

A close-up photograph of yellow Immortelle flowers from Corsica. The flowers are in various stages of bloom, with some fully open and others as buds. The background is softly blurred, showing more of the same flowers and a bright light source, possibly the sun, creating a bokeh effect.

IMMORTELE from Corsica SUPPLY CHAIN REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2016

GROUPE
L'OCCITANE



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

- p 03. Supply chains: the L'OCCITANE Group commitment
- p 04. Key events for our immortelle supply chain in Corsica

A UNIQUE FLOWER, A UNIQUE LAND

- p 05. Immortelle: eternal, legendary and captivating
- p 06. A flower with renowned properties
- p 07. The golden sun of the Corsican maquis
- p 08. Proven effectiveness

THE PLANTATION PROGRAMME: A PIONEERING APPROACH

- p 09. An innovative programme that began over 10 YEARS ago
- p 10. A partnership with committed producers, deeply attached to their land

BIODIVERSITY-FRIENDLY PRACTICES

- p 11. Choosing organic farming, to respect the environment
- p 12. Conserving natural resources
- p 13. Agro-ecological practices
- p 14. Recognition for our actions supporting biodiversity

SUPPLY CHAINS: THE L'OCCITANE GROUP COMMITMENT

PRIORITIES: LOCAL, TRACEABILITY, SUSTAINABILITY AND EQUITY.

The L'OCCITANE Group takes a **COMMITTED** approach to the supply of its ingredients and forges long-term partnerships with high added value, built on trust and respect.

Priority is given to **SMALL, INTEGRATED SUPPLY CHAINS**, in order to have control over the traceability and quality of the raw materials, right up to their delivery.

A dedicated team guarantees the quality of the Group's supplies and drives the development of sustainable supply chains, working directly with producers.

71 traceable supply chains for the L'OCCITANE and MELVITA brands.

Over **10 000** partner producers and pickers.

52 contracts, including **29** multi-year contracts.

The story of the L'OCCITANE Group is intimately linked to plants, but also to the men and women who grow them.

Olivier Bausan

founder of the L'OCCITANE brand

IMMORTELLE

Over 10 years ago, the L'OCCITANE Group took steps to avoid putting too much pressure on the wild areas of Corsica and secure supplies of immortelle. It set up an organic immortelle plantation programme, using environmentally friendly methods and starting with an area of 50 hectares.

In this report, you'll see behind the scenes of our immortelle industry in Corsica.



KEY EVENTS FOR OUR IMMORTELLE SUPPLY CHAIN IN CORSICA

In 2015, almost 20 field missions were carried out by agricultural engineers, to work with our partners on good cultivation, harvesting and distillation practices:

- 6 distillery audits
- 10 assessments of farming practices
- demonstrations of farming equipment.

10 partner pickers and distillers have joined us in this adventure.

Contracts covering a period of seven years.

The L'OCCITANE Group has strengthened its commitment to the producers by increasing the length of contracts.

*French Environment and Energy Management Agency

An innovative plantation programme launched over 10 years ago by the L'OCCITANE Group.

The Immortelle range celebrates its 15th anniversary:

2001: Precious range

2009: Divine range

2016: Launch of Divine Harmony – a premium skincare range made with Immortelle Millésimée essential oil

The L'OCCITANE Group was rewarded for its actions by the "Coup de Cœur du Jury" award for biodiversity at the "Prix Entreprises & Environnement" awards organized by the French Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy and the ADEME*.

OVER 50 HECTARES OF ORGANICALLY CULTIVATED LAND IN CORSICA, AND NEW PLOTS OF LAND HAVE ALREADY BEEN PLANTED!

IMMORTELLE : ETERNAL, LEGENDARY AND CAPTIVATING

IMMORTELLE OWES ITS NAME TO ITS EXCEPTIONAL LONGEVITY,
FOR THE FLOWER NEVER FADES, EVEN AFTER IT HAS BEEN PICKED...

Its Latin name, *Helichrysum*, means "golden sun" – which describes its magnificent golden flowers. For the people of Corsica, immortelle is a flower with a captivating scent that is emblematic of the maquis – the island's fragrant scrubland.

The analysis made by our fragrance evaluator shows that the scent of immortelle evokes warm colours. Honeyed and floral notes, warm and dry – just like the maquis – are also distinctly present.

