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Three Reasons for Reporting

1. Europe's first experiential museum dedicated to fragrances and flavours

Sensoria is one of a kind: it makes the invisible world of scent and taste come alive through interactive stations, 60 fragrances and a digital perfume generator.

2. A place that connects science, culture and everyday life

From the synthesis of vanillin to kosher flavourings and the scent research of tomorrow – Sensoria tells stories that shape daily life, often without being consciously perceived.

3. An architectural highlight in the "City of Fragrances and Flavours"

The new museum building in Holzminden impresses with its award-worthy design featuring a corten-steel façade and a fully accessible exhibition concept.

At a Glance

Europe's first interactive museum dedicated to fragrances and flavours

Location: Obere Straße 45, 37603 Holzminden

Opening: September 2024

Owner: City of Holzminden

Operator: Stadtmarketing Holzminden GmbH

Area: 600 m² exhibition space, 500 m² rooftop garden

The Concept

Sensoria – The House of Fragrances and Flavours is an interactive museum that invites visitors of all ages to explore the fascinating world of smell and taste — sensually, scientifically and in everyday contexts.

Exhibition Highlights:

- Up to 60 fragrances to experience – through media stations, scent modules and themed installations
- Interactive areas: from a perfumer's workstation to a supermarket shelf
- Digital creation of a personal perfume

The Building

An architectural highlight with a corten-steel façade, a barrier-free circular exhibition route (6% incline), a large display window facing the city and a sustainable energy concept powered by geothermal technology.

Admission Prices

Adults: €12

Children (from 6 years): €5

Reduced: €9

Family ticket (2 adults + up to 3 children): €30

School classes: from €40

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Concept and Background

Sensoria – The House of Fragrances and Flavours, Holzminden

Since September 2024, Europe's first interactive museum dedicated to fragrances and flavours has been inviting visitors to explore the use and enjoyment of fragrance and taste in everyday life.

Events, workshops, talks and special exhibitions complement the permanent exhibition, addressing current topics and new trends in the world of olfactory and flavouring substances. With its mission of cultural and scientific knowledge transfer, the interactive museum appeals to all age groups.

Since 2014, Holzminden has officially borne the title *City of Fragrances and Flavours*. Over 150 years ago, in 1874, vanillin was synthesised here for the first time, and the production process was patented. This marked the birth of the fragrance and flavour industry, which today shapes almost every aspect of our daily lives.

The new museum building is owned by the City of Holzminden and operated by Stadtmarketing Holzminden GmbH.

The exhibition

Sensoria offers an experience for all the senses and provides fascinating insights into the world of fragrances and flavours – a place where history, science and enjoyment come together.

Covering around 600 square metres, the interactive museum invites visitors to experience fragrances and flavours in an entirely new way. Interactive scent stations, modern media technology and captivating exhibits open up new perspectives on the invisible yet powerful world of olfactory and flavouring substances.

The exhibition is divided into several thematic areas that highlight historical, scientific and everyday aspects:

A Space for Sensual Experiences

Seeing, hearing, smelling

An immersive introduction awakens all the senses. Visitors pass through a curtain of threads and enter changing scenarios where moving images, sounds and scents merge into a holistic sensory experience.



Gallery of Fragrances

The most expensive fragrance in the world

This gallery presents selected and historically significant fragrance materials used in perfumery. Each fragrance can be experienced individually – an exclusive opportunity beyond traditional perfume compositions.



Time Travel

Stories of spices and fragrances

From antiquity and ancient Egypt to the rainforests of today – the fascination with fragrances and flavours unfolds across cultures and continents, illustrating their enduring importance through time.

Films are projected from suspended glass cylinders onto the floor, accompanied by matching scents that bring these stories vividly to life.



Knowledge in a Mirror

Learn how smelling and tasting work

Interactive mirrors come to life as visitors approach, revealing through animated visualisations how the human senses of smell and taste function. Visitors can also test their own sense of smell in the entertaining *Super Nose Quiz*.



Vanilla & Vanillin

Vanilla flavour from Holzminden conquers the world

One side of this section presents the lush green of vanilla plants, explaining their origin, varieties and cultivation. The other side traces the development of synthetic vanillin – first produced in Holzminden – into a global success story that shaped the modern fragrance and flavour industry.



From Holzminden all across the world

Products through the ages

Historical exhibits and replicas illustrate more than a century of product development, showing how fragrances and flavours have evolved and reflected social change over time.



Anything for good taste

Careers related to fragrances and flavours

Before a product reaches the supermarket shelf, many professionals contribute to its creation. Five interactive stations provide insights into their work and the industrial processes behind the products we encounter every day.



Scents and aromas in everyday life

A 24-hour journey

From the fresh mint of toothpaste to the aroma of fried onions – scents and flavours accompany us throughout the day. Interactive stations such as a digital snack dispenser and a virtual dining table offer insights into products and cultural food traditions, including halal and kosher cuisine.



Whatever the future may hold

A glimpse into the world of tomorrow

Three infinity mirrors provide a visionary look into the future. Animated scenes present a scent researcher's work and raise thought-provoking questions about innovative products and future trends.



Fragrance laboratory

Create your own personal perfume

At the perfumer's workstation – the fragrance organ – visitors can explore this creative profession. Using the digital fragrance generator, they can compose a personal perfume, which can later be purchased in the museum shop.



As a complement to the permanent exhibition, the rooftop garden invites visitors to relax and explore. They can enjoy the panoramic view of the River Weser and the old town while discovering aromatic plants.

