
Handmade Candles: Two Ways with Arina from BellaCreme

Chapter 1 - Handmade Candles: Two Ways

Overview

- I'm Arina Soler, owner and operator of BellaCreme, an all-natural skincare company operating out of the Hudson Valley. Welcome. In this class, you will learn how to make two different types of candles. One will be an unscented, decorative pillar candle. It has beautiful, fresh flowers in it. I got them from my garden. It's a soy wax, hemp wick, clean burning, long-lasting, and it's just really aesthetically pleasing. The other candle is, it's fragrant, it's got a combination of geranium and lavender. It's colorful, using natural colorants. And the best part is whichever one you choose, you'll be able to source whatever you need from nature. You might consider making your own candle because it is more cost-effective. It gives you the ability to make something beautiful and gift it to another person, and put all the things that you love inside of it. It makes it really special. It's amazing what you can do with the things that you get from nature and I'm excited for you to try it. (upbeat music)

Materials

- Thank you for joining me. We're making two types of candles. Let me walk you through the ingredients that we'll be using. For our first candle, we'll need fresh flowers, silicone molds in three different sizes, but if you only have one size, that is okay, too. For our second candle we have a heat resistant glass jar and optionally a few tea lights that we'll be playing with, colorants, which include annatto seed and alkanet root, and for our scents, we have geranium and lavender. For both candles, we'll need soy wax, a spatula, a stainless steel mesh strainer, wax adhesive, scissors, our double boiler system, a scale, a bowl. For our wick, we're using a pre-waxed hemp wick. It burns cleaner, less soot, and it also burns longer. We also have wick-base tabs. If you are not familiar with what these are, these are the little things that go at the bottom of the candle that support the wick. It keeps it from sliding all over the place, it helps keep it centered so that it has a nice, even burn, and it lasts longer, as well. And last we have the wick holder. This goes right on top of the candle mold and allows it again to be held in place so that there is little chance that your candle will not burn evenly.

Decorative pillar candle

- First thing I wanna do is to turn on my double boiler system. Medium heat is good enough. Empty out our wax and measure it. If your wax is already open, that's fine. We're gonna turn on our scale. Make sure it's at zero. And now we wanna measure out our candle wax. We're measuring out six ounces. It's okay to get a little extra, no big deal. I have 6.3 here. Take a little bit off, it's all right. But if you wanna leave it in, you can as well. So we have our six ounces here. We wanna heat and melt this. I like using soy wax for making candles because it melts a lot faster, it is easily accessible, and when you're first starting your process of candle making, it allows you to make, you know, a bit, a few more mistakes. It's more forgiving. I like to also keep my wax adhesive near a hot surface. Not so close that it melts and burns, but close enough that it gets warm. Because when it's time to move on to that step in this process, you want it to be as malleable as possible. While we're waiting for this to heat, I'll tell you a little bit about the rest of the process. We have three different molds here. I chose silicone because it's flexible, and once your wax hardens, it will allow you to pop it out

