

Reading Explorer 2, Unit 7: Madagascar Perfume

Narrator:

The island of Madagascar is renowned for its distinctive wildlife.

But these Swiss scientists are interested more in the island's smells and tastes — and the chance to find essences for entirely new perfumes and flavors ... This scientist says he discovered a flower yesterday. The bud has just opened, and he expects the flower's scent to be very appealing, perhaps primarily a mix of vanilla and jasmine.

The Swiss team goes by river deep into the forest, then by balloon up into the tree tops, hoping to obtain new flowers and fruits. The scientists bring the essences back to the laboratory where they use technology to recreate the scents.

Roman Kaiser:

"I'm quite happy it's already very close to this beautiful stephanotis scent as I experienced it on the Tampo River."

Narrator:

The scents and flavors will be used in a variety of products for purchase in stores all over the world—everything from bath products to fruit juices.

This scientist says they have found two or three types of fruit whose taste is still unknown. They may be able to use these new essences to change existing flavors, and perhaps derive entirely new flavors.

But not all the discoveries are special.

Willi Grab:

"Juicy? Acidic? A little bit earthy? Watery? Nothing fantastic. Nothing special."

Narrator:

Only a few of these scents and flavors will be exported to markets and eventually displayed in stores. But the next time you're purchasing perfume, you could be smelling "The secrets of Madagascar."