

Candles

*Scents transform interiors
to energize, spark emotions*

By Mary Welch

“Our candles are made to resurrect or create a moment, a memory, an emotion,” says Kathryn Kucka, beauty manager of marketing and planning for Tocca Candles. “Our candle scents are based on simple accords of fragrance but they all inspire. It may be Havana, with a sweet, yet spicy mix of sugarcane and rum. Or it can evoke the spirit of a person, like Grace Kelly.”



The market for candles and home fragrances reached \$8.4 billion in 2004, a growth of 14.1 percent over previous year. In fact, some 80 percent of all adult Americans bought some kind of home fragrance product in the past year, according to Unity Marketing, which keeps tabs on the luxury market. Small travel candles are particularly a favorite for women. The luxury candle market is strong as consumers want candles with intense exotic scents that are clean burning, long lasting and infuse well. But what should one look for in selecting a candle? “The first place to start is to



look for scented candles that may be similar to your personal scent,” says Jennifer Puckett, a spokesperson for Diptyque, a well-known French luxury candle company. “If you like florals, look for candles in that line. Generally, you choose a perfume that makes you feel good, so you want that same sense of well-being in your home. Once you’ve got a basis, you can start experimenting with different scents.” London-based perfumer Jo Malone is a firm believer in layering scents. “For a dynamic, lively fragrance for the day, light citrus, fruity or light floral fragrances are suggested,” says Corrine Zagidan, spokesperson. “As the evening draws in, choose warm and aromatic to create a soft and sensual ambience.” Zagidan



suggests burning different fragrances in several rooms. For the dining room, one should “stick with a citrus scent – as it is light so to not overpower if you are eating or drinking a lovely wine; it also clears away the smell of food,” she says. Harry and Laura Slatkin have spent over a decade developing Slatkin & Co., a diverse line renowned for home fragrance products as well as its ultra-hip packaging and sophisticated scents. Using exotic perfume oils from flowers found around the world, Slatkin & Co. has a variety of product lines, including the recently launched food scents featuring scents such as herb vinaigrette and ice tea. It also has celebrity lines such as its

Kabbalah candles, aimed at spiritual wisdom and the Elton John Collection, which is a blend of the vanilla bean, cedarwood, Chinese star anise and spicy coriander. Tocca’s Kucka says that it is important the candles be hand poured with cotton wicks for smokeless burning. “Hand pouring keeps the wax even and prevents the wax from creating a tunnel when it’s burned. Also, never burn a candle less than one hour and never more than four hours at a time. It is also important to cut the wick before burning the candle again” Natural wax, whether it be soy or paraffin wax – or a combination – is important in helping the scent diffuse properly, she adds. A luxury candle rarely – if at all – uses artificial ingredients to create their scents. A good candle should burn anywhere from 30 to 40 hours. Packaging is also important. Altru clothes its Wellness candles into a hammered copper vessel with golden lining and packaged with a culturally inspired pattern. All Diptyque candles feature a black and white design, with elegant lettering and stylish drawings. U.K.-based Molton Brown’s candles are in beautiful frosted glass containers. Of course many candles also promote spiritual, mental or emotional well-being. Molton Brown tries to deliver a stimulating physical and emotion response with its products while Elemis’ Twilight candle is promised to “lift, lighten and enrich your surroundings.” Finally, many purchase candles to make a social or political statement. Slatkin’s Kabbalah and Elton John Collections donate a portion of the proceeds to Kabbalah and AIDS, respectively. Altru, which was founded by pop star Prince’s wife, Manuela Testolini Nelson, supports In a Perfect World Foundation, a nonprofit organization that inspires children to become socially conscious leaders. All from a glass full of wax and some plant or flower extracts. Not a bad deal at all. ♀