# Gwyneth Paltrow defends Goop’s controversial vagina candle as feminist statement despite past lawsuits



Gwyneth Paltrow recently took to the stage at the Mindvalley Manifesting Summit 2025 in Los Angeles, where she once again faced questions regarding her wellness brand Goop’s notorious candle, "This Smells Like My Vagina." Launched in January 2020, this candle, retailing at $75, was crafted in collaboration with Douglas Little, founder of Heretic Parfum. It features an eclectic blend of scents: geranium, citrusy bergamot, cedar absolutes, Damask rose, and ambrette seed. During the event, Paltrow recalled the inspiration behind the product, which emerged from a playful moment of experimenting with fragrances. What began as a joke—Paltrow's offhand remark about a scent evoking a particular body part—quickly evolved into a product that would not only break sales records but also spur significant conversations about women's sexuality.

“We were messing around with different scents one day…I was joking. And then [Douglas] was like, 'Oh, we should make that a candle and put it on the site,’” Paltrow recalled, indicating just how spontaneous the product's inception was. Little did they know, the provocative candle would generate headlines and conversations that traversed far beyond its scented core. Paltrow has articulated that while the actual name of the product was meant to be humorous, it also sought to challenge the societal stigma surrounding female sexuality, asserting that women should embrace their identities without shame. “We are beautiful and we are awesome,” she asserted, embodying a punk rock ethos of self-empowerment.

However, the product has experienced its share of turmoil. In May 2021, Goop faced a class-action lawsuit filed by a Texas man, who claimed the candle had exploded after just a few hours of burning—a hazardous defect that allegedly posed serious risks. This claim echoed earlier concerns from another customer in London. The lawsuit sought damages exceeding $5 million, but Goop strongly defended itself, stating that the candle had been subjected to rigorous testing and met industry standards for safety. “We believe the claims are frivolous,” the company remarked, positioning the candle’s legitimacy in the eyes of consumers.

The candle, though discontinued, remains a symbol of Goop's bold marketing and social commentary. In 2022, Paltrow demonstrated her commitment to women's rights by launching a follow-up product, "Hands Off My Vagina," with proceeds benefiting the ACLU, coinciding with the 49th anniversary of Roe v. Wade—a Supreme Court decision that was later overturned. This move underscored Paltrow’s ongoing advocacy for women's autonomy and rights, further intertwining her commercial ventures with significant socio-political issues.

From its origins as a modest email newsletter in 2008, Goop has burgeoned into a multifaceted lifestyle empire. Paltrow has expanded the brand into e-commerce, wellness summits, media, and even a Netflix docuseries, attracting a broad audience with her unique blend of luxury and wellness narratives. With her children, Apple and Moses, now pursuing their own ventures in acting and music, Paltrow’s personal and professional life continues to evolve. As she prepares for her upcoming film roles, including a much-anticipated part opposite Timothée Chalamet, she remains a prominent figure at the intersection of celebrity culture and modern feminism.