quickly and easily. And you can always facilitate the melting process of this wax by stirring it a little bit, just get the wax beads evenly distributed around. I don't know if you're impatient, but sometimes I am. I really like things to move quickly, and I know sometimes I need to slow down some, but, you know, life happens fast, so I need everything around me to happen just as quickly. But it's okay to take your time here. It really is. Soak it all in. Think about what you wanna do. I wonder what kind of flowers you picked out for your decorative pillar candle? I can't wait to show you the details on what I have, and I can't wait until you see what the finished product will look like. The more color that you use in your bouquet or in your choice of flowers, the better. We're not adding any colorant here, so it'll offer a nice contrast between your floral arrangement and the wax. As our wax melts, if you find that your wax adhesive is still not warm, it's okay. I like to drag the base tab like this, and just kind of scrape up the putty, right? It's another word for this wax adhesive. It's called the putty as well. And that way we loosen it up a little bit so when it's time to put our base and our wick together, we have something to add to. You can also use a butter knife, or any kind of flat instrument that would allow you to do that with ease. Let's get our hemp wick together. I always like to use a little bit of extra wick, because I never wanna fall short of where I wanna go. So if you look here, I'm gonna do maybe about a quarter inch flat to the surface that I'm working with, and then maybe a quarter inch above the top of it, and that's where I'm going to cut. This will give me a little space to put my wick inside of the tab, and also leave a little space for me to cut any excess wick off without overdoing it. I'll show you exactly what I mean when we get there. All right, is everyone ready? I'm ready! All right. I also wanna tell you that you can purchase pre-prepared wick and tabs, so that removes some of it, but I sort of like to do everything myself. So if there's a way for me to do it, I'm gonna work on getting it done, and I want you to understand that, too. I want you to have that option as well. So we have our putty, we have our tab, and we have our wick. You insert it right through the top. The flat part is going to be your base, and that tab goes to the base of your mold. You wanna put your putty right alongside of there. And I just wanna show you, I like to give it a little bit of extra so that it is supported, because sometimes as the hot wax goes in, it interacts with the putty, it may make it a little slippery, and it may slide around. And the most important part as I mentioned earlier is you want your wick to be as centered as possible so your candle burns evenly. Turn down our double boiler, it's ready to go. It's like, come on, let's make these candles. And now you're going to press firmly on the middle of your silicone mold, and sort of get this to stick. I don't want you to move it after that. If you find that you needed a little bit of extra putty, then you can do that as well. And this is also why I mentioned when it's soft it's a little easier to work with, 'cause it adheres a little better as well. But at the very least, if you can get it into the middle, don't move it around, and then you want to use your wick holder at this step. Put it right through the middle here, let it rest on the base, straighten it out without putting too much tension, because we don't want that moving around. It wants to move around, but we don't want it to move. If you find that it pops out during the process, just get the wick holder where you want it to be, and again, apply some gentle pressure. Sorry, not gentle, but firm, be firm, firm pressure. Let's scrape up some more adhesive. If you find that your tab isn't sticking well, it's being a little stubborn, trust me, I know what that's like, feel free to add some more. Leave the wick holder attached to the wick, because we've decided that that's a good length, and then try again. Nice firm pressure. Again, if we're still having problems, don't worry, we can move to the next step. Let's see what we have here. So beautiful, right? I love these. I really wanna try the jasmine. We have some baby sage here with this beautiful red, vibrant color, kind of matches my sweater, just sayin'. So let's see how we can get a little bit of this off of here. Bits and pieces are always going to be nice. Even if you picked one and

then you just wanted to tear it up into a bunch of little pieces, that would be fine, too, kind of like a confetti. So I wanna talk to you about the importance of using fresh flowers versus dried flowers. Dried flowers are more likely to ignite and super heat the candle, causing it to not only burn quickly, but also it puts you at a risk of burning down your house, and we don't want that. We wanna be safe. So fresh flowers are great. They have a moisture content to them, they will burn, they'll release fragrance, and they'll also look very pretty. So let's see. You can either choose to add the flowers prior to adding the wax, you can choose to add it after adding the wax, but what will likely happen is that if you add it after you've added the wax, the flowers are likely to float on top, and if you want it throughout the entire candle, then you can also do it in layers. You can grab yourself a chopstick, some sort of dowel, and you can also play with positioning a little bit. If you happen to have an extra wick holder around like I do, you can use that. Add as many flowers as you like. If you feel like you're still worried about the adherence of your tab, you can always try to tap it. I don't suggest it, 'cause if it starts moving around, if it gets disconnected, then the wick will come out, and now you've got a big mess, and it just becomes a really stressful process that I don't want you to go through. But it's up to you. You can always also let this cool first and then add another layer. We're not gonna do it like that today. And when you want it to be along the side, you can press it up against here as you layer it before you fill it to the top, so you allow the wax to help you along on this part. As the wax cools, as long as it's not cooled too much, you can always go in and manipulate the flowers a little bit. And the reason why I say not too much is because as it cools, the cooler it is, the more that you run the risk of putting an indentation in there that you may not want. So you do have to work a little quickly, not super fast, but quickly enough. It's always nice to use the greenery too, right, the stem and the leaves. It doesn't all have to be just the petals. Again, there's always the option to cool it and add the flowers in layers if you want the flower to be clearly represented in each portion of the candle. So now that we have our flowers all situated in this mold, you can fill the rest of your molds. Once your candle has cooled completely, it is ready to use, however, the dryer it is, the longer it sets, the longer it will last, so try your best to be patient. I know it's hard, I know.

