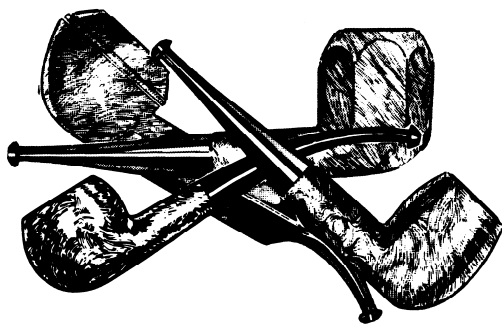


THE BRIAR PIPE

PREPARED FOR YOUR ENJOYMENT FROM OVER
75 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AND STUDY ON
THE NATURE OF PIPES AND PIPE SMOKING.



ON THE NATURE OF BRIAR....

A BRIAR Pipe begins as a “Burl” (or growth) on the root system of the White Heath Tree, a squat, hearty, shrub-like plant which grows primarily in the dry, arid, rocky wastelands around the Mediterranean Sea. Of all woods, the BRIAR Burl is unique for making pipes; it is tough, porous and nearly impervious to heat. Burls for fine quality pipes can often be 50 to 100 years old when harvested for pipe making.

....AND BRIAR PIPES

Once harvested, the BRIAR burls are cut by skilled craftsmen using large, circular saws to remove the soft and cracked portions, leaving only close-grained, extremely hard BRIAR wood. This remaining BRIAR is then rough-cut into small blocks, called “ebauchons”, in sizes and shapes suitable for fashioning into standard shape pipes. Some particularly fine grained BRIAR is left uncut in larger pieces called “plateau” which is used for larger free form pipes and well grained standard shapes.

When harvested, BRIAR contains considerable moisture, sap and resin. The ebauchons and plateau pieces are boiled in water for several hours to remove much of the sap and resin. This is followed by long periods of drying (up to 5 years) so that all traces of moisture are removed from the wood. This careful “curing and aging” process is of the utmost importance in bringing out the finest smoking qualities of a briar pipe. It allows the pipe “to breathe,” to absorb moisture and oil from the tobacco, assuring a cool, dry smoke.

HOW TO SELECT A NEW PIPE

Selecting a new pipe is an important factor in the overall enjoyment of pipe smoking. Because of the fact that BRIAR is a natural material and grows under very extreme conditions, only a small percentage of all the pipes produced will have uniformly fine grain patterns and perfection of finish upon which a manufacturer or individual will stamp their name. These exceptional and rare pieces will go through an extended curing or drying process and then the blocks will be graded to make the finest pipes possible.

These hand made pipes break down into two main types: Free Form and Standard Shape. Since both of these types are made by hand, weight and balance,

draft hole drilling and the flush fit of the mouthpiece are all impeccably crafted by skilled artisans. Free form pipes are carved to accentuate the grain and the grain will dictate the shape. These pipes are one of a kind and are known for their unique design. There are many standard shapes, dozens in fact, and once the craftsman has “read” the grain of the unfinished Briar blocks, the pipe will be carved into one of the standard shapes which best reveals these grain patterns. A smooth finish is always most desirable in these pieces, but sometimes there will be little imperfections that will dictate a sandblast or rusticated finish. The smoking quality remains the same. Considering the number of steps taken and the amount of care given to each of these unique and rare pieces, it is understandable that they will demand top dollar. Serious pipe collectors take great pride in owning and smoking these fine briars.

The majority of pipes you will find at your favorite Tinder Box will be machine made or mass produced. These will be very affordable and are the pipes that are sought out by both beginners and established pipe smokers. Often these pipes will have imperfections in the surface and fillers will be used to conceal these defects. Keep in mind that these imperfections have nothing to do with smoking quality. These pipes often are not as well seasoned or cured and they do not have all the attention to detail that the high grades possess, but because of their reasonable price and good looks, they are most appealing. Most every manufacturer has pipes in this category and you will want to evaluate each piece for aesthetic beauty, weight, how the pipe feels in hand and the bowl capacity when making your final decision.

Your Tinder Box tobacconist is a knowledgeable, skilled professional. He or she can answer any questions you may have about BRIAR pipes and can provide invaluable assistance in the selection process.

SMOKING YOUR PIPE (this is the best part!)

Your greatest smoking pleasure will come from learning and practicing the basic techniques employed by pipe experts. A cool, dry, flavorful smoke time after time will be your reward. Once you know the secrets of loading, lighting and tamping your pipe, you will enjoy the full richness and flavor of your tobacco. Your pipe will stay lit longer and give you full smoking satisfaction.

HOW TO BREAK IN YOUR NEW PIPE

“Breaking in” your new pipe simply means developing a thin layer of carbon or “cake” on the inside wall and in the heel (bottom) of the bowl. The carbon cake acts like a grate in a fireplace to improve the draft and ensure complete combustion. It also serves as a barrier between the burning tobacco and the bare wood. Many pipes are pre-carbonized to assist you in the break-in process.

There are several methods of breaking in a new pipe. Tinder Box recommends beginning with a full bowl of tobacco. The most important thing is to smoke the tobacco *all the way to the bottom!* SMOKE SLOWLY. Tamp and relight as often as necessary; do not be afraid of using too many matches. If your pipe gets too hot, let it rest awhile; then tamp the dead ashes and relight. You can test if the pipe is too hot by placing it against your cheek. If it is uncomfortably hot, set it aside and allow the pipe to cool.

PACKING YOUR PIPE

The packing method we recommend is LOOSE AT THE BOTTOM AND MORE FIRMLY AS YOU WORK YOUR WAY UP TO THE TOP OF THE BOWL. Before you start this process, rub your tobacco between your fingers and get a feel for its moisture content and texture and remove any hard bits that will only interrupt the burning. Aromatic or flavored tobaccos will always have a higher moisture content than non aromatics, burleys or Virginias, and therefore should be packed even looser at the bottom to provide for proper air space between layers.

The number of layers you create inside the chamber will vary depending on bowl size. Once packed, the tobacco on top should feel springy and will expand once it is lit. You will use your tamper to gently push one layer into the next unlit layer to keep the combustion process going and allow for an even burn throughout.

The packing process is absolutely the MOST IMPORTANT aspect of pipe smoking and with a little practice you can become an expert. If problems persist, ask your Tinder Box tobacconist for a demonstration.