



## Which chiminea is perfect for you?

Dear Reader,

A guide to the magic ...

The right chiminea changes your life for the better.

A chiminea lets you enjoy more nights under the stars – whatever the season. You sit around a cosy fire with good company, good conversation – and perhaps a bottle of wine or five.

You just need the **right** chiminea first.

And unfortunately, that's where most people go wrong. They don't pick the right chiminea.

I've written this guide to help you choose a chiminea which adds enormous value to your life for many seasons to come.

Best

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# 3 chiminea types. Which one's for you?



**There are hundreds of chiminea models, but only 3 basic types. These are clay, cast-iron and steel.**

Once you've chosen your chiminea's material, it's much easier to pick the right model for you.

As you compare materials, I suggest you consider...

- The type of fuel you plan on using
- Whether you want it for heating only or cooking too
- The size of your patio
- Whether you plan on moving it around or not
- Whether you have pets or children
- Your garden's style.

## CLAY

**Do you have a colourful, rustic garden?  
I expect a clay chiminea would fit in beautifully.**

The clay chiminea is the original chiminea, after all. Used by Central and South Americans for hundreds of years, they began as cooking hearths. Over the years the design has been refined, but the style has stayed the same.

**Beware:** A lot of clay models today are cheap, manufactured knock-offs. Look for a high-quality model, hand-made in Mexico. A decent clay chiminea should also have a large mouth at the front. This gives the fire a strong draw of air for a cleaner, hotter flame.

Most clay chimineas are inspired by Aztec, Mayan and Mexican art, but come in traditional and contemporary styles. The 'Azteca' chiminea (top right), for instance, is traditionally crafted. It looks much like the chimineas used centuries ago.

Meanwhile, the 'Ellipse' chiminea (right) has a modern design, high gloss finish and you can choose from 8 different colours.

Clay chimineas can't withstand the same high temperatures as cast-iron or steel, so you shouldn't choose one if you're burning coal. This gets much hotter than wood, causing the clay shell to crack.

However, your clay chiminea is the most environmentally friendly of the three. It combusts wood, charcoal, cardboard and garden debris better than any other type.

You'll be amazed at how your clay chiminea turns a pile of wood into a fine ash, leaving almost no residue. And the outer shell absorbs the heat, acting as a radiator long after the fire has died down.

I recommend burning hickory and pinion wood. They both smell wonderful, and their smoke fends off mosquitos. Hickory is also one of the most popular BBQ woods. If you have a grill it adds a unique chargrilled taste to meats.

You can cook simple recipes - like baked potatoes - on a clay chiminea. Or get a grill and cooking pan for basic cooking and barbecuing.

Clay BBQ style chimineas (as shown bottom right) split in 2 halves. The top lifts off so it can be used as a grill.

However, clay chimineas like this - while handy - are only built to handle smaller BBQ fires. They're not particularly versatile. If you cook regularly, you're better off choosing a cast-iron or steel chiminea - as I'll explain in a moment.

Unlike metal chimineas, clay shells don't get dangerously hot. This is worth knowing if you have pets or children to watch over because they won't get burned on contact.



And while all three types are easy to assemble, clay is certainly the easiest. All you do is find a level, fire-resistant surface for the stand. Then carefully place it on top. Simple.

You can treat a clay chiminea with an ordinary emulsion paint. Also, be sure to keep it protected with an insulated cover. I recommend getting a cover whatever material you choose, but with clay it's absolutely essential because clay soaks up moisture. If it freezes, you get cracks in the shell. Clay chimineas need to stay dry – especially in the winter.

## Chimalin AFC chimineas

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### Want a clay chiminea that won't crack through heat?

Gardeco is a specialist importer of real fire products, and they've made a revolutionary breakthrough with a remarkable new fireproof clay. It took them eight years to develop and perfect, and the new product was announced to a delighted world in 2015.

