

Czechoslovakian Art Glass

By Joe Mattis

The colors are vivid. The shapes include bowls, pitchers, fan vases, baskets, flower frogs, candleholders, three-handled pieces, and powder jars. The textures have a wide range: smooth, glue-chip rough, threaded, even caged. The patterns, which accentuate the brilliant colors, have names such as flame, drapery, spider web, teardrop, zigzag, and flower.



With those credentials, it's no surprise that Czechoslovakian Art Glass has caught the eyes of collectors. The time period overlaps the Art Deco era, making Czech glass a wonderful addition to Deco collections.



Although much information has been lost or buried because of the Wars in Europe in the 20th Century, collectors do not let that deter their desire to collect the glass.



Numerous factories—both large and small—created Czechoslovakian Art Glass. Today, researchers are combing through records to put together a more complete picture of how, by whom, and where pieces were made. Czech glass has been heavily researched in the past 5 years. While there is still a lot unknown, a great deal of information has surfaced thanks to an



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increase in the number of people interested in collecting it, along with better communication with museum curators in Europe.

History aside, collectors focus their attention on the pieces, the designers, the glass blowing process, the quality, and the richness of the color. They are particularly interested in the production during the Art Deco period. Well known designers are Josef Hoffmann, Michael Powolny, Kolo Moser, and Dagobert Peche.

Each piece of Czech Art Glass is hand-made. That accounts for not only the great variety, but also the numerous inconsistencies, as well as its mysteries.



Czech Glass Timeline

- 1300 Southwest Bohemia began producing glass
- 1400 At Chribska, Glass Hut began producing glass; still in operation
- 1660 Glass workers formed guilds
- 1815 Josef Meyer founded glass works
- 1862 Company called Mayr's Neffen; inherited by Josef Taschek & Wilhelm Kralik
- 1877 Kralif died; inherited by sons; continued operation until 1922
- 1880 Economy world-wide good; glass widely exported by Novy Bor and Kamenicky Senov.
- 1890 U.S. imports foreign glass in volume; Arts & Crafts movement/Jugendstil/Art Nouveau. Galle using nature is universal: flowers, fish, etc. Iridizing popular.
- 1900-1940 Glass baskets produced
- 1903 Josef Hoffman, Kolo Moser, Fritz Warndorfer founded the Weiner-Werkstatte. Joined by Johann Loetz, Michael Powolny. (Hoffman, Moser, and Powolny are Austrians).
- 1909-1925 Decorated enamel popular. Loetz, Powolny, Kralik, Harrach. Began producing Tango.
- 1920 Spelling changed to Czecho-slovakia.
- 1916-1930 King Tut's tomb major influence on design. Art Deco movement develops.
- 1939 Hitler invaded Czechoslovakia. Glass factories shut down.

