



STRETCH GLASS REVIEW **Imperial Stretch Glass**

Stretch Out Discussion Call on November 12, 2020



The speakers for our discussions are Kitty and Russell Umbraco and Dave Shetlar. They are all noted experts on stretch glass having done extensive research and cataloging of stretch glass in addition to publishing books on stretch glass. They are life members of The Stretch Glass Society and Dave is a past Co-President. Current SGS President, Cal Hackeman, also contributes to our discussions. SGS Director, Bob Henkel, moderates the calls which are organized by SGS Director Mary Elda Arrington. SGS Secretary, Stephanie Bennett, selects and presents the photos of the stretch glass to be discussed. Members and guests of The Stretch Glass Society participate in the discussion.

We will be pleased to identify stretch glass for you if you send photos and dimensions of your stretch glass to us at info@stretchglassociety.org. There is no charge for ID. You may also be interested in reading The SGS Quarterly featuring the most up-to-date information on recent discoveries of previously unreported stretch glass, informative in-depth articles about stretch glass and news of upcoming auctions and sales featuring stretch glass. This publication is provided to all members 4 times each year. Please consider supporting The Stretch Glass Society by becoming a member. Join us at stretchglassociety.org and tap into our extensive network of experts, photos and research. These Stretch Glass Reviews of the discussions are available several weeks after the call and are also posted on our website.

The Stretch Glass Society is pleased to share the insights and knowledge of our experts and hope you find the following summary educational and encouraging as you enjoy, collect, buy and sell stretch glass.



Imperial Glass Company, Bellaire, Ohio



Imperial made several lines of glass which we call stretch glass today. This ruby stretch console set, #232, is referred to as double scroll because there are two scrolls on the sides of the candle holders and also on the sides of the bowls (#1). Whenever you see Imperial's ruby, it is distinctly different than what you typically see with the Fenton ruby stretch. Frank Fenton always said that they prided

themselves at the very beginning of making ruby stretch, to make it an ox-blood red through and through. Imperial did not have that same standard. As long as they had red somewhere in the glass, they did not mind if it was amberina (red fading to yellow). We often see that most of the Imperial ruby stretch has some amberina, but there are a few pieces that are very dark red through and through. This double scroll set also comes in Iris Ice (white stretch glass), Green Ice (teal), and Blue Ice (smoke). Very rarely will you find the Blue Ice sets with the stretch effect. Many of them will be shiny.



The Green Ice (teal) console set includes a large 12" wide panel bowl (#2). The stretch effect on the candleholders is normally seen on the narrow stem. This set is also known in Ruby Ice, Blue Ice and Iris Ice. The Blue Ice bowl can have the stretch effect, but it is almost impossible to find the candleholders with good stretch effect.



This Blue Ice (smoke) 10" wide panel bowl (#3) is a very dark smoke color, due to the generous amount of dope applied. It has also been seen in a very pale smoke, as well as in all the other known colors - Amethyst Ice, Iris Ice, Green Ice, Red Ice and Rose Ice. This wide panel bowl also comes in carnival colors; these do not typically have the stretch effect.

Figure #4 is the Floral and Optic bowl. Gary Senkar discovered that the name of the color associated with this was Orange Onyx. Imperial described it as a bright orange iridescence on onyx glass, basically a white milk glass. This does not have any stretch effect on it, because when they re-shaped the bowl and doped it, they did not reheat the glass. Dave has seen some of the other pieces in Floral and Optic that do have some stretch effect.



The real problem with this Orange Onyx color is that the orange comes off fairly easy, as was stated in one of the industry magazines after Imperial introduced the color. Gary indicated that he found an article in one of the glass magazines that Imperial had solved the problem of the loss of the orange color. They did not explain how it had been done it, whether they had changed the formula or maybe re-fired it. Be very careful in cleaning any of these pieces. Use only soft soap rather than any kind of scrubbing material or you are liable to remove the orange color.



We have another bowl (#5) for which we have not been able to identify the color name, but there are quite a few pieces in the color to be found. These are on pink glass. You can see the pink in the foot. These have either a marigold iridescence, though some of them have a hint of a smoke iridescence on them. We often call these marigold on pink or smoke on pink, depending on the intensity of the iridescence on them. This gives the pieces a very nice effect with the contrasting iridescence on the base color. It is very different than the Velva Rose of Fenton, where they used a crystal iridescence on pink glass.

Figure #6 is a heavily iridized cupped, octangular shaped Iris Ice bowl.

This wide paneled bowl (#7) is cupped in and crimped with a marigold carnival effect. Very few of these have much stretch effect. They are all shiny.





These are a pair of candleholders that are often called Premium by the collectors (#8). They are unusual in that they have a spiral optic in the base. You will also find these candleholders with a plain base. This is another set of candleholders that does not have a true stretch effect. Being candleholders, they were not reshaped. Dave has seen some that have a very satiny iridescence.

