

> **candles**

Once Burned, Twice Gifted

Candles are becoming more giftable than ever, thanks to the trendy use of recycled materials and the practice of repurposing vessels after the wax has melted away.

BY ALEX HERRING

Candles aren't known for being "the gift that keeps on giving," but thanks to current market trends, that's exactly what many of them are now. From recycled wine and beer bottles to concrete containers that can be reused as a planter, a pencil holder and more, manufacturers are increasingly packaging candles in ways that stretch the limits of what these products can offer. Not only does the gift of a candle add decorative value

to the home, but sustainable value as well, and showing off the possibilities within a store display can benefit both retailers and customers alike.

Going Green with Candles

Undoubtedly, the best reason to stock candles in vessels made from recycled materials is that it's good for the environment. Many candles are packaged inside of recycled glass jars and containers, for instance, and according to the Glass Packing Institute,

one ton of natural resources are saved with every ton of glass that gets recycled. It's also beneficial for the economy: the Container Recycling Institute reports that recycling 1,000 tons of glass creates more than eight jobs.

Recycled glass can also work well for merchandising purposes. Just take a look at Torched Products, a company that uses recycled beer bottles and growlers—all of which are cut at a 20-degree angle and sanded down for smooth edges that won't cut into the

Sempre Beve candles are made to be repurposed as stemless wine or cock-tail glasses. A portion of profits from these candles helps support the Nature Conservancy, a leading conservation organization that protects and conserves ecologically important lands and bodies of water. Sempre Beve. terrasi.com

RETAIL TIP

'America Recycles Day' is nationally observed on November 15. Try planning a social post that day that promotes recycling and encourages your customers to do their part by purchasing gifts made from recycled materials, such as candles.



skin—to visually reinforce its line of beer-scented waxes. The resulting candle is one that customers can make an instant connection to, since it both looks and smells like beer, making a great decorative and distinctive accent for a man cave, bachelor pad or backyard cookout. Other vendors, like Rewined and Mad Candle Co., use recycled wine and liquor bottles for a similar effect.

One Candle, Many Uses - Repurposing a candle container once the wax is completely burned up is not only a practical and budget-friendly thing to do, but also the socially responsible thing to do, as items that may otherwise have ended up in a landfill get the chance for a second life around the home.

As Cara Causey, vice president of marketing and business development for Cait and Co., the parent company of Urban Wick explains, “People are becoming more aware of the impact we have on the environment. Some are taking steps towards minimizing waste, and one easy way to do that is to reuse or repurpose a container or jar. It’s hard to commit to zero waste, but it’s not hard to take a container after the candle is burned down and use it for something else. I think customers, as well as candle makers, are drawn to the idea because it is a convenient, approachable way to contribute something small to the environment.”

According to Causey, Urban Wick’s founder Caitlin Abshier decided to make the colorful candle vessels out of concrete in order to create something unique and sustainable that would also add beauty to a well-designed room. Some of the most popular ways Urban Wick candles get reused after burning include as a succulent planter, a pencil holder or as a toothbrush holder. Causey suggests retailers display the vessel in multiple ways so that customers can clearly visualize its versatility. “That way, it would be a multipurpose selling point: a sample while it’s being melted, and an example of how to reuse it afterwards,” she said.

If you carry travel-sized candle tins, be sure to think up creative display uses for them, too. “A travel candle vessel is also a great succulent planter, or it can be used as a small coin jar, a key holder for your entry table or even a button holder for your sewing/craft station,” Causey explained.

The added bonus of a reusable candle can certainly be a key winning factor to make a sale, and Ursula Terrasi had this in mind when she created her line of Sempre Beve candles, which get their name from the Italian phrase “always drink.” Each soy candle comes in a sand-etched, dishwasher-safe glass that can be reused to serve wine and cocktails.

“I noticed increasingly at parties I attended that beverages were served in no-stem glasses,” Terrasi explained. “So, voila! I realized that pouring my candles into high-quality stemless cocktailware would provide something customers could use over and over again and never have too many of.”

From Campagna and Vermuth to Spritz and Orangeccello, each Sempre Beve candle corresponds to a popular cocktail for which a recipe can be found tucked inside the candle box, making a great hostess gift, especially when paired with a bottle of the spirit that goes with the cocktail-inspired candle, Terrasi pointed out. She also recommends serving complimentary cocktails next to the candles—a practice that fully embraces aperitivi, the Italian tradition of having pre-dinner drinks to whet the appetite, and one that has led to great success in her own retail store.

“As more and more retail stores are concentrating on enhancing their customers’ experience, Sempre Beve is a perfect way to engage customers,” Terrasi said. “It’s been great fun for customers to be part of in-store aperitivi tastings; some purchase several scents and have a tasting of their own at home. For retailers, it offers an opportunity to be part of not only a very on-trend product concept, but a great way to engage customers and be part of moving forward with socially aware and globally thinking consumers.” •

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