

PREFACE FOR THE ENGLISH EDITION

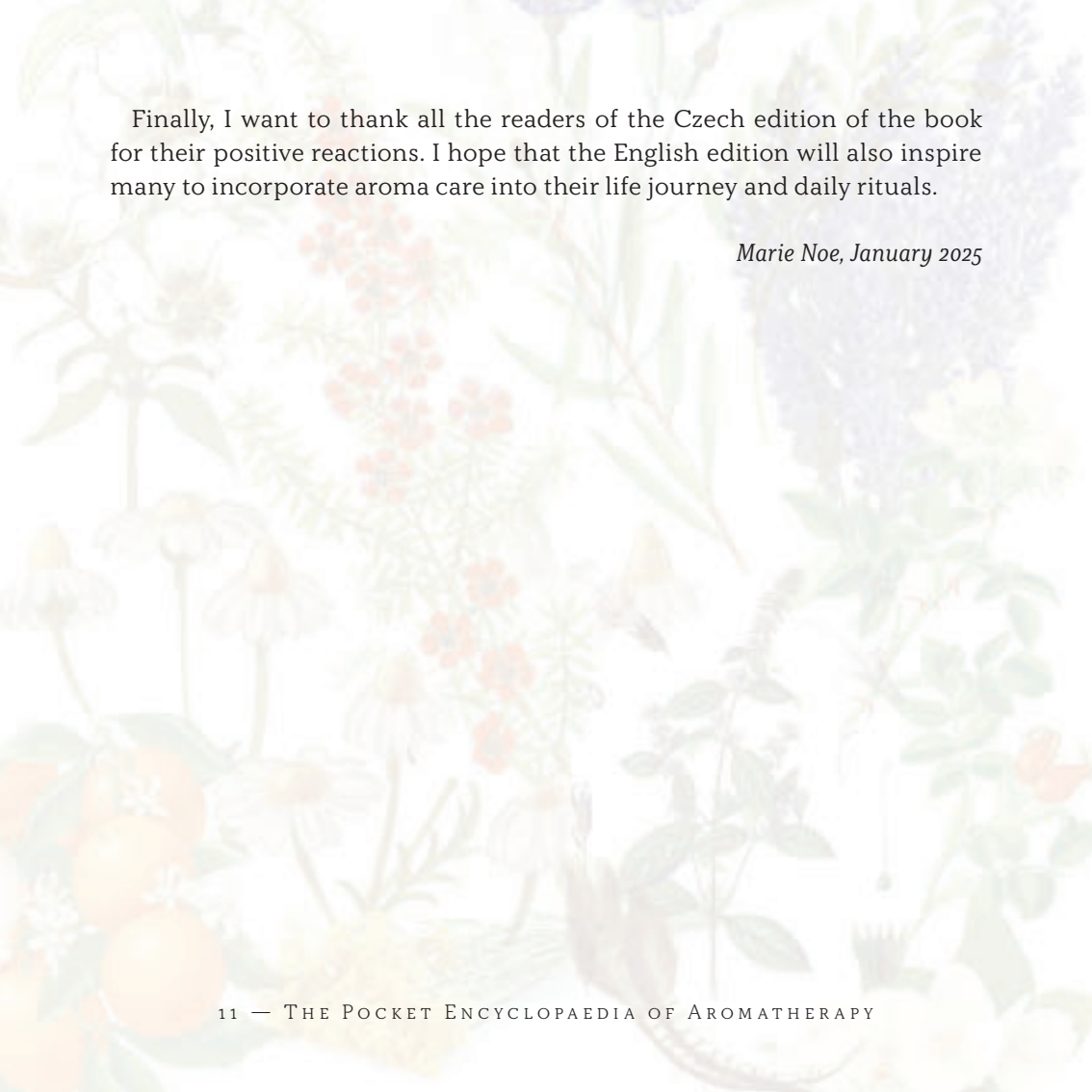
Dear readers,

Aromatherapy already has a permanent place among the so-called alternative methods of care for physical and mental health. Every year, the number of aromatherapists – trained specialists who have chosen aromatherapy as their main field of study – grows. It is a pleasant method, simple to use, with the necessary raw materials widely available, so it is not surprising that it is also popular among lay people and therapists from other disciplines. Certain elements of aroma care can be added to any professional practice. However, despite aromatherapy being one of the few alternative methods whose effectiveness is easily documented scientifically, there are still many myths and prejudices associated with it. While it may seem easy to do your research thanks to the availability of new information and communication technologies, the plethora of information requires the ability to distinguish serious, credible data from biased enthusiasm or marketing texts. This is impossible without basic knowledge. Therefore, as with the original Czech edition of *Aromaterapie do kapsy* (Aromatherapy in Your Pocket) published in 2014 (and the revised edition in 2023), the goal of this book is not only to introduce the proven effects of essential oils but to explain:

- the principles upon which aromatherapy works;
- its possibilities and limitations; and
- how to safely and practically use natural essential oils.

Aromatherapy is constantly evolving, so I have corrected the original text and expanded it with additional information and topics. Of course, it is impossible to cover the whole breadth of the subject in such a small space. A thorough understanding of aromatherapy requires in-depth knowledge of various disciplines, including biochemistry, botany, and medicine. This book provides a summary of basic information necessary to understand the field and gain confidence working with essential oils, setting the basis for further study. In fact, if you want to pursue aromatherapy in depth or professionally, a lifetime of education awaits you, as I can attest. I have been studying essential oils and their use in aromatherapy since 2003, and I have found the more I know, the more I realize what I don't know. However, if you are looking to understand how aromatherapy works, to learn how to work safely with essential oils, or to make the right choice of aroma brand or aromatherapist, then this basic, 'pocket-sized' publication should do the trick. In any case, at the end of the book you will find a list of publications suitable for further study.

I'd like to explain why I have chosen the term 'pocket' for the title of the book. The phrase refers to my favourite childhood mini encyclopaedia *Rozum do kapsy* (Wisdom in the Pocket) from the OKO edition published by Albatros (several encyclopaedias were published in this series). The term did not so much mean that the books fit in a pocket, although the format was 'pocket'-sized. Rather, it indicated that the books contained a representative selection of knowledge to allow one to understand the topic; it was certainly not exhaustive. That is how I feel about my publication – after studying it, you too will have aromatherapy 'in your pocket'.



Finally, I want to thank all the readers of the Czech edition of the book for their positive reactions. I hope that the English edition will also inspire many to incorporate aroma care into their life journey and daily rituals.

Marie Noe, January 2025