

# Heaven scent: Finding may help restore fragrance to roses

July 3 2015, by Malcolm Ritter

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This Thursday, Feb. 26, 2015 file photo shows roses during preparations for the Philadelphia Flower Show at the Pennsylvania Convention Center in Philadelphia. A study of roses that have a strong scent revealed a previously unknown chemical process in their petals that is key to their fragrance. Experts said the finding might let scientists restore a pleasing scent to rose varieties that have lost it because of breeding for traits like color or longevity. Results are reported in a study released Thursday, July 2, 2015 by the journal *Science*. (AP Photo/Matt Rourke)

Shakespeare said a rose by any other name would smell as sweet. In fact, many kinds of roses today have little fragrance. But a new discovery might change that.

A study of roses that do have a strong scent revealed a previously unknown chemical process in their petals. It's key to their alluring odor.

Experts said the finding might let scientists restore a pleasing scent to [rose](#) varieties that have lost it because of breeding for traits like color or longevity.

French scientists identified a gene that's far more active in a heavily scented kind of rose than in a type with little odor. This gene, which produces an enzyme, revealed the odor-producing process.

Results are reported in a study released Thursday by the journal *Science*.



Extraction of rose petals. Credit: A. Cheziere / Université Jean Monnet

**More information:** "Biosynthesis of monoterpene scent compounds in roses," [www.sciencemag.org/lookup/doi/ ... 1126/science.aab0696](http://www.sciencemag.org/lookup/doi/.../1126/science.aab0696)

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