#### What inspired the new range?

Gardeco have been selling ordinary chimineas for two decades, and they developed Chimalin AFC in response to customers who wanted clay fire products that wouldn't crack through heat.

Gardeco took up the challenge and travelled to China, Mexico, Vietnam and Malaysia in search of the perfect clay. They eventually discovered special secret ingredients to add to the clay, which did the job perfectly.

The experimentation period must have been fun. Gardeco even submerged a chiminea in water for a couple of hours, then froze it, the kind of thing that would usually crack clay into pieces and not something you should try at home. But when they fired it up, it worked perfectly and stayed whole. At that stage they knew they'd finally cracked the clay issue... pun intended!

Fresh for 2016, the latest range of Chimalin AFC clay fire products is now available, and they all come with a full five year guarantee against heat-cracking.

This means that, for the first time, you can fire up a clay chiminea in the same way you'd fire up a cast iron one, building a lovely big fire with peace of mind.

- The clay's unique advanced fire proofing means it'll handle much higher temperatures than standard clay
- The clay's extra strength means it can be fired at high temperatures and glazed, a popular and good-looking finish
- The glaze makes the clay even less porous, which improves water resistance even more
- The glaze also retains heat really well, so Chimalin AFC products stay hot for longer.

All this means you can treat your AFC chiminea, fire pit, firebowl or whatever the same way you'd treat a cast iron one. Just cover them or bring them inside through winter, just to be on the safe side.

You can cook on them, just the same as any other chiminea. And, another small yet important advantage, you don't need to line the belly of the pot with pumice stones.

See Chimalin AFC in action here on YouTube



### Consider a clay chiminea if...

- You have pets or children
- You don't want the hassle of assembly
- You want a traditional look
- You want it mainly for heating and decoration
- You're particularly concerned about the environment

### Consider a Chimalin AFC chiminea if...

- You love the look of clay but want the durability of cast iron

### Don't get clay if...

- You want to move it around – they're heavy and will crack if knocked over
- You want to leave it out all year – they'll crack if left in the frost
- You're burning coal
- You're looking to heat a particularly large area.

## CAST-IRON

### Choose your spot wisely.

### Cast-iron chimineas are astonishingly heavy. You won't want to move it around.

However, cast iron chimineas burn fuel at a furiously high temperature. Not only that, the outer shell holds the heat for hours. This makes them much more effective for heating large areas.

Take the Jumbo Toledo (right). This measures over 146cm high and 56cm wide at the belly. It heats a larger area than any other chiminea I have.

If you're choosing between 2 sizes, I suggest you pick the larger one. You can always put less fuel on a fire that's too hot. But if your chiminea's too small, you'll never get it warm enough.

You should also seriously consider a large metal chiminea - be it steel or cast-iron - if you want to cook regularly.

That's because they're a lot more versatile. Most have a swing-out, lipped grill you can use to grill burgers, fry eggs or rest a pizza stone on top.

A cast-iron chiminea lets you burn any fuel - wood, charcoal or coal - so you get more control over the temperature.

Cast-iron is prone to rust, so give any bare spots a rub with wire wool and a lick of paint before each winter. Also, use a cover to protect it.



### Consider cast-iron if...

- You're using it to cook regularly
- You have a particularly large area to heat
- You're burning coal

### Don't get cast-iron if...

- You want to move it around

# STEEL

**Steel is less than half the weight of cast-iron.  
So if you're moving your chiminea around regularly - and heavy lifting is a problem - consider one of these.**

Where a medium cast-iron chiminea weighs over 35Kg, a steel chiminea of the same size would only weigh 15Kg. It's effortless to move around by comparison.

Steel is also the easiest material to maintain. It isn't as prone to the same cracks as clay and it doesn't rust as easily as cast-iron.

## So what's the downside?

Well, steel doesn't get as hot as cast-iron or clay. It's the least environmentally friendly. If your patio is particularly large, you'll need more fuel to heat it. But you can still burn any type of fuel - be careful with coal on thinner steel chimineas - and steel chimineas are just as useful for cooking.