It is said that in the 19th century, Napoleon's boat was guided by the powerful, aromatic scents of this plant when he returned home to Corsica.



A FLOWER with renowned PROPERTIES

A GREEK MYTH FROM HOMER'S ODYSSEY TRACES THE EXISTENCE OF IMMORTELLE EVEN FURTHER BACK AND EVOKES ITS BEAUTY BENEFITS. IT TELLS OF HOW PRINCESS NAUSICAA, WHO SAVES ODYSSEUS WHEN HE IS SHIPWRECKED, RUBBED HIS BODY WITH IMMORTELLE AS AN ELIXIR OF YOUTH.

In Corsica, immortelle is used by the older generation, who tell of its ability to help reduce bruising and treat burns. These days, these properties are used to advantage in aromatherapy.

Immortelle essential oil has been analysed by the L'OCCITANE Group Laboratory, to evaluate both its composition and its benefits for the skin.

We have, in particular, played a pioneering role by demonstrating its antioxidant properties.



THE GOLDEN SUN OF THE CORSICAN MAQUIS

THE REGION OF BALAGNE IS ALSO KNOWN AS THE "GARDEN OF CORSICA". IT WAS HERE, AT THE HEART OF THE ISLAND'S FRAGRANT MAQUIS, THAT THE L'OCCITANE GROUP DISCOVERED THIS EXTRAORDINARY WILD PLANT IN 2001.

Helichrysum italicum ssp italicum from Corsica must not be confused with its cousins from Italy or the Balkans, which are not the same.

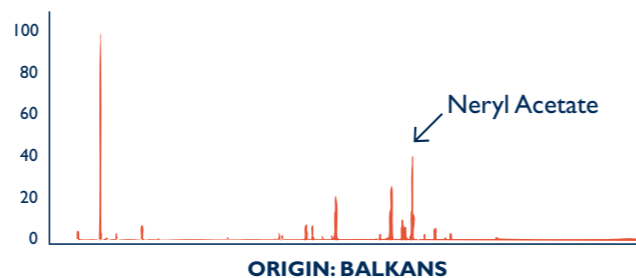
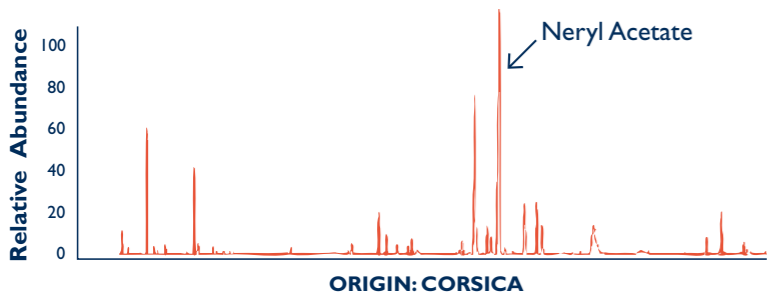
Of the 500 recorded species of *Helichrysum*, the immortelle endemic to Corsica has specific properties.

It contains a high concentration of a valuable molecule, **neryl acetate**, which gives it a unique quality, due to:

- the intrinsic qualities of the plant,
- the "terroir" (soil, climate, region) and ecosystems,
- local knowledge and skills,
- sun exposure.



