

# What's That Smell? It Might Just Be the Next Big Thing in Travel.

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A dozen travelers gather around Martin Schaffner's 16th-century painting "Christ in Limbo," and take a deep breath. Thanks to hand-held scent diffusers these tourists are getting a whiff of smoke and sulfur to evoke the fiery gates of hell depicted in the Renaissance artwork.

It's all part of a "[Follow Your Nose](#)" tour at [Museum Ulm](#), in Germany. By pairing artworks depicting odorous things—flower gardens, a perfume ball, or a table full of food—with reconstructed scents, the cultural center hopes to further immerse patrons in its collection.

A growing number of museums, hotels, and fragrance experts are offering smell-based adventures to help travelers connect more deeply with destinations.

Scent is the only sense that is directly linked to the memory and emotional learning centers of the brain, says [Rachel Herz](#), a neuroscientist at Brown University and an expert on the psychological science of smell.

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