



Olfactory Heritage Practices

This resource presents an overview of intangible cultural heritage practices in which smells play or can play a significant role. The list is compiled to support cultural heritage policy makers to identify the significance of olfactory heritage and help heritage communities to acknowledge the value of olfaction in heritage practices.

The information is compiled by the Odeuropa project in collaboration with the Dutch Centre for Intangible Cultural Heritage (DICH), the Smell of Heritage group of University College London and the Meertens Institute. The list is compiled on the basis of interviews and questionnaires with ICH practitioners. It should be regarded as a first overview. We hope that it will inspire heritage researchers and practitioners to add to its contents in the near future. More historical cultural heritage practices in which smells have played a significant role can be found in the [Odeuropa Smell Explorer](#) and the [Odeuropa Encyclopedia of Smell History and Heritage](#).

For this overview, we list the heritage practice, the scents that have been mentioned as significant in relation to this practice, and the values that are connected to the role of smells in these traditions, festive events, rituals and crafts. We have ordered the practices according to ICH Categories: Festive Events and Rituals; Markets and Fairs, Religious Rituals; Performing Arts, Oral Traditions, Arts & Crafts, Culinary Traditions, Sports and Gaming, Other).



Intangible heritage practice	Smells indicated as significant	Values connected to the smell	Data collected by
Festive Events and Rituals			
Dragon slaying	Dragon; Gaming; Costumes	Part of the game; Folktale reenactment	DICH / Meertens / Odeuropa
Flower Parade	Flowers (e.g. Dahlia), Bulbs; Damps from welding	Seasonal sensation (Spring); Heightening crafts sensation; Memories of youth	DICH / Meertens / Odeuropa
Easter Fires	Fire; Smoke; Sawn timber; Sweat	Sensation; Anger (due to environmental pollution); Connectivity; Freedom	DICH / Meertens / Odeuropa
Fruit Parade	Fruit; Vegetables; Glue	Smellscape; Sense of creativity; Joy; Communal practice	DICH / Odeuropa
Horse feet washing in the sea (Strao)	Horse manure; Sea; Beach; Woods	Seasonal sensation (early Spring); Fitting	DICH / Odeuropa
Celebration of Christmas	Christmas tree; Orange; Cinnamon; Ginger; Christmas dinner; Cloves; (blown-out) Candles	Happiness; Family; Coziness	Meertens / Odeuropa
Celebration of Saint Nicholas	Bischops' wine; Peppernuts; Candy; Speculoos	Warmth; Coziness; Sense of familiarity	Meertens / Odeuropa
Kermis	Oliebollen; Cotton candy; Barbecue,	Enjoyment; Memories of youth; Happiness	Meertens / Odeuropa
Carnival	Atrophied beer; Theatre make-up; Dmell of pubs; Dweat; Sweet liquor	Enjoyment; Memories of youth; Familiarity	Meertens / Odeuropa



Marksman's festival (schuttersfeest)	Gunpowder; Sand; Beer; Grass; Sweat	Relaxation; Being together; Celebrating	Meertens / Odeuropa
Sjaasberggank	Forest; Trees	Being outside	DICH / Odeuropa
Fireworks (New Year's night)	Gunpowder	Melancholy; Nostalgia; Euphoria; Joy	DICH / Odeuropa
Celebration of New Years Eve	"Oliebollen"; Waffles; Fireworks	Tradition; Memories of youth	Meertens / Odeuropa
(Music) Festivals	Grass; Sweat; Beer; Mud	Feeling at home; Belonging; Memories of youth	Meertens / Odeuropa
Harvest festival	Grain; Grass; Straw; Hay	Nostalgia; Awareness of nature	Meertens / Odeuropa
Jan- and Michael feast	Bonfire; Spices		Meertens / Odeuropa
Markets and Fairs			
Organizing fairs	Baking smells ('oliebollen' / donuts), Diesel oil; Linden trees	Seasonal sensation (June / July); Sense of tradition	DICH / Odeuropa
Horse market & cow market	Horses; Cows; Manure	Seasonal sensation	DICH / Meertens / Odeuropa
Farmers markets	Hay; Cattle; Tractors; Sand; Horses; Candy	Feelings of belonging; Coziness	Meertens / Odeuropa
Kings day flea market	old things		Meertens / Odeuropa
Religious Rituals			



Religious processions	Candles; Incense burning; Flowers	Connection to divine; Blessing; Community shaping	DICH / Odeuropa
Easter candle	Wax; Church	Familiarity; Intimacy; Religiosity	Meertens / Odeuropa
Light candles in the church	Wax; Church	Familiarity; Intimacy; Religiosity; Connection with dead people; Transcendancy	Meertens / Odeuropa
Religious rituals (processions, funerals)	Incense	Religiosity; Nostalgia; Feelings of belonging; Memories of youth	Meertens / Odeuropa
Rituals of Wicca	Incense; Oils; Candles	Wicca cannot exist without smells; Calm state of mind	Meertens / Odeuropa
Performing Arts			
Gregorian music making	Incense	Nostalgia	DICH / Odeuropa
Gamelan instruments and music making	Incense burning at Slametan (prayer and thanksgiving meal)	Integral part of tradition	DICH / Odeuropa
Circus	Sawdust		Meertens / Odeuropa
Re-enactment	Burning wood fires; Food; Gunpowder; Sweet cakes, grass	Essential part of re-enactment	Meertens / Odeuropa
Folklore dancing	Textiles; Traditional clothes	Coziness; Warmth	Meertens / Odeuropa
Brass band ("fanfare" music making)	Uniforms; Mothballs; Instruments; Musty smell of rehearsal rooms	Nostalgia; Inspiration	Meertens / Odeuropa
Choir singing	Church; Incense; Candles		Meertens / Odeuropa



