

Add Some Light To Your Life With Candles

Candles first served as the main source of light for early civilization. They have made many changes through the years. The candles of today are not the same candles from hundreds of years ago.

Before the introduction of wicks, early Egyptians lit their reed torches by soaking them in molten tallow, which is fat from sheep or cattle. Romans later developed wick candles which they dipped into the tallow.

By the Middle Ages, beeswax was being used in the making of some candles. The candles burned cleaner than tallow and had a more pleasant odor than the tallow candles. However, they were more costly and only the wealthy could afford them.

In Colonial times, the settlers found they could boil berries from the bayberry bush to make a sweet smelling and clean burning wax for their candles. Unfortunately, it was tedious work and it took many berries to make just one candle.

By the 18th century, candles were being made from spermaceti, a wax which was crystallized sperm whale oil. These candles had an even better odor and would not bend and soften in warm weather.

In 1834, a machine was invented which mass produced molded candles. By 1850, we were using paraffin wax made from oil and coal shale. It was processed by distilling residues of crude petroleum refinement. Soon after, stearic acid was added to the paraffin wax and these are still the basic ingredients of today's candles.

Today, we have many kinds of candles to choose from. We have candles in all different shapes, sizes, and scents. Not only do candles add soft light to our home décor, they also add tantalizing aromas which can affect our moods. We have many aromatherapy candles to help us feel better. And how about those candles which bring back childhood memories—There's nothing like a deliciously scented chocolate chip cookie or apple cinnamon candle to warm up your kitchen on a cold winter day!

About the Author

Published by: Wendy Yeager <http://www.wenmarcorp.com/candles-go2>

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