

# Blue Pearl candle store moves from online to local store

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Kim Rowe first started making and selling homemade, scented candles online in March 2020. In December, Rowe opened a brick-and-mortar store called Blue Pearl selling candles and wax melts at 17538 Dixie Highway in Homewood.

To make the candles, Rowe and her 14-year-old daughter heat soy wax, add coloring and scents, and pour it into molds. Most commercial brand candles are made from paraffin wax which is petroleum-based, Rowe said. Because the candles at Blue Pearl are made from soy, a renewable resource, they're more natural and it's less likely for someone to be allergic to them, she said.

Rowe's daughter Terrianna, a freshman at H-F High School, knows the entire process of making the candles, and she's helped Rowe sell the candles online and in front of SmallCakes of Homewood.

The candles' have many different scents, including Fresh Linen and a scent meant to smell like men's cologne.

"We've got about six different sizes altogether – for the beginner candle lover and the connoisseur candle lover," said Rowe.

She describes scented candles as some-



Kim Rowe, owner of Blue Pearl candle shop, makes the scented candles and wax offered for sale.

thing that can "engage the memories" and bring you back to a time and place from years ago.

"When you light a candle and you get that aroma, it really does mentally and emotionally take you to a whole 'nother place," Rowe said. "We are guided by our senses – our ears, our eyes, our nose. And

candles are sensory. It's really hard to just buy a candle online if you don't know the smell."

In addition to more conventional candles, Blue Pearl sells wax melts. This is a candle that doesn't require lighting a flame. The wax is melted by a lightbulb that you can turn on, creating the same aromas that other

Blue Pearl candles make. Wax melts aren't significantly cheaper or more expensive than lighting regular candles, Rowe said.

Rowe said she was inspired to make and sell candles after she was watching the documentary "She Did That," a show that offers a look at Black women working to raise the glass ceiling. Rowe recalled one feature about a woman starting a candle-selling business after losing her job.

"She didn't want to work for anybody else. She didn't want to take the chance of [having] her world flipped because someone fired her," said Rowe. The piece was so inspirational, that "right there...Blue Pearl was born."

Rowe currently works as a sales rep for her day job. She said there's no way she can quit her job yet but that's the plan if Blue Pearl goes well.

Rowe's in her fifties and said she's dreamed of owning her own business and being her own boss since she was a kid.

"It was either now or never," said Rowe. "Either I do something now or I let it go and I die with it."

Blue Pearl's hours of operation are currently Wednesday through Friday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., Saturday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 4 p.m. The store is closed on Monday and Tuesday.

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