The 'Tia' steel chiminea (right) has a pull-out grill just like the Toledo. It warms up fast, kicks out lots of heat - and is easy to store, move and maintain.

I mention the Tia chiminea, because it also has an ingenious 'chim stove' you can add (bottom right). As I write this, I haven't seen the same gadget for any other model. The chim stove fixes between the bowl and the funnel of your chiminea, and a cast-iron cooking plate sits on top.

As the heat passes through the system, the cooking plate gets hot. You can use it to boil a kettle or heat a saucepan. If you want a complete outdoor version of your stove, this set is ideal.



## Consider steel if...

- You plan on moving it around often
- Heavy lifting is a problem
- You're cooking on it regularly
- You're absolutely allergic to maintenance
- You're burning any type of fuel
- You want something as versatile as your stove (get the Tia chiminea and chim stove)

## Don't get steel if...

- You need the extra heat cast-iron gives
- You're particularly concerned about the environment

## Chiminea Vs Fire Bowl

A chiminea works by drawing air through the mouth and out the funnel.

As the funnel gets hot, the speed of the air increases. It radiates an enormous amount of heat, while burning a relatively small amount of fuel.

Quite simply, if you're looking for a way to heat your patio, nothing beats a chiminea. That's what it's made for.

But if you want the fire more for show, you might prefer a fire bowl.

A fire bowl, like Gardeco's Calenta model (right), stands in the centre of your patio. This means the fire can be enjoyed from every angle. It's a wonderful way to decorate your garden.

You can even get a fire bowl table, like the one pictured opposite. This table is from the Violetta range.

It lets you BBQ with all your guests around the table. And the grill doubles up as an ice-bucket, so you can use it to chill beer and wine.



# How to season a chiminea

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## “My chiminea’s got a crack! How did this happen?!”

### The most common reason, I find, is the owner started a large fire too quickly.

If your chiminea jumps from stone cold to piping hot, the sudden change in temperature causes the shell to split. It’s a particular problem with clay chimineas. You need your chiminea to warm up slowly. We call this process seasoning or ‘curing’.

#### Here’s how to season your chiminea. Take extra care to follow these steps on cold days...

1. Place your chiminea precisely where you want it before you begin.
2. If you have a clay chiminea you must insulate the bottom. Put a layer of pumice stones in the bowl - you can use sand but we recommend pumice stones. Fill it  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the way up to the opening.
3. Start with a small fire of paper and cardboard. Let it burn itself out. Repeat the process two or three times.
4. By now the shell should be slightly warmer. Start a small fire of wood kindling. Let the sides heat up as it burns out. Repeat a couple more times.
5. Start building your fire slowly – one log at a time.

Keep the fire small for about 20 minutes before you start building it up high.

You’ll want to build your fire with a seasoned wood first. Coal and coke burn much hotter than wood. They shouldn’t be used right away.

Never use lighter fluids on your chiminea. If you’re having trouble starting a fire, I suggest you use Ocote sticks instead. Ocote sticks come from Central American trees. They have an unusually high resin content, so they burn much easier. You only need a couple of sticks to start a fire.



## Pick the right fuel

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### Not every fuel burns at the same speed and temperature.

The heat you get depends on 3 things: calorific content, weight and moisture. Whereas the average log has a calorific content of 16MJ per KG, coal scores 29. Almost double.

That’s why coal burns almost twice as hot - unsuitable for clay chimineas.

Of all the fuel types, wood is the least consistent.

Some woods burn slow hot and clean - the perfect chiminea fire. Meanwhile, others spit out sparks and puff acrid smoke into the air.

I’ve drawn a table (next page) to help you choose the right wood types. The highlighted woods (in red) are the very best choices for a chiminea fire.

6 logs should burn for a good 3 hours. An average 1Kg log burns at a similar temperature to an electric fire.