Carillon playing	Lubricating oil, Ropes	Reassuring; Happiness	Meertens / Odeuropa
Oral Traditions			
Storytelling	Smells of the past; Cookies	Eat while listenig	Meertens / Odeuropa
Arts & Crafts			
Malt wine distillation	Yeast; Fire; Alcohol	Engagement of all senses in crafts	DICH / Odeuropa
Sirup making	Sweet fresh smells of boiling fruit; Burning wood fire	Seasonal sensation (Autumn); Security; Warmth; Flavor control (Smells help determine the quality of the crafted product)	DICH / Odeuropa
Printing	Printing ink	Sense of physical labour	DICH / Odeuropa
Boat making	Tar; Linseed oil; Emp; Resin; Wood (pine, oak, mahogany, oukumé).	Smells form integral part of the historical ships and shipyards; Provides joy; Sense of pureness; Smells define different steps in the craft process (steaming, sawing, sanding, oiling, tarring) Odours are intensified in the craft process (when the wood is steamed for bending and when sawing and sanding, the sawdust gives off a strong odour)	DICH / Odeuropa
Milling	Grain; Wood; Dust	Heightening sensation of crafts; Support quality measurement of products; Warning against danger (fire); Historical sensation; Memories	DICH / Odeuropa
Tile painting	Poisonous smells	Smells help to indicate toxic levels; Necessity to ventilate	DICH / Odeuropa



Cotton printing / block printing	Wood; Oil (mustard oil); Linen; Cotton; Wool; Paints; 'Old'	Embodied knowledge; Establishing wood type by sniffing; Sensory experience (including skin sensation); Help to distinguish between different fabrics; Measure quality of pigments and paints; Mindfulness; Distinguish between old paints (sharp, chemical) and newer generation with more sustainable components (soft, more sweet smell). Smellscape of workspace;	DICH / Odeuropa
Paper making	Paper; Rotting paper pulp / fibres; Boiling plant fibres; Sewer	Embodied knowledge; Rotting smell indicates readiness level for next phase	DICH / Odeuropa
Cheese making	Cheese; Dairy		DICH / Odeuropa
Mining			
Spinning with sheep's wool, knitting, woolworking	Wool	Quality of the product; Nostalgia; Gratitude; Familiarity; Well-being; Smell of connectedness	Meertens / Odeuropa
Sheep shearing	Wool		Meertens / Odeuropa
Woodworking	Wood	Comfort; Strength; Self-trust; Inspiration; Memories of youth; Warmth; Connectedness with nature	
Beekeeping	Honey, Bees, Beeswax, Propolis	Satisfaction	Meertens / Odeuropa
Craft of blacksmith	Fire, Coal, Grease, Metal	Motivation; Intense happiness	Meertens / Odeuropa
Ceramic making	Clay, Earth		Meertens / Odeuropa
Willow pollarding, basket making	Willow	Smell is essential	Meertens / Odeuropa



Peat farming	Peat; Manure; Straw	Old traditions; Malodors can help to realize how sterile our world has become	DICH / Odeuropa
Posy making	Flowers; Herbs; Grains	Seasonal; Blessing; Connection to divine; Protection	DICH / Odeuropa
Weather fishing	Sea; Fish; Seaweed; Fishnets	Connection to nature; Freedom; Attracting tourists	DICH / Odeuropa
Sweetwater fishing	Fish; Water; Freshness	Indication of (high number of) specific fishes; Escape from urban / industrial smells	DICH / Odeuropa
Culinary traditions			
Cooking Pea Soup	Peas, Broth	Seasonal sensation (Winter); Flavor control; Slow food sensation; Natural products	DICH / Odeuropa
Sausage roll making	Dough, sausage	Flavor control; Taste-smell interaction	DICH / Odeuropa
Veghelse Krol (anise seed roll) making	Bread; Anise; Buttercream; Speculoos	Intimacy; Familiarity; Seasonal sensation (Sinterklaasfeest)	DICH / Odeuropa
Diverse culinary heritage	Food, spices	Familiarity; Feeling at home; Feelings of belonging; Seasonal; Coziness	Meertens / Odeuropa
Pipe smoking	Tobacco; Flavors	Enjoyment	DICH / Odeuropa
Sports & Gaming			
Horse racing	Horses; Horse manure; Flattened grass; Fireworks; Ditch water; Fried fish; Stale beer; Partying crowds; Fried snacks	Seasonal sensation; Festivity; Joy, Happiness, community, season.	DICH / Odeuropa



Odeuropa

Olfactory Heritage Toolkit Resource 2

Short track horse racing	Horses; Horse manure; Fried snacks (Oliebollen); Gunpowder (fair ride); Scoured beer; Sweat	Recognition; Tranquility; Ambiance; Immersion; Smells heighten the sense of festivity and enjoyment; Bring participants in right mindset; Heighten intensity; Happiness	DICH / Odeuropa
Four-day walking tours	Food	Appetizing	DICH / Odeuropa
Sailing	Wood; Sea; Sails		DICH / Odeuropa
Varsity	Fresh air; Beer; Mud	Pure; Raw	DICH / Odeuropa
Other			
Scouting	Forest; Rope		Meertens / Odeuropa
Oil slamming	Linseed; Oil	Part of smellscape; Support quality measurement of products; Warning against danger (fire); Historical sensation; Memories	DICH / Odeuropa
Lapwing egg search	Fields; Fresh air	Seasonal sensation (Spring); Sense of freedom and space; Connection to nature	DICH / Odeuropa