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WEATHER: VERY COLD

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expressyourself Beauty

MORE than 2,000 years after making a guest appearance at the Nativity, the three wise men and their gifts are still bang on trend. Gold, frankincense and myrrh are the inspiration for some of the most covetable beauty products around. They feature in many of this season's most luxurious creams, richly scented bath oils and sweet-smelling candles. "Each of these ingredients was used by the ancients as far back as records go," says Geraldine Howard, managing director of Aromatherapy Associates. "They were prized for their therapeutic and healing properties. Nothing has changed. "These days we value them for the same reasons."

GOLD
"We've long known that the molecules of different minerals can improve skin quality," says Geraldine. Historically gold was used to heal the sick as well as being valued for its beauty. These days it's found in creams which improve skin elasticity and reverse cell damage from pollutants or in lotions to give skin a shimmer. Dibi's luxurious Gold Performance Ultra Performing Rejuvenating Cream, £250 (beautique.com), contains gold microparticles and is excellent for dry and ageing skin. On a less pricey note, invest in a Botanic

Three wise gifts

Gold, frankincense and myrrh are seasonal, luxurious and have unexpected beauty benefits, says ALICE SMELLIE

Earth Mud Mask, £15.50 (livenative.co.uk). Gold leaf has been added to help ingredients penetrate more deeply into the skin.

For a touch of luxury every day try Transformulas Hydration Gold cream, £45 (transformulas.com).

As well as containing 23 carat gold, the bright red and gold bottle will give your bathroom a festive touch.

For a double treat the rich Elixir D'Or by Jean d'Estrees, £128.50 (screenglam.com), has both gold and pearl to stimulate cell regeneration and leaves skin radiant and smooth.

Gold is extensively used to make products look and feel more luxurious. Linden Leaves Gold Gift Set, £30.65 (forever-natural.co.uk), has 23-carat gold body oil to rehydrate your skin as well as a real gold soap and facial mist. It's designed to be massaged

on to skin after bathing. There's nothing quite so glamorous as shimmering with real gold at Christmas parties.

If you want to gleam from top to toe, the flakes of gold leaf in Rococo Nail Apparel's Gold Leaf Lacquer, £22.50 (spacenk.co.uk), will create sparkly hands and feet.

FRANKINCENSE

The calming scent of frankincense oil helps you breathe more deeply and focuses the mind.

"It is phenomenal for skin tightening," explains Geraldine. "You often find it in anti-ageing creams." Look no further than the brand new range from Antonia Burrell, whose Radiant Light Serum's key ingredient is frankincense, £33.50 (020 7893 8333).

Alternatively, Neal's Yard Remedies Rejuvenating Frankincense Skincare Essentials, £23.50 (feelunlike.com), has a facial wash, serum and hydrating cream to ensure your face receives all the benefits of the oil.

New range Celgenics, from £23.50 (celgenics.com), uses collagen and hyaluronic acid alongside frankincense in a neat marriage of old and new ingredients or you could relax in a hot bath containing Malki Dead Sea Bath Salts with Frankincense Oil and Rose Petals, £5.95 (0845 0708 090).

Alternatively, wake yourself up with In the Zone Bath and Shower Oil by This Works, £33 (bathandunwind.com). It contains a blend of frankincense and eucalyptus to stay cool throughout the Christmas chaos.

MYRRH
Historically used for embalming, myrrh is a thick,

musty-scented oil derived from tree sap and its powers are now harnessed for skin conditions such as acne. "It has incredible healing qualities and myrrh is also valued for its scent," says Geraldine.

Breathe in the fragrance with Aromatherapy Associates Relax Candle, £24.50 (aromatherapyassociates.com), which infuses any room with a warm rich scent or give your skin a treat with the

deliciously spicy Kings and Queens Myrrh Body Butter, £8 (bathandunwind.com). It contains lemon flower, myrrh and honey.

Badger Balm Yoga and Meditation Balm, £5.99 (bathandunwind.com), is perfect for spots and problem areas

and comes in a neat little pot. If your hands are dry and your nails flaking, Declor's Aromessence Ongles, £32.85 (wantthelook.com), uses the healing powers of the oil to soften and strengthen nails.

Caudalie's Beauty Elixir, £32 (spacenk.co.uk), contains myrrh and is a fresh smelling facial mist. It will prove just the thing for rapidly rejuvenating a drained Christmas complexion.

Darphin's utterly delicious Myrrh Aromatic Care, £35.10 (feelunlike.com), will soften the driest of complexions over the cold and snowy festive period.