If you plan to cook with your chiminea, charcoal is great. But do pick an environmentally friendly, sustainable one – for example, Wyre Forest Charcoal.

### How to improve your fuel’s economy.

Wood burns much hotter and cleaner when it’s dry.

A piece of wood lying in the forest could be at least 50% moisture. The fire has to burn all that moisture off before it can start producing real heat.

But a log that’s been dried for 2 years might have only a 15% moisture content. You could expect this sort of wood to produce 60% more heat.

Not surprisingly, dry wood costs more. But if you have the space, you can do it yourself.

Store your fresh wood away from the elements, off-ground with plenty of air circulation. Larger pieces need to be split so the air can dry them out quicker.

When you store your wood this way, you can expect it to reach a moisture content of 30% within 1 year, and 20% within 2 years.



# Pick the right fuel

WOOD	HEAT	SPEED	SMOKE/SPARKS	OVERALL
Chim Logs & Heat Logs - recycled compressed sawdust	High	Slow	Low	Excellent
Alder	High		Moderate	Excellent
Apple	Moderate	Slow	Low	Excellent
Ash	High		Low	Excellent
Beech	High		Low	Excellent
Birch	Moderate	Fast	Moderate	Good
Cedar	High		High	Fair
Cherry	Moderate	Slow	Low	Good
Chestnut	Moderate		High	Fair
Cypress	Moderate	Slow	Low	Good
Douglas Fir	Low		High	Poor
Elder	Low	Fast	High	Poor
Elm	Moderate		Moderate	Fair
Hazel	Moderate	Fast	Low	Good
Holly	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Good
Horse Chestnut	High		High	Good
Laburnum			<b>Poisonous</b>	<b>Do not use</b>
Lime	Low			Poor
Maple	High		Low	Good
Oak	High	Slow	Low	Excellent
Pear	Moderate	Slow		Good
Pine	Moderate		Moderate	Fair
Plane	Moderate		Moderate	Fair
Plum				
Poplar	Low	Slow	High	Fair
Acacia	Moderate	Slow	High	Fair
Spruce		Fast	High	Poor
Sweet Chestnut			High	Fair
Sycamore	Moderate		Moderate	Fair
Walnut	Moderate		Low	Good
Willow	Moderate		Low	Good
Yew	High	Slow	Low	Excellent

# The 9 vital accessories

**These 9 accessories are absolutely essential. You need them to stay safe and make sure your Chiminea lasts year after year.**

## Chiminea cover (£27.87 - £34.87)

**Whichever chiminea you buy, you need a cover.**

A cover stops your chiminea rusting away through the winter. If you have a cast-iron model, it means you can keep it protected without moving it indoors.

With your clay chimineas you must keep the frost out too - the absorbed moisture causes the shell to crack so an insulated cover is essential.

All our covers are made from tough woven polyethylene. They're waterproof, UV resistant, they don't tear and they're shaped to fit perfectly.

There's also a drawstring at the bottom so you can tie it up snug.

**Important point: Never cover a wet chiminea. This seals the moisture in. Make sure it's thoroughly dried first.**



## Chiminea guard (£37.87)

5 panels surround any chiminea up to a 90cm diameter, keeping children and pets safe from the hot surface.



## Stove paint (£18.87)

This stove paint comes in a spray, so looking after your steel or cast-iron chiminea is a doddle.

Heat resistant paint wears away over time. There's no helping it. And when the metal's exposed, it could easily rust.

When you spot a bare patch, rub it down with wirewool, spray on a new layer of paint and leave it to dry. The job's done in seconds.

This stove paint comes in bronze and black.



## Fire-proof gloves (£18.97)

These one-size-fits-all gloves protect your hands and forearms - useful if you ever have to reach into the fire, or touch a hot chiminea for any reason.

Made from quality suede, these gloves are designed to withstand heat for short periods.



## Poker (£19.99)



The poker lets you move the hot fuel around, shift ash and get more air under the fire.