In recent interviews, Paltrow reiterated that the intent behind the original candle was not simply to shock but to encourage a conversation about empowerment and self-acceptance amongst women. As she navigates the complexities of public perception and personal identity, she remains undeterred, always ready to amplify the conversation surrounding women's rights and self-expression.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraph 1: [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-14724727/gwyneth-paltrow-defends-goop-smells-like-vagina-candle.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[6]](https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/gwyneth-paltrow-vagina-candle/)
2. Paragraph 2: [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-14724727/gwyneth-paltrow-defends-goop-smells-like-vagina-candle.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://people.com/gwyneth-paltrow-says-goop-vagina-candle-was-feminist-statement-7964824)
3. Paragraph 3: [[2]](https://people.com/style/gwyneth-paltrows-goop-sued-after-vagina-candle-allegedly-explodes/), [[4]](https://www.classaction.org/news/goops-vagina-candle-can-explode-due-to-defect-class-action-alleges), [[5]](https://www.thecut.com/2021/05/goops-gwyneth-paltrow-vagina-candle-exploded-lawsuit.html)
4. Paragraph 4: [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-14724727/gwyneth-paltrow-defends-goop-smells-like-vagina-candle.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://people.com/gwyneth-paltrow-says-goop-vagina-candle-was-feminist-statement-7964824), [[6]](https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/gwyneth-paltrow-vagina-candle/)
5. Paragraph 5: [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-14724727/gwyneth-paltrow-defends-goop-smells-like-vagina-candle.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://people.com/gwyneth-paltrow-says-goop-vagina-candle-was-feminist-statement-7964824)
6. Paragraph 6: [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-14724727/gwyneth-paltrow-defends-goop-smells-like-vagina-candle.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://people.com/gwyneth-paltrow-says-goop-vagina-candle-was-feminist-statement-7964824), [[6]](https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/gwyneth-paltrow-vagina-candle/)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-14724727/gwyneth-paltrow-defends-goop-smells-like-vagina-candle.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://people.com/style/gwyneth-paltrows-goop-sued-after-vagina-candle-allegedly-explodes/> - In May 2021, a Texas man filed a class-action lawsuit against Gwyneth Paltrow's wellness brand, Goop, alleging that the 'This Smells Like My Vagina' candle exploded after burning for approximately three hours. The lawsuit sought damages exceeding $5 million, claiming the candle was defective and dangerous. Goop responded by labeling the claim as frivolous and asserting the safety of their products, stating that the candle's manufacturer, Heretic, had substantiated its performance and safety through industry-standard testing.
3. <https://people.com/gwyneth-paltrow-says-goop-vagina-candle-was-feminist-statement-7964824> - In September 2023, Gwyneth Paltrow reiterated that the 'This Smells Like My Vagina' candle was intended as a strong feminist statement. She explained that the product aimed to challenge societal shame surrounding women's sexuality, emphasizing empowerment and self-appreciation. Paltrow also mentioned that Goop no longer produces the candle, highlighting its role in sparking important conversations about women's bodies and self-acceptance.
4. <https://www.classaction.org/news/goops-vagina-candle-can-explode-due-to-defect-class-action-alleges> - A class-action lawsuit filed in May 2021 alleged that Goop's 'This Smells Like My Vagina' candle could explode during normal use due to a design defect or manufacturing flaw. The lawsuit claimed that the candle was inherently dangerous and capable of causing serious injury and property damage. Goop responded by defending the safety of their products and stating that the candle's manufacturer, Heretic, had substantiated its performance and safety through industry-standard testing.
5. <https://www.thecut.com/2021/05/goops-gwyneth-paltrow-vagina-candle-exploded-lawsuit.html> - In May 2021, a class-action lawsuit was filed against Goop, alleging that their 'This Smells Like My Vagina' candle exploded after burning for approximately three hours. The lawsuit sought damages and compensation, claiming the candle was defective and dangerous. Goop responded by labeling the claim as frivolous and asserting the safety of their products, stating that the candle's manufacturer, Heretic, had substantiated its performance and safety through industry-standard testing.
6. <https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/gwyneth-paltrow-vagina-candle/> - In January 2020, Goop introduced a $75 candle named 'This Smells Like My Vagina.' The product description stated that it was made with geranium, citrusy bergamot, cedar absolutes, Damask rose, and ambrette seed, aiming to evoke fantasy, seduction, and sophisticated warmth. Despite the provocative name, the candle was not intended to literally smell like a vagina, but rather to challenge societal taboos and promote empowerment.
7. <https://people.com/style/martha-stewart-wouldnt-buy-gwyneth-paltrow-smells-like-my-vagina-candle/> - In January 2020, lifestyle icon Martha Stewart expressed that she 'wouldn't buy' Gwyneth Paltrow's 'This Smells Like My Vagina' candle. While she wasn't aware of the product at the time, Stewart commented on Paltrow's tendency to create attention-grabbing products, acknowledging their popularity but indicating that she personally wouldn't purchase the candle.