

# Pearls have a scent and this Tasmanian Company has just released perfumes made from them

PETER FARQUHAR 02/03/15 AT 1:28 PM



Managing director of Essential Oils of Tasmania, Stephen Gleeson and Stephen Birbeck, from Atlas Pearls and Perfume.

A Tasmanian company has bottled the scent of a pearl – a world first.

Essential Oils of Tasmania, a wholly owned subsidiary of ASX-listed Atlas Pearls and Perfumes, recently began work on a facility near Hobart which it calls a “pearl powder and extraction plant”.

The “extraction” part of the story began in 2008 with former CEO of WA-based Atlas Pearls and Perfumes, Stephen Birbeck.

He began extracting proteins from pearls as a way to monetise the shell waste, creating skin care products made from the powder, which is sourced from pearl shells. According to EOT, it contains extremely high levels of a range of amino acids which are great for maintaining strong, healthy skin.

Birbeck, having previously worked in the perfume industry, realised the powder also had a unique scent.

A scent was distilled from it and given a name – Ayu. A small quantity of it over the shelf from his store in Claremont, WA and some extract was also sold to other perfumeries.

Things were looking good. In May last year, [Atlas, through EOT, won a \\$1.1 million grant from Commercialisation Australia](#) which went to EOT in order to get a commercial scale extraction plant under way.

But shares in Atlas Pearls have taken a hit in the past 12 months, from a one-year high of 0.1350 in August [to 0.06 today](#). [Birbeck stepped down as executive chairman just last week](#) as news of a poor pearl harvest in the next six months broke and the company was forced to borrow \$500,000 from one of its own shareholders and board members, Coogee Chemicals managing director Tim Martin.



Picture: Essential Oils Tasmania

In other words, getting pearl perfume on the market in proper commercial quantities couldn't have come at a better time for Atlas.

So what do pearls smell like? Here's the managing director of Essential Oils of Tasmania, Steve Gleeson:

“We have created a perfume that features this sophisticated airy scent highlighted through contrasting white floral undertones of jasmine and rounded in rose absolute, ylang ylang, mandarin, white musk and a hint of an ocean breeze.”

The plant where it's being made is “[Australia's first Supercritical Fluid Extraction plant](#)” using CO<sub>2</sub> for the extraction of ingredients and bioactive compounds.

Pearl by-product in all its other forms is worth around \$3 per kilo. Atlas and EOT's value-adding make it up to “10 times” that worth, according to Birbeck.

“Pearls could become the new scent-sation,” he said.

“If you close your eyes and put yourself in a tropical environment and you just imagine the waft of white floral of the frangipanis and the white sand, a nice flick off the ocean, a little bit of salt in the air, that is the smell.”

It's still only available only at Essential Oils of Tasmania's Hobart headquarters, but in recent months has been gifted to the First Lady of China, Peng Liyuan, on the Chinese President's recent visit to Tasmania in 2014, and French President Francois Hollande on his recent visit to Sydney.

As well as giving work to an estimated 50 locals, the new EOT plant will increase the exposure of the fragrances to local and tourist markets.

<http://www.businessinsider.com.au/pearls-have-a-smell-and-this-tasmanian-company-has-just-released-perfumes-made-from-them-2015-3>