

Botanical cleanse

WE'RE OBSESSED WITH THESE FLORAL SMUDGE WANDS FROM **AQUARIAN SOUL DESIGNS**, PERFECT FOR ADORNING YOUR ALTAR WITH BLOSSOMING BEAUTY.

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PHOTOGRAPH BY **ALLY SANDS**

As a practicing herbalist, Ally Sands often found herself foraging wild sage alongside fields of wildflowers. It only seemed natural to add the flora to the bundles she made daily. Hence, Aquarian Soul Designs' floral smudge wands were born.

These Instagram-worthy sticks are as stunning as they are healing – herbs like mugwort, cedar and sage purify and clear energy, while lavender has calming properties. More often than not, though, Sands says her customers use the wands simply to decorate sacred spaces. “Many people say they don’t have the heart to burn them!” she explains.

All flowers are gathered locally or grown in her medicinal garden in tune with the lunar cycle. “While we do not plant native wildflowers, we do try and gather these during the energy of the waxing moon, as the energy goes to the flowers during this time,” Sands explains. “The energy goes downward toward the roots during a waning moon.” In April,

for example, Sands will gather golden yarrow, deerweed, buckwheat, brittlebush and, hopefully, wild roses. From her own garden, she’ll harvest varieties of roses, lavender and chamomile.

Sands gathers white sage herself, returning to the same spot year after year to ensure it is sustainably harvested. “We never pick from plants that are not healthy enough to sustain it,” she says,

wild harvest more than a few pieces, and only take a few pieces per plant – never many from just one.”

Wands are offered year-round in limited quantities for \$30 at aquariansoul.com, and are limited to one per customer. To make your own, Sands says to keep your eyes open. “There’s magic to be found anywhere,” she says. “You can find wildflowers blooming in an empty lot, or sage growing in a field behind your house. Just keep the plants’ sacred nature in mind and only pick what you need. Take a few pieces from each plant and let your creativity run wild. Come up with your own beautiful creation. Use plants like sage, cedar, mugwort or sweetgrass as the backbone of your bundle, and add floral elements on top to create your own unique wand!” 🌱

also noting that she’s growing more than 15 sage varieties in her garden. Her San Diego studio will also begin incorporating a more sustainable incense cedar to lessen its impact on the native sage population. “When we pick sage, we also only pick the tops, never whole branches, which encourage the plant to grow two new buds in its place,” she explains. “We don’t encourage people to