Scented and colored votive candle

- Now we are going to make our second candle. It is going to be scented, it is going to be bright, and it is going to be lovely. Let's power up our double boiler. Good medium heat. We're going to measure out two ounces of soy wax. Almost got a little carried away there. Add it to our double boiler. Scrape out any of the beads who don't want to go. I'm gonna turn up my heat a little more. Make sure things are melting. We already have our jars prepared. I chose lavender and geranium because lavender has a nice, relaxing, inviting fragrance, while geranium has a very bright and powerful, floral but not too heavy fragrance. And I thought that would be a great combination that would compliment the colors really well. The alkanet root here we're going to use enough to give us a pink hue versus a deep red, but if you find that yours is deeper or even if ours becomes a little deeper, it's okay. Our goal is to layer the colors and give a nice, beautiful appearance to our candle. If you found that your wax is giving a little trouble with melting, you can help facilitate the melting process by using your spatula. Stir it around a little bit. Get those clumps worked out. Get a nice flow. So what color do you think we should start with? I'm thinking I want to do orange. So that means we're going to start with our annatto seed. Some of you may be familiar with annatto seed because it is used a lot of times to cook with, for flavoring, as a colorant. I'm familiar with it from a Spanish rice, when you're making a sofrito-based rice using annatto seed to make the rice like an orange-yellow sort of color. All right, our wax is melting down really good. And at this point, I feel

like it is absolutely safe to add our annatto seed. We're going to add one teaspoon. I want you to get a really close look. If you want a deeper orange, you can add more. If you want a lighter orange, add less. Just be sure to strain out the seeds in its entirety. When you burn your candle, we don't want anything left behind that may cause a fire hazard. You see this pretty orange? I like it. So we'll let it sit a little bit 'cause we want every bit of color that we can get out of these seeds. I prefer natural colorants because it's just the least amount of chemicals. I'm always trying to avoid artificial additives and chemicals, and this is why I often choose anything that's going to be a natural colorant and that occurs or, you know, just happens naturally within our surroundings. It makes it easier to source. It's often more cost-effective. Like you can head down to your local supermarket and grab annatto seeds. And you really don't need that much. It only takes a few seeds to get such a bright, beautiful orange color like you see right here. So I really like this color. It's perfect for me. I hope it's perfect for you, too. Now we're ready to add our lavender essential oil. Get ready. So because we aren't applying this to our skin, it is a little easier to eyeball this amount that we're gonna add here. We're gonna do about 0.5 ounces. And 0.5 ounces would be the equivalent of buying one small jar of essential oil. That's usually how it comes. So if you just went out and bought a bottle of essential oil, the smaller bottle, you can just dump the entire bottle inside. But again, you are free to be liberal with how much you put in here or how little, 'cause there's no risk of skin irritation. It's all gonna be based on your scent palette. We're going to wipe off the bottom. We don't wanna spill any water into my candle. That pot is going to be hot, so be careful. And now we are ready to pour it in. Isn't that beautiful? I really like it. You like it? (instructor humming) We wanna allow this some time to cool, and put it off to the side, and we'll start cleaning our area again. I like to have a little bit of a mixture. I don't mind, but if you prefer a very clean, precise definition between each layer, then you'll wanna take your pot and wipe it out and make sure all the remnants of the annatto seed and wax that you used previously are gone. Here we have our first layer of our candle. I put mine into the refrigerator for a few minutes to allow it time to cool. I suggest that you do not put it in the freezer. It will create cracks in your wax and it will ruin your finished product, and we don't want that. We are now ready to move on to our next layer. We'll be using alkanet root. It's a wonderful colorant. It gives us a nice pink-red hue depending upon how much you use. We're using one teaspoon. But first we're gonna melt our wax. Our water is already heating up in our double boiler system. It's ready for our wax, and look at that. It's melting so quickly. I love it. Give it a little stir. And as soon as it has melted, we wanna add our alkanet root. I wanna remind you that even though this is a heat resistant glass, we have to be careful about huge variations in temperature change, right? So if you have taken this out of the refrigerator and it's still really cool, make sure you give it some time to warm up a bit. Your wax will be hot, not scorching hot, but again, we're working hard on this product. We don't want it to be ruined. Our wax has melted. We're ready for our alkanet root. So again, we're going for a nice pink-red sort of color. If you wanted a deeper red, add a little more alkanet root. We added one teaspoon. We can now add our essential oil. For this layer, we're going to be working with our geranium. Bright, floral. Remember that bottle that I was describing earlier about 0.5 ounces? This is what it looks like. All right? We are going to use this entire bottle in here. You can drop it all the way through. I like to take the cap off with a paper towel. It allows me some leeway with pouring. Also gets it out of the bottle a lot faster. Just go right ahead and add that to your mixture. Gonna give it a stir. And then we're gonna remove it from the heat. Take our pot and wipe the bottom. Remember, this water is gonna be hot. It's just been steaming and forming on the bottom of this pot, so always be careful with that. Grab your strainer. You're gonna pour it into here. We don't wanna get any bits and pieces. Give it a nice

