

# Burning Bright

From puppy's breath to Santa's whiskers, Lori Woods has seen and smelled it all as the owner of the 5B&Co. Candlemakers shop in Brookside.

PHOTOS BY ZACH BAUMAN

Former elementary school teacher Lori Woods decided to make a career change when she first discovered 5B&Co. Candlemakers more than a decade ago at the original shop in Weston, Missouri. She franchised the business from owner Marsha Martin in 2003 and learned the craft of candle making from her. We caught up with Woods just as her busiest season kicked off to learn more about her work.

**Q. How many candles do you make each day?**

**A.** This time of year, we're making anywhere from 200-400 votives per day. We also are making pillars or filling jars everyday too. It all depends on the order we're working on; we pour for the shop but we also wholesale to a few local companies. That's a part of our business that is beginning to grow.

**Q. What sets 5B's candles apart?**

**A.** Our candles are unique in the fact that they are produced right there in the building. We use a soy-blended wax, cotton wick and top-notch oils. We do not cut costs where oils are concerned because we want the fragrances to be as authentic as possible with no artificial undertone. We also blend several of our own scents so customers will not find those scents elsewhere.

**Q. Why do you think people are so drawn to scented candles?**

**A.** People are drawn to scent, as it is comforting and brings pleasure. The sense of smell is the most heightened of the senses. It is also the sense that is the most closely tied to memory. So when someone smells a fragrance, it most likely reminds him or her of a memory, an experience,

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Lori Woods, owner of 5B&Co. Candlemakers in Brookside, learned the candle making trade from the owner of the original 5B&Co. location in Weston, Missouri.



If you love the candle company's scents, get ready to make a little extra room on your vanity and in your home. Next year, Woods says she plans to introduce lotions and a wine bottle cutting and filling service, allowing people to turn empty bottles into fragrant keepsakes.

or a certain mood. They can also be considered a luxury or a treat if one does not normally spend money on candles for themselves. That makes them great gifts to give as well.

**Q. What are some of your favorite scents for the holidays?**

A. My favorite scents for the Thanksgiving season are our Harvest candle, a blend of bergamot, citrus, fig, and cedarwood, and our Pumpkin Pie, which is not a spicy scent. Our other best sellers are Gingered Pumpkin, Gingerjack, Candy Corn and Caramel Apple. Around Christmas, my favorite scent is Fraser Fir—it's the most authentic tree scent I've ever come across in candle form. I also love our Jingle Bells candle, which is a blend of Bayberry with a touch of fruitiness, Fig, and our Naughty or Nice, which is fresh and sweet all at the same time. Gingerbread, Frankincense and Myrrh, and Santa's Whiskers (a ginger-patchouli scent) are also popular with customers.

**Q. Are there any scents out there that you'd like to capture in a candle but haven't been able to yet?**

A. People jokingly ask for bacon but I've tried all the oils out there and so far I would rather smell the real thing. You can't mess with a good thing there. We're also still working on barbecue, rain and seaside scents. Other candle companies offer candles they call rain or ocean breeze scented, but they never smell like the real deal. On the other hand, we've mastered dirt, freshly cut grass, tomato vine, baby lotion, s'mores, leather, whiskey, freshly baked bread, popcorn... the list goes on and on.

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Since candles aren't always an item people think to buy for themselves, they can make great gifts. Woods says her favorites for the season include Pumpkin Pie, Fraser Fir and Harvest, a blend of bergamot, citrus, fig, and cedarwood

**Q. Do you create custom scents?**

A. Yes. For example, we worked with [Lenexa-based] Dark Horse Distillery to create a whiskey candle for use in their bar and event space- and worked with Chai Me to create an amazingly authentic Chai tea scent. Most often if we're creating a custom scent then we don't offer it in the shop as the customer has paid for the recipe, but we do sometimes adapt the recipe to create a scent for 5B. We've had plenty of requests from customers too, including puppy breath, pizza and garlic.

**Q. What's the best thing to do with empty candle containers?**

A. Once shoppers have burned through their container candles, we invite them to return their used clean container and we will refill it for them at \$2 per ounce. It's a great way to reuse and recycle. Customers can also bring in their own unique pieces—teacups, vintage Santa mugs, bowls, gravy boats, whatever they wish—and I can usually have filled within a week's time or less.

**Q. What's coming up in the future for 5B & Co.?**

A. I'm hoping to offer the service of cutting and filling wine bottles for customers starting early next year. It'll be a great way to hang on to bottles they opened to toast special occasions. We are also planning to introduce 5B&Co. lotions, as well as a totally new look and functionality to our website. ●