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Why buy David Beckham's perfume?

Why not defy the hard sell of Beckham and co, and base your decision on how a perfume actually smells?

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Carlos Santana, David Beckham, Donald Trump and Antonio Banderas: fine gentlemen all of them, and all the possessors of their own name-branded men's eau de colognes. Celebrity-endorsed perfumes now account for around 40 per cent of the men's "fragrance" market, apparently, and that market is set to buck the economic downturn – with a projected global rise of 17 per cent to \$13 billion within three years, according to Euromonitor figures.

So why are we spending on smell? Possibly because a swanky new bottle of eau de c is what Lisa Armstrong cleverly calls a "micro-pleasure" – it feels like a self-indulgent splurge without costing the earth. But instead of paying off celebrity endorsements, why not defy the hard sell and base your decision on how something smells? The English Scent (www.english-scent.de) is a Berlin based-business that sells the great eaux from Britain's classiest gents perfumers, including Czech & Speake, Trumper and Floris. The company has also started its own perfumery, Anglia, dedicated to reviving classy English perfumes (it does women's, too) that have fallen out of favour. Some of them are fantastic. Particularly good are Duncan (musky), Russian Water (vanilla and lavender), Park Royal (lemon and clove), Richmond (bergamot and citrus) and Imperial Lime (yep, limey). Best of all, for five euros they will post you five samples so you can select something that suits you at your leisure. We all deserve micro-pleasures. But why should Beckham lead us by the nose? Much better, surely, to be our own men.