

## Essential Safety Tips about How To Use Your Chimenea-00-5400

Historically it seems that chimeneas, also spelled chiminea, were first used 500-1000 years ago in Mexico for heating and cooking, and they were made of clay. The role of the chimenea was a daily life necessity and they were used indoors, usually by an open window or in the centre of the hut or home with an opening in the roof to allow smoke to escape.

Now, however chimeneas are used outdoors mainly for entertainment in a backyard setting. They are multi functional and apart from being used as a barbecue, they are also used as an effective patio heater as well as for decorative purposes. Clay varieties are giving way to the more sturdy cast iron construction which is longer lasting.

Chimineas are growing in popularity both in the US and UK. They need little space, and can even be used in colder months, as per the age-old favourite pastime of sitting around a campfire. You can create a nice cosy back garden fire that is contained and safe with a chiminea and they make a great feature for a garden party.

Cast iron chimeneas are a safe and fun way to enjoy an evening outdoors however it is very important that you consider safety when using a chiminea.

Here are some safety tips:

- Always read and action the instructions that come with a new chimenea carefully.
- Never use a chiminea indoors! They are only meant to be used outdoors.
- Make sure the chimenea is placed on sturdy stone, brick or concrete ground where there is nothing hanging over it, eg trees, clothes lines etc. You don't want the wind to be sending embers flying around.

Most chimeneas have a safety screen.

- Chimineas are heavy so find a fairly permanent spot and try not to keep moving them around, you don't want to have an accident or break it.
- When assembling your new chimenea be sure to read all of the assembly instructions. It's a good idea to assemble your new chiminea in or around the area you will be using it. Cast iron chimeneas are very heavy and the less you have to move it the better. Assemble your chimenea making sure to fasten all bolts and screws securely.
- Never touch your chimenea while it is burning or even immediately after the fire is out. The iron will hold the heat and definitely cause serious burns if you're not cautious.
- Keep children and pets a safe distance away from the chimenea.

The advantages of a chiminea are as follows:

- The design of the chimenea means that the fire is contained and the size of the fire is dictated by the size of the bowl. Because the fire in the chimenea is contained, it will retain more heat. This is a great plus of chimeneas.
- Another advantage of a chimenea is that because of the tall funnel-like chimney, the heat will blow the smoke straight up into the air and be less of an annoyance to people enjoying the occasion (unlike with fire pits).
- They are very decorative, with some great designs, such as roses, butterflies, checked designs etc.
- It is easy to quench a fire in a chimenea and cleaning up the next day is a breeze.

What should you burn?

There are several types of woods that work great in a Chiminea and a few that are absolutely detrimental to your Chiminea and/or your health. A good size range for Chiminea wood is from 9-14 inches in length and 4 inches in diameter. This size may vary depending on the size of the Chiminea mouth.

Do Not Burn: Pressure treated wood, these emits toxic gasses when burned. A good rule of thumb is that if it has a greenish tint it may be pressure treated. If you are not sure DON'T burn it!

Types of wood to burn:

There are several types of wood that many people love to burn however extra caution is needed. Eco type logs are the best type of wood to use. This wood is made from the dust of hardwood floor manufacturing companies and is compressed into logs at 80,000 PSI. These logs come in packs of 8 and are very inexpensive but burn much longer and with much larger flames than some of the fake logs you see in the supermarket or local home

center. There is no paraffin used to hold the logs together so they burn slower and better!

Red Cedar has a nice aroma and keeps the mosquitos away however it has a tendency to pop" therefore be sure and have a spark arrestor in or on the neck and a screen over the mouth. Mesquite is an excellent cooking wood for those with grill chimineas but it burns very hot. Be sure and use only a few pieces at a time. Although mesquite is noted for its ability to thrive in near drought conditions, this culinary wood is best known for its qualities in smoking meat. Chefs, regardless of culture or location, hail mesquite as the only option for smoking brisket. For Chiminea grill users mesquite gives steaks an incredible flavor. \*Remember Mesquite burns hot so limit the number of pieces.

How to make a fire in a chimenea:

Begin with a small pile of kindling over one or two sheets of crumpled newspaper. Do not use starter fluid, gasoline or any other fire-starting preparation. Light the newspaper to start the fire. When the kindling is burning well, add one or two slightly larger pieces of wood. When this wood is burning well, carefully add your chimenea-sized fire logs.

If you plan on cooking in your chimenea it is a good idea to have a few fires first. Just like a grill the food won't taste as good if the chimenea hasn't been cured" with a few fires. Never use gasoline or other petroleum based accelerants to get the fire going! Fat wood or fire starters work best!

What to burn in an outdoor fireplace.

The cooking benefits make wood the number one fuel source. A good hardwood such as oak creates the best fire. You can ask your local lumber yard or look in the yellow pages for a good wood supplier in your area.

Other sources are manufactured fire logs, propane, natural gas and gel inserts. Pinion wood, pronounced "pin-yon", is commonly recommended by chiminea owners for its pleasant "pine aroma." It also helps to repel mosquitoes and other flying insects. In the Southwest, Pion is a common fireplace and stove wood. It keeps an active flame, produces good heat, and burns well with other woods.

You can also add pine cones, apple wood, or other exotics if you would like a more aromatic experience. Manufactured fire logs are a quick way to get a fire going.

So all that's left to say is may you safely enjoy all that your beautiful chiminea has to offer!

## About the Author

Hop over here for some lovely: [cast iron chimeneas](#). Chimineas maker a great feature for any garden, so join the rising trend, and get ready for summer!

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