Special Programme

Covering 115 square metres, the Fragrance laboratory also serves as a venue for special topics and events.

The programme series “Fragrances. Flavours. Experiences.” complements the themes of smelling and tasting presented in the exhibition through workshops, tastings and talks. Each year, more than twenty different events invite participants to explore the diverse facets of fragrances and flavours – from scent yoga and herbal studies to champagne tastings.

Participation in workshops and tastings is subject to a fee, while talks can be attended free of charge as part of the exhibition visit.

Special Themes

Fragrances and flavours offer a wide range of possibilities for expanding the exhibition – through in-depth content, artistic perspectives or interactive formats.

Examples of previous thematic focuses include:

- *The Lavender Miracle* (Thematic Year 2025)
- *Lavender Olfactory Art* by Camilla Nicklaus-Maurer (June–October 2024)
- *The Art of Fragrance* (June–October 2024)

Educational Offer

Experience from the first exhibition years will help determine how the educational offer can be expanded for specific target groups.

Guided tours for school classes of different age levels, as well as for kindergarten groups, are already being planned as part of this development.

How Sensoria – The House of Fragrances and Flavours – came to Holzminden

1874

Dr Wilhelm Haarmann founded his vanillin factory in Holzminden.

2014

Holzminden officially received the title *City of Fragrances and Flavours*.

2018

The Holzminden Citizens' Foundation commissioned a feasibility study for an exhibition dedicated to fragrances and flavours.

February 2019

The consulting firm *Museo Consult* presented the feasibility study.

Summer 2019

The location at Obere Straße 45 was selected.

Autumn 2019

Anderhalten Architekten (Berlin) won the architectural competition.

Spring 2020

Funding commitment by *NBank*.

July 2022

Final resolution by the Holzminden City Council.

July 2022

Start of construction.

September 2024

Opening of the exhibition.

The Building

Architectural Office: Anderhalten Architekten GmbH, Berlin

Location: Obere Straße 45, 37603 Holzminden

Client: City of Holzminden

Completion: 2024

Facts and Figures

- Plot area: 820 m²
 - Building area: 530 m²
 - Outdoor area: 290 m²
 - Total usable space: 874.20 m²
 - Exhibition space: 614.10 m² in total
 - Permanent exhibition: 497.70 m²
 - Temporary exhibitions and events (2nd floor): 116.40 m²
 - Maximum building height: approx. 15.7 m
 - Rooftop garden area: approx. 500 m²
 - Window to the exhibition: 2.4 tonnes, 8.7 m long, 3.2 m high
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Design Concept

The building is conceived as an integral part of Holzminden's historic old town. By closing a previously open plot, the urban structure of the area has been restored: the western historical city boundary continues, and the adjoining streetscape gains new definition.

The new structure marks the entrance or conclusion of the pedestrian zone and highlights the historical gateway to the city. A tower-like elevation along the visual axis from the Weser Bridge creates a new point of orientation, aligning with existing landmarks such as the gatehouses, Luther Church, grain silo and Kaufhaus Schwager.

Its striking architectural presence reflects the building's special purpose and prominent location, making it an unmistakable feature of Holzminden's cityscape.

The Facade

The expressive façade ensures harmonious integration within its surroundings. Ninety-centimetre-wide shingles made of Corten steel reinterpret the region's characteristic *Solling sandstone* façades. Their irregular curvature gives the surface a lively, dynamic appearance.

A specially developed lighting concept enhances this effect: 160 backlit shingles subtly change the building's appearance depending on the time of day and season.

Interior and Layout

The building is organised across four levels:

- Basement: Heating and building technology
- Ground floor: Foyer with ticket desk and shop, offices, cloakroom, toilets and technical rooms
- First floor: Main exhibition area and storage
- Second floor: Temporary exhibition and event space with kitchenette

A large window facing the pedestrian zone provides a preview of the exhibition from outside.

The entrance area includes the foyer with ticket sales, shop, cloakroom, tourist information and offices of Stadtmarketing Holzminden GmbH.

The main exhibition space extends across approximately 500 m² and is designed as a barrier-free, continuous path over two levels with a gentle gradient of just six per cent. This allows all visitors – whether with pushchair, wheelchair or walking aid – to experience the exhibition along a single, accessible route.

The second floor, accessible via stairs and lift, houses the final section of the exhibition and additional space for temporary shows and events. The rooftop garden above can also be accessed from here.

The architectural concept allows flexible use of space: the second floor can be opened independently from the regular exhibition area – ideal for evening events or special formats.

Construction and Materials

The building is constructed from reinforced concrete walls and ceilings, allowing a column-free exhibition space. The stairs consist of prefabricated reinforced concrete elements, while non-load-bearing interior walls are made of sand-lime brickwork.

The façade is insulated to current energy standards and clad in Corten steel shingles. Interior walls are finished with tinted clay plaster, and the finely textured terrazzo flooring complements the earthy tones, creating a calm, refined atmosphere that highlights the exhibits.

Energy Concept

Heating is provided via geothermal energy, generated by a well heat pump system with underground probes. The entire building is heated through an underfloor heating system, ensuring consistent and energy-efficient comfort.

A House That Sets Standards

Europe's first interactive museum dedicated to fragrances and flavours mirrors, through its remarkable architecture, the conceptual and design quality of its exhibition – a building that visibly embodies the spirit of sensory discovery.

Press Contact

For press enquiries, additional information or image material for editorial use, please contact:

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We appreciate your coverage and warmly invite you to immerse yourself in the world of fragrances and flavours.