and row that you can see today."

The Dennys **sold** the farm in 1989 and it changed hands several times before Mr Ravens and his wife, Jennifer, bought it in 2007.

The five types of plants the Dennys planted are now named after women in Mr Ravens' life:

- Bridestowe Jennifer, is named after Mr Ravens' wife.
- Bridestowe Myra, is named after his mother.
- Bridestowe Elizabeth, is Mr Ravens' granddaughter's name.
- Bridestowe Philippa, is for Mr Ravens' daughter.
- And Bridestowe Ann is Mrs Ravens' mother's middle name and also a middle name that is used in the family.

It was decided in 2009 that the oils of each flower should be put together to create Bridestowe's perfect "signature" blend.

Each flower was put through the steam distillery, with every 250 kilograms of lavender, producing 2.5 litres of oil.

Lavender Farm field and production manager Anna Robertson said the Philippa lavender was the only lavender the farm didn't use in its fragrance, as it was its culinary lavender, which it used in food.

She said each flower type was distilled separately, before being blended.

"There's one [lavender type] that there is a bit more of in the Bridestowe 100, but you can still have notes of all the others," Mrs Robertson said.

Mr Ravens described the fragrance perfectly: "it has a soft, floral perfume, which creates an aura of calm and well-being".

The fragrance has also been used in Bridestowe's other new product, the Bridestowe SPA Hand Therapy (cream) which was released last week.

Mr Ravens has been in **Hong Kong** launching the hand therapy this week.

"Our market research shows that it has immense potential in the Asian market," he said.

He said Bridestowe decided to release the products in a luxury Bridestowe SPA range, which already included soaps, body lotions, room diffusers and candles, as "the market is so crowded with fragrances generally that it is almost impossible to get shelf space with a perfume alone".

He said the fragrance was called Bridestowe 100 for several reasons.

"One, Bridestowe **Estate** is approaching 100 years of age; two, we calculated that there are 100 lavender flower heads in 10ml of the oil, and three, 100 is a perfect score."

"Packaging for the 'Bridestowe 100' oil is being designed now to allow it to go on the shelf in November.

"It will be 100 per cent natural and derived entirely from Bridestowe **Estate**, thus it will be a truly Tasmanian fragrance, which can't be copied."

Mrs Robertson said because each oil had its own scent, there was potential for the **estate** to create other fragrances for the range, if it could produce the right volumes of oil.

"It's got heaps of potential," she said.

Only 100 litres of Bridestowe 100 oil can be produced each year.

Two hundred litres have already been put aside for the launch.

■ Hobart based **company** Essential Oils of Tasmania is also planning to launch a luxury Tasmanian perfume next year. Oils for the perfume will be extracted from lavender, boronia, Tasmanian native mountain pepper, parsley, fennel and peppermint. Singer Tina Arena is expected to launch the Essential Oils of Tasmania perfume.

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