

1231 RIBBED OCTAGON CREAM AND SUGAR

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The previous article discussed the 500 Octagon cream and sugar. The 1231 pattern is approximately contemporary with them, and, being eight-sided, is called Ribbed Octagon, not an original factory name. In a sense, these two patterns complement each other, since 500 Octagon creams and sugars are essentially oval, and 1231 Ribbed Octagon creams and sugars are essentially round. A number of other patterns, of course, include both round and oval variations within the same pattern, but here, Heisey split them between two patterns. Ribbed Octagon's "round" shape is actually an octagon (surprise!) of eight panels, all the same width and all crisply divided from one another, hence the "Ribbed" part of the name. There are no actual ribs, however, just precise angles.

1231 Ribbed Octagon differs from 500 Octagon in other ways, too. Ribbed Octagon has pressed handles, rather than stuck ones, angular and much resembling the shape introduced with 393 Narrow Flute handled pieces. They are quite a bit taller than the 500's, so the taper of the body is more

pronounced. Each piece has a distinct foot, a detail lacking in 500 Octagon. The base was not designed to be ground; the recessed bottom is still there, but the ring is just as it comes out of the mold. Oddly enough, the cream spout is hand tooled, having one angle of the rim pulled out and down, which introduces a bit of a curve in an otherwise straight-lined body. An angular spout was formed in the mold for 500 Octagon, but in the equally geometric 1231 a curved spout is left to the skills and mercies of a workman. Why the different treatment is anyone's guess.

The glass in the 1231 creams and sugars is lighter weight than we find in earlier creams and sugars, another trait shared with #500 pieces. Also like the 500 pieces, no covers were made for the 1231 Ribbed Octagon sugars. Less glass, no lid (one less mold) and no grinding made them cheaper items to produce. These were probably made to compete with the tank glass manufacturers who were selling machine-made ware at cheap prices. The 1231 creams and sugars had a bit more than a dozen companion pieces, most made to appeal to the buyer wanting sets for luncheons or other light entertainment. (Except for that rum pot - ever see one of those at a luncheon? Me neither.) Many of the Ribbed Octagon pieces are unmarked, but our little creams and sugars are marked.

Vital statistics:

Sugar—Height 3 1/4"; top diameter (opposite angles), 3 3/8"; base diameter, 2 1/2".

Cream—Height, 3 1/4"; top diameter (opposite angles), 3 5/8"; base diameter, 2 3/8".

Octagons have eight angles. How many angles do you have? Let me in on some of them, at heisey@embarqmail.com.