This low candleholder (#9) has a smoke iridescence on the underside of the base. It is interesting to note that a lot of these were only iridized on the inside of the bottom of the candleholder. It is not applied to the rest of the candleholder. Typically the iridescence is shiny. If they did not reshape the piece or reheat it, it is not going to have that stretch effect.



The handle candlestick tray has a fruit or cookie tray in the bottom of it and a candleholder. This one is Amethyst Ice (#10). You can see the very heavy stretch effect very heavily on the bowl as it was reshaped, however the candleholder itself is very shiny. You do not see the stretch effect on it. When first few of these were found, it was thought that they were extremely rare; however, as more have been found, the consensus has changed and they are now considered 'hard to find'. The same item is known in Iris Ice and Rose ice; they are more available in these colors. Collectors of handled servers, as well as candlesticks, are interested in these items, so there is quite a bit of demand for these items when they are offered for sale.





The octagonal candlesticks (#11) that look like a mushroom are extremely rare and very difficult to find. Most of them do not have this gold decal. This one is pink with a smoke iridescence. Cal Hackeman commented that there is a big console bowl that is shaped almost like the candleholder and, when used together, makes a nice console set.



This Ruby Ice Pitcher and tumbler set (#12) is also known in Green Ice. There is a marigold set, but Dave has never seen stretch on the marigold sets.

Dave asked Russell Umbraco if any of the true stretch ones have a lid, compared to the marigold ones that often do have one (#13). Russell said there was one on the display at the American Carnival convention in 1973 in Virginia. It was during the 4th of July weekend. There were displays all around the room. One collector's display, which featured red, white and blue, attracted everybody's attention because it was the 4th of July. He had a pitcher and tumbler set with a red pitcher with a red lid. Russell has not heard of another one since.

Cal asked if anyone had seen the Blue Ice pitcher. He has five Blue Ice tumblers. You do not see the tumblers very often. The other set that is equally difficult to find is the Iris Ice set.



The optic rays plate is in Green Ice (#14). This was also made in Blue Ice and Iris Ice. The smaller sherbet plates are found in Ruby Ice, but Dave has never seen the 8 1/2" or 11" plate in Ruby Ice.

You can see some of the multi colored reflection in the Blue Ice (smoke) handled server (#15). These handled servers come with the iridescence both on the upper surface and the lower surface. The iridescence on this one is almost exclusively on the upper surface. The light plays with the cutting in the iridescent showing through the crystal glass.



A question was asked concerning the price you should expect to pay for a handled server with a cutting. Dave responded that if it has a cutting on it, the price depends on the cutting design, as some are harder to find than others. You can look at some of the Stretch Glass Quarterly Newsletters from one or two years ago and see all of the designs. Virtually all the companies made handled servers. Each of the companies made them in different colors. Imperial was the one that produced a lot of servers with cuttings. Most of the other companies did not do cuttings on their servers. There is a Central handled server that actually has an etched floral design. It is not a cut design but it is an etched design. You can sometimes find the Fenton trays and the Northwood trays also with gold etched designs around the edge. Those are actually very difficult to find.



This is the #725 heart handled server (#16) that is part of the line of Imperial octagonal shaped bowls and plates. There are two lines of bowls and plates, number: #727 is without handles and #728 usually has handles on the sides of the bowls and plates. There are two different lines in this one. This one has a decal on the bottom of the bowl with gold leaf applied to bring out the decal color and has a marigold type iridescence. The handle is a bluish color. They obviously made a batch of that pale blue color when they were making these #727 and #728 pieces. The heart handled servers are much less common than the shovel handled servers.



Ruby wide paneled plate (#17) is typical of Imperial Ruby Ice. It has definite amberina on the inside.



These vases (#18) are sometimes called 'Loving cup', double looped handle, or 2-handled vases. Imperial tortured the tops of these in many different ways. They may be flared out, cupped in, rolled rim or Jack-in-the-pulpit style. These are most commonly found in marigold as is pictured here and in Iris Ice. Occasionally you can find these in Blue Ice (smoke iridescence). Look at them carefully. Many of these will have shiny iridescence. They were given a Carnival treatment as opposed to a true stretch treatment. Russell commented that a lot of people are concerned about some of Imperial's later production. About 20 years ago, before Imperial closed, it is said that they made some of these vases again, however, this has not been verified. Russell has one in a sort of pink color, that he thinks was a late production.



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Figure #19 is a Carnival vase in purple with a very nice iridescence on the side of it. The Carnival name is 'Morning Glory'.

The swung vase in blue ice on milk glass (#20) is very difficult to find. There are a fair number of these in marigold on milk that do not have the stretch iridescence, but Dave is aware of at least one that does have good stretch effect.

The marigold on the outside of this marigold on milk vase (#21) is almost satiny. It gets close to having the stretch effect. It does not have the crackly stretch that you see on the Blue Ice vase. This is a very elegant piece.



