



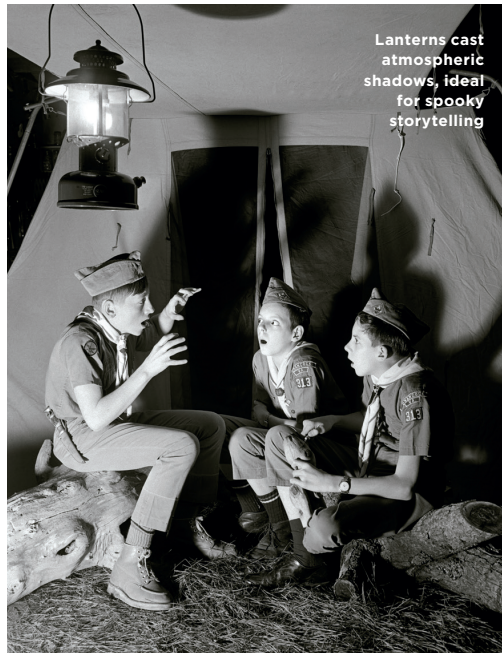
# HOME STYLE

## THE LANTERN

Words: **CLARE GOGERTY**

Light a lantern on a summer evening and it's like pushing open a door into an out-of-the ordinary world. As the natural light dims, the lantern brightens, gathering everyone close, their faces softly illuminated in its warm and friendly glow. Rather than scuttle indoors and be startled by electric lights or be stupefied by the TV, you can linger in the garden and continue to loaf about. The evening suddenly elongates, stretching unhurriedly ahead with the promise of convivial times as the lantern's magic pool of light creates an intimate space where confidences can be exchanged.

Good news then that the choice of lanterns has never been so vast or so appealing. Whether you opt for a candle, electricity, paraffin or butane gas (one for the campers), the principle is the same: a lantern, put simply, is a light source enclosed in a container that protects it from external elements. The prettiest ones – because their flames flicker and gutter – use candles or tea lights, especially if they are encased in a pierced or woven shell which spills



*“The lantern’s magic pool of light creates an intimate space”*

light about in attractive patterns.

The first lanterns, however, which can be traced back to Ancient Greece, Egypt and China, were purely functional and burnt oil in simple containers. Lanterns became more sophisticated in 1780 when François Pierre Aimé Argand, a scientist son of a Swiss watchmaker, invented the hurricane lamp. With a glass chimney protecting the flame from wind (and, presumably, hurricanes), and a control knob to adjust the height of the wick and thus its brightness, it was soon widely adopted. Much safer than an open lantern, it was portable and was carried from room to room in homes, hung above and below decks on ships, and taken into mines where it replaced candles fixed into helmets.

The advent of electricity has meant that we no longer consider the lantern as a household item: we have bulbs and switches for that. Instead it has become associated with fun activities like hanging out in the garden, dancing at festivals, or chilling outside a tent on a warm night waiting for the stars to appear. Which is why it is such an essential part of summer. **S**

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**Powder-coated steel Miners Lantern | £15**

Uses a tea light, so best for sitting on a table rather than going down an actual mine. [gardentrading.co.uk](http://gardentrading.co.uk)

### THE UPDATE



**Baggy bamboo lantern | £52.50**

Spills light and shadows softly and prettily about. [brostecopenhagen.com](http://brostecopenhagen.com)



**Solar Aswan lantern | £20**

Metal filigree casing contains a solar-powered LED light. Carefree and constant. [glow.co.uk](http://glow.co.uk)