CHROMATOGRAPHIC PROFILES OF IMMORTELLE ESSENTIAL OIL



PROVEN EFFECTIVENESS

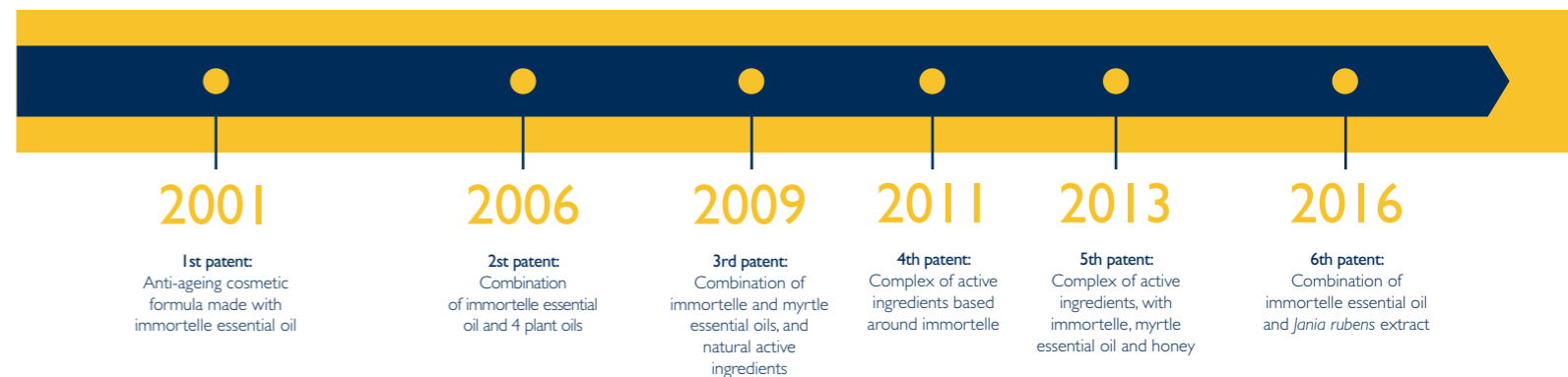
THE L'OCCITANE GROUP HAS FILED SIX PATENTS*, WHICH ATTEST TO THE INNOVATIVE NATURE OF ITS RESEARCH INTO THE REMARKABLE ANTI-AGEING EFFECTIVENESS OF ITS SKINCARE PRODUCTS MADE WITH IMMORTELLE FROM CORSICA, COMBINED WITH OTHER ACTIVE INGREDIENTS.

IMMORTELLE ESSENTIAL OIL, captures the very essence of the plant and is obtained by distillation. For the Divine Harmony range, launched in 2016, the Group chose to use Immortelle Millésimée essential oil.

This oil comes from carefully selected plots of land that belong to two producers and offers a higher concentration of active molecules as well as unprecedented traceability.

The oil is combined with a new extract of *Jania rubens* – a calcified red alga that originally comes from Revellata Bay near Calvi, in Corsica – to act on the harmony of the face.

The Group continues its research in order to further develop its knowledge of immortelle and its biological properties, by developing new active ingredients obtained using innovative, eco-friendly extraction processes.



*Patents filed in France.

AN INNOVATIVE PROGRAMME THAT BEGAN over 10 YEARS AGO

Originally, the immortelle plant was picked in the wild, in the Corsican maquis. When the Immortelle skincare range was launched by the L'OCCITANE brand in 2001, it was an **immediate success**. As this success continued to grow, so **did the need for immortelle essential oil**.

When immortelle is picked in accordance with sustainable guidelines, this actually "cleans" the maquis and indirectly helps to prevent fires. However, this method, used in the past, did not ensure a sustainable supply of immortelle and there was a risk of putting too much pressure on the wild areas of Corsica. As a result, the **L'OCCITANE Group set up the first plantation programme in Corsica in 2004, with 50 hectares** of immortelle planted using organic methods, to protect the natural environment and encourage biodiversity.

THE IMMORTELLE RANGE

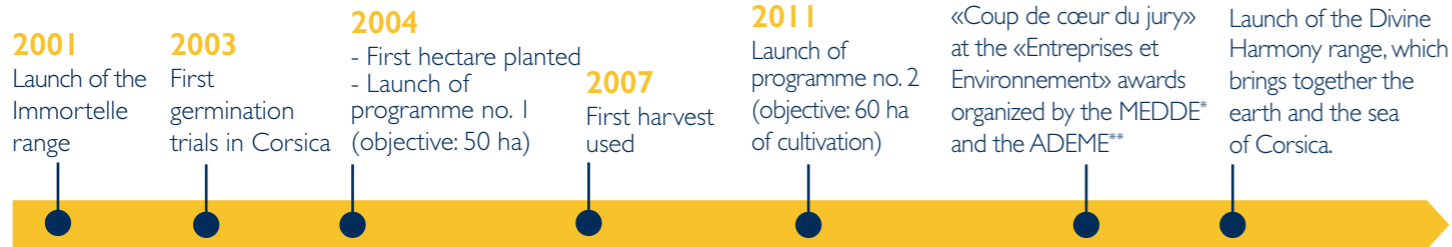
- A **pioneering** approach in a unique "terroir"
- une gamme emblématique de la marque L'OCCITANE depuis 2001



A COMPLETE AND INTEGRATED SUPPLY CHAIN

Quality and traceability are guaranteed from the harvest to the distillation of the plant, which is carried out in five distilleries in Corsica.

