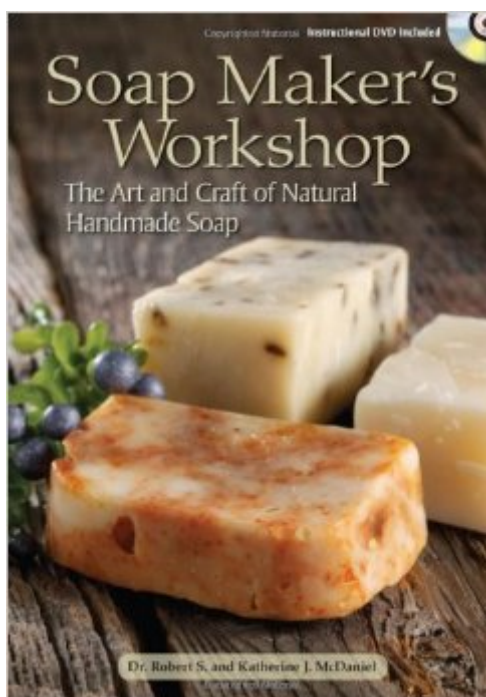


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Soap Maker's Workshop: The Art And Craft Of Natural Homemade Soap



Synopsis

Preserving the timeless craft of soap making, artisan soap maker Robert McDaniel provides instruction & guidance to all levels of soap makers. Using natural ingredients, readers will experience the gratification of making all kinds of handmade soaps, including liquid soaps, cold & hot process soaps, melt-&-pour soaps & re-batched soaps.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In general, I like the book. But I have been making soap for some time already, cold process (CP), hot process(HP), cream soap, liquid soap, I have also made my own base for M&P method and still, I have found some information filling the gaps. Evidently the author is a chemist. I particularly like the video - worth of thousands words - especially good for beginners, where the lye mixing, precautions and soap mixing is explained quite nicely - despite my experience, I have learned something, too. There are some important messages that I didn't find elsewhere. I like also their approach of showing their experiments (the "hot process" part), although this is rather for a more experienced soapmakers. However, I didn't like the hot process part. The content is OK - as mentioned above, this is quite fun to read, if only it was not called "Hot process". Actually this chapter does not describe the hot process! What authors call hot process is just warming the soap in the crockpot to get to the trace (maximum 10 minutes) and then pouring it like all other CP soap to the mold. But (as to my knowledge, correct me if I am wrong), hot process is defined as cooking the soap until the saponification reaction is finished - about 3-4 hours - waiting for complete gel phase. Such a finished soap has its advantages - adding Ph sensitive colors or fragrances/essential oils at the end

is without surprises. This may be very misleading for beginners and I was surprised the authors are not aware of this. Otherwise a nice book, however, should not be the only one you read when you start.

I am delighted with the organization of information in this book. There is only a small amount of new info in this book: It is a re-vamping of Essentially Soap (Dr. McDaniel's previous book) and several of his articles previously published in the "Saponifier" magazine. The new material, although minimal, is exquisite and I am impressed with the information on INS value. I've struggled to write emails explaining the Iodine Value and Saponification Value correlation in INS numbers to inquiring soapmakers and now refer them to this book. Soapmakers who own neither Essentially Soap nor this new book should purchase only the new Soap Maker's Workshop because it contains most of Essentially Soap within its pages. Although originally disappointed in the lack of new material from Dr. McDaniel, I now value this book very highly as a complete source of soapmaking information and I greatly appreciate the care in arranging all of his diverse accumulated soapmaking material into one comprehensive book. Note: Students of the Soapmaking Studio and some new soapmakers have found it beneficial that this book comes with a CD featuring a video of a soapmaking demonstration.

When I started making soap, I got my education off of internet tutorials and forums as well as this book. Though it doesn't cover all the bases, it's perfect for beginners. It answers most the questions a beginner has, without getting complicated or overloading with confusing information. When I made my first batches I used it as a reference. Once you master everything it talks about, then you can go on into advanced techniques.

This is a well written guide to soap-making for the hobbyist as well as someone who may be considering taking their interest in soap-making to another level. The book describes how one might go about making soap with the ash and animal fats in the manner available a few generations ago, for the curious minded. If one is considering a commercial venture into selling their handmade soaps, this book describes some aspects one may wish to take into consideration. There is an interesting/useful range of recipes given in weights (which I greatly prefer to volume) as well as the relevant table and formula to calculate a proper ratio of fats to lye in order to accurately create your own recipe. I was pleasantly surprised to find a well-presented DVD included with safety information and a video of the soap-making process. The book is beautifully and logically presented in the

manner befitting a professional educator (as Dr. McDaniel is). This book seems to include the basic skills required from which to build one's knowledge. For the readers who wish to add their own creative flair, there is very good information on fragrances and colorants. If I were hard-pressed to find any fault, I'd request some substitutions perhaps when available for some of the more difficult to source components, I am not currently living in the US and I'm having a bit of trouble finding menthol for the shaving soap recipe. So, perhaps in the next edition? I love this book, it is very interesting and the photography is beautiful as well as illustrative of the processes. Carol Buxton

I have to be honest with you and confess that I have never made a bar of soap of any sort in my entire life. That is about to change though as I have, for a number of years, been thinking that it (making soap) would be an interesting and neat thing to do. So, in my typical fashion I have been doing some research; digging through books, asking questions of the few soap makers I know and searching the internet. I have gleaned some very useful information...quite a lot, as a matter of fact. Well, I recently picked this book up (special order) through our library. I have read through it (several parts I have read several times) and played the DVD that comes with the book. I feel that I can actually make the stuff, i.e. soap! The author takes you through a step by step process and thoroughly explains each step in a very readable and comprehensive fashion. The few questions that I did have which I was unable to find in this book were quickly found doing a google search. When it gets right down to it, it seems that soap making is not all that much different than cooking; not when you really think about it. This work is filled with excellent photographs and the author has shared many soap recipes. She has covered the different herbs and scents quite well. She has done an excellent job of explaining the chemistry involved here and has not treated her readers as a collective group of idiots....I like that! I am quite sure that there are many books out there more suited for the advanced soap maker, but for those of us, like me, who are absolutely clueless, then this work is just the ticket. If I make it through this work and find I enjoy this craft, then I will do further seeking and buy more advanced books. Until that time I have all the information I need to not only get me started but most importantly, help me understand what I am doing, why I am doing it and what the expected results are. Don Blankenship The Ozarks

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