

## What's the Difference?

Commercial soaps are manufactured in large factories (often located overseas) staffed with anonymous employees, using the most economical ingredients. Often they contain some or all synthetic detergents; most have the glycerin removed.

Handcrafted soaps, on the other hand, are 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, offering consumers a wide selection of soaps that are not only natural, but functional and beautiful as well.



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



# Why Handcrafted Soap?

Published as a public service by:

Handcrafted Soapmakers Guild, Inc.  
178 Elm St.  
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866  
Toll Free: (866)-900-SOAP (7627)

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

Grateful thanks to the HSMG Members who provided photos for this brochure: Front: Joyce Noerr, JNC Designs; Inside fold (pitcher): Kristy Brown, Barely Gentle Bath Bars; Inside: (top) Lisa Volta, Volta Soap; (melon) Lissa Lee, Arcadia Aromatics; (fish) Jeanine Van Voorhees, Jeanine's Hummingbird Soap Works; (bottom, l to r) Kerri Mixon, Pallas Athene Soap; Pam Saldutti, PS I Love You Soap Co.; Lisa Tarris, Seascape Soap Co.; Hedge Sefcovic, A Natural Alternative; Susan Blouin, Back to Nature Goat Milk Soap; Amy Warden, Great Cakes Soapworks; Karen Clough, Rocky Corner Soapworks.



© 2012 Handcrafted Soapmakers Guild, Inc.  
All Rights Reserved. Contents may not be revised,  
except by special permission from the HSMG.

[www.soapguild.org](http://www.soapguild.org)

# The Truth About Handcrafted Soap

Also known as “handmade soap” or “home-made soap,” handcrafted soap is a blend of both science and art. By combining the scientific knowledge of the last 150 years and the artistic creativity of the soapmaker, each bar is safe, luxurious and unique. Handcrafted soap is soap in its true and most pure form.

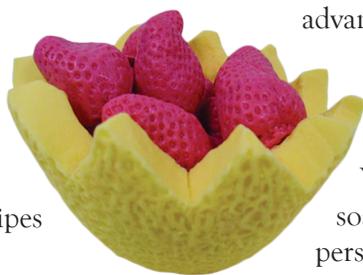
Handcrafted soap can be made from scratch by the cold or hot process methods or by utilizing a pre-made soap base. The Handcrafted Soapmakers Guild recognizes any soap made by these methods to be handcrafted so long as at least 50% of the process is done by hand.

**Handcrafted soap is soap in its truest and purest form.**

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”.

Handcrafted soapmakers generally pride themselves on the unique recipes that 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 might be added specialized oils, nut butters or seed extracts to bring the desired qualities to the finished bar.

**Most handcrafted soapmakers use food-quality, natural ingredients in their soaps.**

Fragrance oils or plant-based essential oils are added for scent. 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 “simple soap” with no additives or scent.

Besides all the wonderful ingredients that may be in handcrafted soap, perhaps the biggest advantage of handcrafted soap is in the soapmakers themselves, each of whom invests their care and attention to detail into every batch and bar.

When you use a bar of handcrafted soap, you know it was made with the personal touch of a local soapmaker.



## What About Glycerin?

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

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

With handcrafted soaps, glycerin remains intact in the soap. The end result is mild, pure soap that gently cleanses your skin without being harsh, irritating or drying.

