

Collecting Carnival on a Budget

By Walt Robinson

One thing that frustrates young carnival glass collectors is the cost of many carnival items. It is clearly impossible to collect expensive carnival glass with limited funds, whether the funds are yours or come from a friend or relative. So what can you do to solve this problem?

First and foremost you can remember that collecting carnival is all about learning about the glass, the colors, the iridescence, and the variety of shapes and sizes. The good news is that many collectors have solved budgetary problems by concentrating their collecting efforts on certain shapes or patterns that allow them to gather numbers of pieces with variety, color, and iridescence, and to do so on a budget.



Above are examples in powder blue, Vaseline, red, marigold, and blue.

So what might some of these patterns be? Let's start with Fenton's Holly compotes. There are up to 20 colors known for Holly compotes. And these little compotes have five or six distinct shapes for the configuration of the tops. Over time one could easily have a collection of thirty, forty, fifty or more holly compotes, all different from one another. Many of these are inexpensive and quite attainable for collectors.

Another example of really pretty glass might be Imperial marigold sauce dishes in various patterns. Purples ones are beautiful but can be quite expensive. The marigold ones can be just as pretty without much cost. (Shown are Scroll Embossed and Windmill)



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Collecting Carnival on a Budget, cont.

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And then there are Bon Bons. These are relatively small two handled pieces. Many colors to choose from and some really beautiful pieces can be found. There are many large collections of Bon Bons. Here are some Northwood examples, they come stippled or unstippled:



Grape and Cable, collar base. Shown are stippled marigold, green and blue.



Fruits and Flowers, pedestal base. Shown are amethyst, stippled marigold, and blue.

Carnival pieces like the ones shown in this article can be really pretty, they don't take up much space, and they are readily found somewhat inexpensively (except for the red Holly compote). You really can build a beautiful collection by concentrating on Compotes, Sauce Dishes, and / or Bon Bons. Look them up in your reference material and I'm sure you will find the variety, colors and availability make them great targets for your collection.