

Treat yourself, locally

Local businesses offer natural bath and beauty products

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Several businesses in the Columbia-Pacific region make and sell sustainably-sourced, natural bath and beauty products so customers can practice self care while also caring for the environment and the local economy.

The Magical Bee

Acupuncturist and herbalist James Carter and his husband, Daniel Uribe, create and sell a variety of natural candles and soaps through their business, The Magical Bee.

Uribe's brother is a beekeeper, which inspired the Astoria-based couple to try their hand at making beeswax balms and salves for Carter's clients.

"We dove right in and started making many types of candles," said Carter, who runs Luna Acupuncture and Wellness in Hillsboro as well as a new location in Astoria. "A lot of times people who see me at the acupuncture office are not able to take in herbs, I see a lot of chronic conditions. So we started mixing herbs into candles and soaps with essential oils and it evolved from there."

Uribe added it took some trial and error, but eventually the two came up with successful recipes for soaps and candles using beeswax mixed with coconut wax and soy wax.

Since then, The Magical Bee has grown and now uses herbs from all over the world, including turmeric, frankincense, myrrh, wintergreen, copaiba and French lavender. All ingredients are sustainably-sourced, paraben-free and chemical-free.

Uribe said it's really important that people in the area can get access to locally-made aromatherapy products.

"People could really benefit from a good aromatherapy candle," Uribe said. "If they have anxiety or depression I'd always recommend one of our lavender-lilac candles to ease their mood."

Carter said it's important to have these products available locally at the Astoria Sunday Market, as well as online and on Etsy.

"There are huge pockets in the U.S. that don't have natural products so it's available online for them too," Carter said.

Part of the profits from The Magical Bee go toward Love, Peace and Harmony, a humanitarian nonprofit foundation, and Carter offers free Love, Peace and Harmony meditation sessions.

Harmony Soapworks

Fellow Astoria Sunday Market vendor and soap maker Diana Thompson owns Harmony Soapworks in Oysterville.

Thompson said she and her husband started the business in 1997 in Portland, when they decided they wanted to have a business of their own. Thomp-

son got involved with small business development programs at her local community college and got her start in making soap through one of her classmates, who was also running a soap business.

Thompson and her husband moved to the Long Beach Peninsula in 1999, when Thompson began working for a friend whose company sold decorative soap molds.

When a company in Japan, Tree of Life, contacted the soap molds company, Thompson brought along samples of her own soap to give to the representatives, who were impressed with her products. Since then, Thompson has been making soap for Tree of Life, as well as selling wholesale to local shops on the Long Beach Peninsula and online to customers.

"We try to be really careful about where we get our ingredients," Thompson said. In addition to natural plant oils, Thompson uses essential oils from a company in the Portland area, as well as local herbs and plants, including cranberry seeds and fiber from Washington. Harmony Soapworks also uses powdered goat milk and has even made a beer soap using beer from local breweries Astoria Brewing Company, Willapa Brewing Co. and North Jetty Brewing.

"I'm lucky I've had some really good employees," Thompson said. "When we have a small business and we're paying people for their work, that money goes back into the local community, which I think is always a good arrangement."

Royal Makaha

Ever since she was very young, Julie Greene has been interested in studying plants. She went on to get a master's degree in botany and took classes about the use of essential oils. After two decades of making essential oil products for friends and family, she decided to become a registered aromatherapist in 2015 and began selling her products at the Astoria Sunday Market and Ilwaco Saturday Market.

She named her business Royal Makaha — Good Vibrations Blends, after her family's favorite destination, Mākaha, Hawaii.

"It is lots of fun and it's nice because they're all health-based products that can help with pain and anxiety," Greene said. Some of her products include essential oil sprays to address pain, allergies and mosquitos, and she even makes sprays for pets to reduce their anxiety and ward off fleas and ticks. During the pandemic, she created a mask spray people can spray inside their masks that has a pleasant scent and is meant to be good for the respiratory system.

"I source the oils directly from small family farms from all over the world that are organic or non-sprayed," Greene said.

Greene said she believes in vibrations, so she only makes batches of her products when she's feeling great. During a new moon, she'll take water



EMILY LINDBLOM

Amy Francoeur owns Sacrilicious Beauty in Astoria.

from the spring off of Highway 26 and states her intention that it will do the highest good for healing whoever's going to buy it.

"I don't think you're going to get that from big factories and machines," Greene said.

Sacrilicious Beauty

Another place to find locally-made, natural bath and beauty products is Sacrilicious Beauty, a brick and mortar store in downtown Astoria.

Owner Amy Francoeur started her career as a cosmetologist for 15 years at Aveda, and has always been fascinated by the power of plant extracts in beauty products. She started her own salon in Denver and began making bath bombs and lotion as a hobby.

"In 2016 I moved to the coast and really put effort into developing new formulas," Francoeur said. She founded Sacrilicious Beauty out of her Oysterville home in 2017, started her first storefront in Long Beach in 2018 and moved to her current Astoria location the following year.

"I fell in love with this space," Francoeur said of the Astoria store.

Now, she has expanded the business to sell not only her own products but others from predominantly women and LGBTQ-owned businesses.

Some of her own products include bath bombs, salts and bubbles, skin care, cleaners, lotions and body creams.

"I like to use things you don't often see here," she said, adding she infuses baobab oil and kukui oil into moisturizers. "It's also an opportunity to learn



COURTESY OF HARMONY SOAPWORKS

Harmony Soapworks demonstrates making custom round soap.

about different cultures and beauty practices around the world." She has traveled to India to learn about Ayurvedic rituals for hair and skin care involving hot oils.

According to Francoeur, when it comes to self care products, there are two options: Going to a big box store and blindly buying things without getting to ask questions, or choosing to visit a local shop where the maker can be easily contacted to give advice and explain what goes into the products.

"I'm happy to help," Francoeur said.