layered effect. That's looking really good. And I wanna go a bit further and decorate my tea lights a little bit. It might get a little messy here. That's okay. Once the wax hardens, it is easier to clean it up. Then whatever's left we will put it in here. I can't wait to see how this all turns out. It's gonna be pretty. You're going to like it. Once again, you're going to put this in the refrigerator to cool, so let's do that. I've allowed my second layer of wax to cool completely. Back out of the refrigerator. My two ounces of wax is already melted, and that means that it's time to add my essential oil. Once again, we're using our lavender essential oil. What better way to layer colors and scents? We're going to go with 0.5 ounces of lavender. You can add that right to the pot. And give it a little stir. Make sure the scent is nice and evenly distributed throughout your layer. And now we can add it as the last layer of our candle. Remove it from the heat. Can wipe off the bottom. Give it a nice pour. Add to our tea lights. And then I'm gonna add the remainder of my wax to my big candle. And we are done. Allow your candle to cool completely, preferably overnight. I suggest this because sometimes although it may look completely solid, it may still be soft on the inside, and we want to give our candle as much burning time as possible.

Reveal and burning tips

- Our candles have cooled completely, and now it is safe to unmold them. First, we'll trim the wick on each of these and we will slowly remove the wick holder. I forgot to tell you, if you don't have a wick holder, you can use a dowel, you can use a chopstick, if you have a fork. you can get really creative with it. As long as you can place it here, steadily, and it holds your wick centered. When we unmold our candle that is within the silicone mold, sometimes the silicone likes to stick to the candle. I like to use a butter knife because it's thin enough to fit between the walls and just gently scrape around and create some air. Be careful as you go around to keep the butter knife closer to the mold than you do the candle. That way, you don't scrape it and ruin your work of art. You did a great job on this and we want everyone to know. All those gifts that you're gonna give out, it's gonna be great. And even if you do scrape it a little bit, it's still gonna be great. You made it, you made it with love. It's gonna be wonderful. I will say here that patience is key, but it will happen. You can see it's coming out. Obviously, when you get to a certain point, you may be able to just pull it out. No matter how tempting it is, avoid using the wick to pull out your candle. If you get to a point where you feel like you can actually grab it and slowly work it out, you can also do that. If it's not ready to pull out, just keep going around. Same process. You wanna make sure you push at the bottom of the candle to kind of let that air get in there. Let's try it again. All right. Look at that. Isn't that beautiful? I love it. You've done a wonderful job. Let's take a look at this. This is nice, nice sherbet color, beautiful layers. You can decide the ratio that you wanna use as far as the colors go. You want it a little bit light on top, maybe you want the thickest parts to be in the middle maybe you want it thin at the bottom. It is absolutely up to you. But either way make it personal, make it beautiful. We will not be removing this candle. It's going to stay here, and this is why we picked out a heat resistant glass jar. Same as with the heat resistant jar, we are not removing our tealight candles. These happen to be fragrant. So this way, you can just burn them whenever you want. Again, you can give them as gifts. It's a quick way. Just throw it in the box with something else that you created, something special like a soap or salve, maybe an herbal infusion, any of those things. But these are also layered and they're very fun. Key points to remember. Don't burn candles unattended. Be mindful of what may be nearby and create a hazard for ignition. The other thing that I want you to remember is for if, for any reason, there is any sort of ignition, fire needs oxygen. That's where these wood covers come in. You can cover it up, or for something smaller like this, you

can throw a pot over it. You really want to smother it. You wanna protect the surfaces of your home by burning your pillar candle or tealight candle on a plate. Ideally, your candle will burn straight down, but sometimes it will spill over the sides. And the great part about having a dish or a plate there to catch it is that even when it cools off, you can easily scrape it off clean and start again with your new candle that you created in your spare time.