

Commercial vs Handcrafted - What's the Difference?

Commercial soaps are manufactured in large factories, using the most economical ingredients. Often, they contain fillers which dilute the actual soap content; most have the glycerin removed.

Handcrafted soap is manufactured locally in small batches with the personal oversight and care of the soapmaker. Handcrafted soapmakers use high-quality ingredients and are able to add specialty oils and additives to personalize their formulations.

The creative artistry of each handcrafted soapmaker results in soaps that are different and unique in terms of ingredients, colors, shapes and scents. Consumers enjoy a wide selection of soaps that are not only natural, but functional and beautiful, while supporting local small businesses.



For more information about locally available handcrafted soap, please contact:



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Handcrafted Soap & Cosmetic Guild, Inc.
184 Edie Rd, Ste A
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866
866-900-7627
mbrservices@soapguild.org

The HSCG is the only international non-profit professional trade association promoting the benefits of handcrafted soap, and giving a voice to the handcrafted soapmaker.

H S C G

Handcrafted Soap
& Cosmetic Guild



Why Handcrafted Soap?

www.soapguild.org

What is Handcrafted Soap?

Sometimes called "handmade" or "homemade" soap, handcrafted soap is a blend of science and art. By combining scientific knowledge from the last 150 years with artistic creativity, soapmakers create safe, luxurious and unique bars. Handcrafted soap is soap in its true and most pure form.

Handcrafted soap can be made from scratch using the following methods:

- Cold Process
- Hot Process
- Melt & Pour or pre-made soap base

The Handcrafted Soap & Cosmetic Guild recognizes any soap made by these methods to be handcrafted, as long as at least 50% of the process is done by hand.

True soaps are the result of a chemical reaction between vegetable or animal fats, water and lye. When combined, they transform into soap and glycerin, with no lye remaining in the soap. This reaction is called "saponification", which literally means "the making of soap".



What's in Handcrafted Soap?

Handcrafted soapmakers pride themselves on the unique recipes they use to create their signature soaps.

Most handcrafted soapmakers use food-quality, natural ingredients, starting with a variety of vegetable oils such as olive, coconut or palm, or they may use purified tallow or lard. To these, they may add specialized oils, nut butters, or seed extracts to bring the desired qualities to the finished bar.

Fragrance oils or plant-based essential oils are added to make handcrafted soaps smell amazing! For color or texture, soapmakers often use cosmetic-grade pigments or dyes, botanicals, herbs, spices or other natural ingredients.

For those with sensitivities, many soapmakers also make plain soaps with no additives or scents.

Support Local: Buy Handcrafted!

Handcrafted soap isn't just full of amazing ingredients; it's an investment in your community. Soapmakers are small business owners. They're people in your area who contribute to the strength of your local economy.

When you use a bar of handcrafted soap, you know it was made with the personal touch of a local soapmaker, and that by purchasing from them, you're making a contribution to your community, too.



What about Glycerin?

Glycerin is a humectant, which means that it attracts and retains moisture on your skin. Think of it like a natural skin lotion in soap.

Glycerin is a natural by-product of the soapmaking process. Most commercial soap manufacturers remove the glycerin from soap, process it and then sell it to other industries where it's used in pharmaceuticals, foods, cosmetics and other products.

This isn't the case for handcrafted soap! Glycerin still remains in the bar. The end result is a mild, pure soap that gently cleanses your skin without being harsh, irritating or drying.



A special thank you to all of the talented HSCG Certified soapmakers who contributed the photos for this publication:

Front cover: Jennifer Hofmann, inside bottom (from left to right): Zipora Sayag, Sandy Palisch, Jo Haslauer; Glycerin page, top: Jessica Eveleigh, glycerin page bottom: Zehra Kapasi, back outside cover: Alexis Abruscato (sailboat soap) and Carly Gavlak (honeycomb).