

There Are No Glass Police – Mix and Match

My husband and I have enjoyed collecting Depression-era glass for over thirty-five years. We became glass collectors in a rather “round-about” way. Early in our marriage, we developed an interest in furnishing our home with antique furniture, finding the pieces to be solid wood and better made than the inexpensive, modern furniture made of stapled together fiber board. Our pursuit of antique furniture led us to antiques shops and shows throughout southern Wisconsin. At one such show, we stumbled on a set of four opaque black glass goblets which we thought would be stunning with our modern off-white Heath stoneware. They were sitting on a unique oak tavern table with little cubby holes at the corners to fit your beer and a sandwich while you played cards at a local Wisconsin tavern. We purchased the table and those black goblets, which we later found to be a Westmoreland pattern, “#700 Modernistic Line” which Hazel Marie Weatherman called “Marguerite” in her Colored Glassware of the Depression Era, Book II. Those four black goblets were what began our glass collecting. It took years to find a full dozen of those water goblets, but in the meantime we collected more black glass including pieces of Hazel Atlas’ black Cloverleaf pattern and myriad serving pieces to compliment it. We still use it today with our Heath stoneware and find it especially fun to use at Halloween time. The black glass and white stoneware set a very striking table and we like the idea of mixing the vintage and the modern.

The Westmoreland glass company listed the #700 Modernistic Line pattern in their 1926 catalog and continued to produce it until 1940, with the goblet and sherbets in black being reissued in 1952. The pattern itself is relatively plain with a Greek Key design at the top and panels on the interior of the pieces. The goblets have a stem with four “wafers” that get progressively smaller from top to bottom. Westmoreland did not make an extensive line in #700 Modernistic Line pattern. They produced several goblets, a flat tumbler, a creamer and sugar with a tray, cup and saucer, sherbet and liner, five sizes of bowls, several sizes of plates, a candlestick and handled sandwich plate in several different colors. Besides the opaque black, which is the most widely found, other colors include a pale blue, crystal (clear), green and pink. Unfortunately, the only wine goblets we have ever seen are in the Pioneer Museum in Minden, Nebraska and were not for sale.

The other black glass pattern mentioned is black Cloverleaf, a pattern produced by the Hazel Atlas Glass company between 1930 and 1936. Cloverleaf can be collected in green, yellow and black, with a few pieces turning up in pink and crystal. Not all the pieces were made in all the colors. For example, the footed tumblers are only found in yellow. Ash trays were only made in black. Gene Florence lists a total of nineteen pieces in his Collector’s Encyclopedia of Depression Glass. The greatest number of pieces available are in green, followed by yellow and then black. The selection in pink or crystal is far less. Cloverleaf is best collected as a luncheon set as only the green and yellow have divided dinner plates, with few serving pieces. Again, this gives the collector the opportunity to mix and match patterns and manufacturers with the black color unifying the setting.

People often refer to black glass as black amethyst. Of the two patterns mentioned, only the #700 Modernistic Line falls into the realm of black amethyst, which, when held up to a strong light will look purple through the glass. But not all black glass is black amethyst. The Cloverleaf

pattern, when held to the light looks like a brown green. What appears to be opaque black glass can be a variety of different colors when held to the light: green, red, purple, brown to name a few. The different colors are created using different minerals in the molten glass.

Keep in mind that our thread in this article is “Mix and Match”. On another occasion, my husband I attended an estate sale where we found a lovely curved glass salad bowl in an elegant pattern, Fuchsia, made by Tiffin Glass Company. I was smitten with the pattern and thought it would be a lovely piece to use with the Wedgwood Westbury dinnerware that we had selected for our wedding registry in 1968. The Westbury pattern is white with a green floral border and a thin platinum band. Among the flowers in the floral border is a Fuchsia. We had originally selected a plain green Swedish crystal to use with the china. The Fuchsia salad bowl made a nice addition since we had no salad bowl in the original china set. Soon we learned that there was a complete dinnerware set in Tiffin’s Fuchsia pattern and we set out to replace the Swedish goblets with Fuchsia, along with a variety of additional serving pieces. The Fuchsia and the Westbury patterns make a very elegant table setting which we enjoy using for special family dinners.

Tiffin produced the Fuchsia pattern between 1936 and 1940. Fostoria also created a Fuchsia pattern, not to be confused with Tiffin’s. In contrast to the #700 Modernistic Line and Cloverleaf patterns mentioned above, there are over 100 different pieces listed for Fuchsia. Besides the dinnerware and stemware, there are a variety of Fuchsia vases, candleholders, bells and serving pieces with which one could set an entire dinner table. Fuchsia was produced in crystal (clear) with only a very few experimental pieces in a color called Twilight.

The idea of mixing and matching patterns, colors, elegant and machine made glass can provide endless opportunities to create your own unique table setting or group of decorative items for your home. The only limitations are your own tastes and creativity. Changing the color of a set of goblets or adding accessories to compliment pieces you already own can be fun and give a new twist on something you have grown tired of. There are no rules, only your own ingenuity in making new combinations. The glass police will not hunt you down or declare you in violation of some infraction!

To gain an appreciation for the beauty, variety and quality of American glass manufacturing, consider attending one of the shows that promotes these items. The next glass and pottery show featuring depression glass mentioned in this article will be sponsored by the Rocky Mountain Depression Glass Society (RMDGS) which will be holding their 36th annual glass and pottery show on April 24th (10-5) and 25th (11-4), 2010, in Castle Rock, CO . At the show you will find vintage glass and pottery from the 1800’s to the 1970’s as well as antiques that compliment the vintage glass and pottery. The show will be held at the Douglas County Events Center, 500 Fairgrounds Road (Exit 181 – I-25) in Castle Rock. Please visit the RMDGS website to learn more about their club and show: (www.rmdgs.com) & ([show](#)). There will also be special displays from members’ collections. The show has hourly door prizes for adults and a special \$25 door prize just for children every 2 hours during the show. The Events Center and vendor booths are easily accessible for the disabled community. Please feel free to submit questions about this article or about the show etc. on the club’s website. A club member will get back to you with an answer.