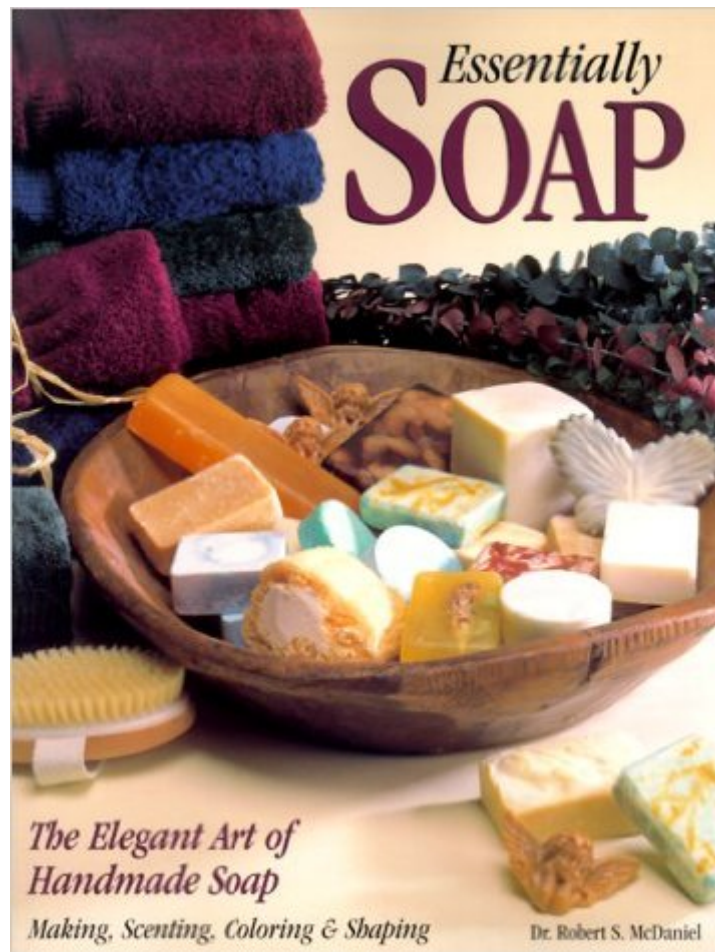


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Essentially Soap: The Elegant Art Of Handmade Soap Making, Scenting, Coloring & Shaping



Synopsis

No longer satisfied with mass-produced soaps? The author shows how to create special soaps with the right scent, emollients and appearance. He demonstrates how to work with fragrances, skin treatments, colours and shapes, and discusses the aromatherapy benefits associated with many essential oils.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Dr. Bob does a fine job of bringing the past to the present in methods of soap making in one book. So rare it is to find a book that mentions current methods and still isn't stuck in 1970's Ann Bramson's method. We have gone so far beyond Ms. Bramson now. The book starts with some ancient history on soap making and brings us up to present day. I like that he mentions my favorite story, "The urine collectors". Hahahaha, I don't know why I like that story so much, but I think it is fun. :) There are a couple of cartoons and some actual photos of how to leach the lye from wood ash. So many people have asked me how to do that and this is a fine section on describing the process with photos so now I can just recommend this book! And no, you don't need to collect Roman urine. ;) There are two good sections to get you started with glycerin Melt & Pour, and Rebatching. Dr. Bob gives the basics and gets you thinking with some ideas which he explains quite well. He gives a good method of remelting soap which should work for you every time, unlike other books which have attempted that topic. I don't know why, on page 36, Dr. Bob just didn't buy the matching end cap for that PVC pipe... It is a lot easier than using saran wrap or making a wax plug.... but that

works too. I have to laugh when I see the scale pictured throughout the book. How did that scale get so clean! haaha. Mine is all marred up from lye spills and goo and raw soaps. A nice, new scale just looks odd to me, haahaa. This book is really very good for the person who has never made soap. Dr. Bob puts the chemistry in to English and has a well thought out plan for presenting the information. He starts at the beginning, covers the nonlye methods first, like a beginner is likely to approach soap making.

After reading the other reviews of "Essentially Soap", I had to run out and buy it for myself (I just love controversy). I was really curious about "INS", which is a term I have never heard or read about before. None of the other soap books I've read have mentioned it, nor the websites, so I was interested in learning more about it. Apparently INS was relatively new to Dr. Bob, too, because he states that the "discovery set the wheels in motion and a quick scrutiny of my own recipes showed an INS nearly in the optimum range", optimum being 160. Dr. Bob then adjusted his own recipes to get closer to the optimum range. However, Dr. Bob apparently did not adjust his lye content based on these changes. About half of the recipes are lye-heavy (many with negative discount!) and the other half are oil-heavy, with 8 or even 10 percent discount. Also, Dr. Bob uses the now infamous "fuzzy math" when analyzing his own recipes' INS values, because the example he uses lists the INS of palm oil at 206, but the chart in the back of the book lists the value at 145. However, assuming that I can trust the INS numbers in the back of the book, now that they have been called into question, I will be able to use this methodology to improve my own soap recipes (no doubt I will run mine through the lye calculator, though!). Also, Dr. Bob's book includes good information on the properties of oils and essential oils, other additives, and includes coloring techniques. And, unlike other reviewers, I found the pictures to be interesting (not all soap is perfect) and even inspiring.

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