The L'OCCITANE Group has contributed financially to setting up the cultivation of immortelle, while its commitment to the producers and distillers is demonstrated through multi-year contracts.



A PARTNERSHIP WITH COMMITTED PRODUCERS, deeply attached to their LAND

DETERMINED TO MAKE THIS PROGRAMME AN INNOVATIVE AND SUSTAINABLE PROJECT, THE L'OCCITANE GROUP HAS WORKED WITH LOCAL TECHNICIANS TO FIND ECOSYSTEM-FRIENDLY CULTIVATION PRACTICES.

The producers are mainly located on the eastern coast of Corsica and in the Balagne region, which offer a wide range of pedoclimatic and environmental conditions.

Support from **local organizations** and funding from the L'OCCITANE Group for the plantation programme have been levers to convince farmers to join this adventure.

The immortelle industry is based around **10 corsican farmers ans distillers** who produce the essential oil, as well as **technicians** who supervise the project, and the L'OCCITANE Group, which makes use of the total volume produced.



1 TON OF IMMORTELLE
= approx. 2kg of essential oil

CHOOSING ORGANIC FARMING to respect the ENVIRONMENT

OUR PLOTS OF IMMORTELLE ARE CERTIFIED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE EUROPEAN ORGANIC FARMING STANDARDS AND ARE CONTROLLED BY ECOCERT ENVIRONNEMENT.

The yellow immortelle flowers do not need any special treatment. These hardy, robust plants are used to the arid soil of the maquis.

The organic production method makes it possible to **protect the environment and support non-polluting farming**. The agronomic techniques practised help to **preserve soil fertility** and invigorate the soil.

The prohibition of the use of pesticides, chemical fertilizers and GMO seeds contributes to the quality of the water and helps to preserve the landscape and genetic heritage of the region.

Helichrysum italicum is adapted to the Mediterranean climate and needs no irrigation. As a result, it does not have a negative effect on water resource.



CONSERVING NATURAL RESSOURCES

DUE TO ITS INSULARITY AND THE DIVERSITY OF ITS LANDSCAPES, CORSICA IS HOME TO OVER 3,000 PLANT SPECIES. IMMORTELLE BELONGS TO THE 5% ENDEMIC SPECIES.

In order to preserve the sites where immortelle grows naturally, as well as the genetic heritage of *Helichrysum italicum*, **the plots of land were planted with seeds from wild immortelle plants that grow close to the cultivation areas.**

This practice makes it possible to preserve the genetic diversity of the plant and ensure a continuity between the natural and cultivated environments without any negative interactions.

An application has been filed for the **PGI** (Protected Geographical Indication) **label**, and a workshop dedicated to the **production of certified-organic** plants is now operational in Upper Corsica.



AGRO-ECOLOGICAL PRACTICES

The banks and hedges are preserved, to provide an **ecological reserve** for the fauna and flora.

The **plots of land are farmed semi-extensively** or extensively, in particular by using sheep grazing, to limit the use of mechanized equipment.

The low input needs of the cultivation help to **reduce the impact** of production on **climate change**.



Ecological continuity of the agro-pastoral areas



Sheep grazing on natural grass cover

RECOGNITION FOR OUR ACTIONS supporting BIODIVERSITY

IN 2013, ALL OF THE ACTIONS TAKEN WITH OUR CORSICAN PARTNERS TO COMBINE THE SECURING OF SUPPLIES WITH RESPECT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT WERE REWARDED BY THE "COUP DE CŒUR DU JURY" AWARD FOR BIODIVERSITY.



A DESIRE FOR CONTINUITY

Communication about the plantation programme has contributed to the growth of the **Corsican immortelle industry**, which now has **over 100 hectares of organically farmed immortelle**. The L'OCCITANE Group programme has **re-energized the aromatic and medicinal plant industry**, enabling young farmers to become professionals, thanks to the supervision of technicians.

To ensure the sustainability of this industry, the L'OCCITANE Group focuses on several areas:

- renewing multi-year contracts
- providing technical support for producers, to reinforce their cultivation and processing skills
- diversifying the income of producers by finding ways to use immortelle coproducts or by working with them on other plants
- prospecting new partners.