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Remember that Imperial made a whole set of these vases (#22) ranging basically from about 4" all the way up to nearly 20" in height. There are also several different base sizes. The true funeral vase is the one that has a nearly 5" base. Most of these vases are swung during the making which results in elongating the vase. Imperial actually assigned different numbers for each one of these bases and then a second part of the number was used to indicate how much it was swung. In other words, you could have this little 1 1/2" or almost 2" vase that is only 4". If they swung it to 6" that was another number. They did that for all of these vases. You could spend a life time trying to get every one of these vases in the different base sizes and different heights.



This #727 mayonnaise set (#23) does not have handles on the plate or bowl. It is pink with the Iris Ice iridescence on it. They really jazzed this one up with a fruit wreath decal that is applied to the under surface. Then they also applied gold paint to the edge of the mayo dish and the under plate. This plate has a special indentation for the base of the mayo dish.

A question was asked, "Did they use real gold?" Dave explained that some of the catalogue pages indicated that they did. However, you have to be aware that there were some companies that may have claimed it was gold that they applied, but it may have actually been brass powders that were mixed in the enamel and applied.



There are rings on the stem of this Iris Ice cheese dish (#24). If you look closely you can see a floral decal. The plate on which this would have set would also have the same decal on it. We don't have that plate in this picture.



The #728 Iris Ice mayonnaise set (#25) has handles on both the under plate and bowl. The plate has a ring in which the bowl fits perfectly. You can find these generally in Iris Ice or in pink glass; the pink glass can either have the plain iridescence or it can have a smoky iridescence on it. There are quite a number of these with different effects.

The dark cobalt blue candy jar (#26) is a Late production of Imperial, referred to as "Aurora". It has a nice satiny iridescence on it. If you are very fortunate you may see some of these with a stretch effect on them. Some of the bowls will have the stretch effect. This candy jar was not reshaped, because if you reshaped it, the lid would not fit very well. This has a good satiny iridescence to it.



This is a sherbet and plate set in Ruby Ice (#27). Gary Senkar has confirmed that he has found the term Ruby Ice in some of the Imperial writings and historical records. We can start using Ruby Ice and be technically correct.



The rib optic creamer and sugar is in Green Ice (#28).



Imperial made some covered candy jars. Most of these do not have a stretch effect. Figure #29 is fairly obtainable. Dave just checked on eBay recently. They had swirl optic candy jars in smoke and in marigold. Dave has never seen these with a true stretch effect. Dave does not know if these were put in the stretch glass line or whether they would have been in the regular Carnival line.

Dave knows of a couple of these Ranger candy jars (#30). The name Ranger was given by the Carnival collectors. These are normally seen with a shiny marigold. We know of at least two of these that have Iris Ice true stretch effect. There is also a marigold one that has true stretch effect. None of these are easy to find. Since they are candy jars, and there are collectors that like to collect covered pieces, these usually command pretty good prices.





This bread tray (#31) is an octagonal bowl that has been flattened down with two sides up. This is pink with the light, almost light marigold iridescence applied to the tray.

In reality this handled basket (#32) looks to be more like a sapphire iridescence applied to a shiny smoke. You can almost see some marigold overtones. That is often a challenge with iridescence. The colors can change dramatically depending on how much dope is applied to the item. This probably started out as light smoke, but the finisher held it in the doping booth a little bit too long and the 'dope fairy' gave it a really heavy dose, which almost gave it a brownish marigold kind of iridescence. You can make quite a collection of these if you have enough money and time to accumulate all the color effects.



That basket was made both with the stretch effect and shiny carnival effect. This basket also comes in Green Ice - two different shades of the green, dark green and icy green.

This square, flared down nappy bowl (#33) has a very shiny marigold iridescence. Tim Cantrell showed up with this bowl a few years ago. When he pulled it out of his box, Dave thought it was just a very dark marigold. It is kind of hard to see in this picture, but when Tim handed the bowl to Dave, he realized it had stretch marks all through it. This was definitely given the stretch iridescence. It does have a light blue cast to the underlying glass. It is a very unusual piece. Dave has never seen another one like it. He thinks it might have been an experimental piece that Imperial tried, but never put in the line.



Next Stretch call:

The January 14, 2021 discussion will focus on Rare, Unusual Items and One-of-a Kind Stretch Glass.

Not all rare stretch glass is unusual but most unusual – meaning infrequently seen – is probably going to fall into the rare category. Rare usually leads to pricey, but not always....I might have the only one of something (so it's rare) but if I am the only person who cares about it, then it is not going to be very pricey. We must always keep in mind that demand, i.e. interest by collectors, is a critical element of establishing value....no or limited interest generally translates into a low price even if the item is 'rare.' You will hear about all of this and more on this Stretch Out Discussion and you will see and learn about some truly unusual and rare stretch glass.