## Pumice stones (£18.97)

Use pumice stones to line the bottom of any clay chiminea. For jumbo and super-jumbo size chimineas you'll need 2 bags – for all other sizes just 1 will be enough.

And there's no need to buy another bag ever again. These stones can be used over and over.

You need pumice stones to stop your clay chiminea from cracking. Clay is particularly sensitive to temperature changes. It can't be in direct contact with the fire.



## Floor protector (£36.67)

Do you have decking?

If so, you'll need one of these. A floor protector stops rogue sparks from damaging the wood. It also prevents it from catching light.



## Clay chiminea Sealant (£29.97)

Apply this twice a year to any clay chiminea.

This sealant keeps the moisture and frost out, to stop your chiminea getting cracks. It's quick and easy to apply. Just use a sponge or cloth. Be sure to use this before each winter.



## Chim burner (£24.97)

This amazing burner lets you use your chiminea indoors.

It runs on bioethanol fuel so there's no smoke and no harmful fumes. The chim burner is easy to top up, as well.



# 9 must-have cooking accessories

**A chiminea burns with more intensity than your kitchen stove. Your everyday pans aren't built to handle it. So I've listed some essential cooking accessories below.**

**Always use dry wood or charcoal when cooking. Let the flames die down (these contain poisonous gasses from the fuel) and cook over the embers.**

## Removable BBQ grill (£19.87)

Designed for clay chimineas without a built-in grill. This removable BBQ grill is made from tough chromed steel. It also comes with a 'floppy foot' which drops down to support it. You can adjust the angle of the cooking surface. There is also a raised edge all around the grill to stop food falling into the fire.



## Toasting fork (£19.97)

Just the thing for making old-fashioned toast and roasting marshmallows. You can even use it to cook apples over your open fire.



## Cooking iron (£24.50)

The cooking iron lets you roast vegetables and meats, or warm buns and croissants without the food touching the fuel. Always pre-heat cast-iron pans, coated with lots of oil or butter to prevent the food sticking. Then place it directly on the fire.



## Frying Pan (£19.87)

This frying pan has a long handle - perfect for your chiminea or firebowl. Made from steel with a non-stick teflon coating, it's thinner than cast-iron, so it cooks food faster.



## Popcorn popper (£14.97)

Fresh popcorn in 60 seconds!  
The steel-mesh dome sits over your frying pan. Put a tablespoon of vegetable oil in the pan, add the popcorn kernels and shake over the flames.



## Pancake pan (£25.67)

Lightly grease and pour in the pancake mix. This pan has a long handle so it's easy to use over an open fire.



## Waffle iron (£28.67)

This long-handled waffle iron cooks two waffles at a time. Lightly grease before you pour in the batter and move it frequently in the flames for evenly cooked, golden brown waffles. Package also contains a recipe for fresh waffle mixture.



## Chestnut pan (£24.97)

Pierce the chestnuts' skin and place them in the pan. Chestnuts should be roasted until the skin blackens and the yellow flesh shows through. Allow them to cool before peeling. This pan has a long handle and a heat-proof non-stick surface.



## Pizza Stone (£25.87)

This clay pizza stone gives an even heat distribution. The result is a superb, crispy Pizza base. Heat the pizza stone slowly, from the moment you light the fire. This prevents it from cracking. This stone is 30cm diameter, so it works best with XL and Jumbo size chimineas.



# 5 chiminea safety points

**It's mostly common sense, of course, but these safety points are easily overlooked so please take care to read them before lighting your first fire.**

1. Always place your chiminea on a flat, non-flammable surface. If you have decking, make sure you get a floor protector with your chiminea.
2. Keep your chiminea away from plants, children and garden furniture.
3. Be careful not to overfill your chiminea. If flames are coming out the funnel, your fire is too large.
4. Don't throw water on the fire unless it's a desperate emergency. Keep a bucket of sand or dirt nearby instead.
5. Always make sure the fire is completely out before leaving it unattended.