

500 OCTAGON CREAM AND SUGAR

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500 Octagon Cream and Sugar

Octagon is a name given to Heisey's pattern 500. (In a most helpful fashion, 1229 is also called Octagon; luckily for us, it does not have a cream and sugar, so no confusion ensues. See Heisey News, November, 2010, for more on these two patterns.) Not a particularly large pattern, 500 Octagon seems designed mostly to augment other patterns, or to be used when only a few pieces were needed. Why it was given the rather peculiar number of "500" is a mystery. Heisey made a fitful start at numbering a few odds and ends in the 500 series in the 1920s, but most new patterns were by then being numbered in the 1200 series. Doubtless, some sinister Heisey factotum did it just to annoy the sales staff and the collectors he knew would follow. Most 500 Octagon pieces are marked, including the cream and sugar; at least the ones I have seen have been. As befits the more informal look, the sugar was designed with no cover, creating a little less angst for present-day cream and sugar gatherers.

Judging from today's availability, the pattern was popular. Coming into production about 1928, the cream and sugar are available in Moongleam (theoretically—at least one piece has been found), Flamingo, or Sahara. Crystal ones with Moongleam handles are not too difficult to find. Marigold is possible. Continuing a trend started the previous decade, 500 Octagon creams and sugars were oval in general outline, and for the rest of the company's history, there were always oval creams and sugars in production. Earlier patterns' ovals were always called hotel creams or sugars, in

keeping with their smaller capacity compared to those in the table sets early in the century. By the time 500 came along, table sets were outmoded, and most creams and sugars were scaled down. Thus, the Octagon set was not designated "hotel" as it might have been even a few years earlier. Octagon's "oval" is made of eight panels of varying widths.

As done with some other C&S sets, the handles were stuck. However, in this case, the design prevented Heisey from using the flexibility of stuck handles to leverage one mold into two different pieces. The rigidity of the pattern precluded using a hand tool to pull out the cream spout. Instead, the precisely angled spout required that the cream be produced from a different mold than the sugar.

The creams and sugars have recessed bottoms; a star bottom would have cluttered the design. Because the sides taper, the sets are almost stackable, but the handles make that an ugly proposition that only the space-deprived can tolerate.

Vital statistics:

Sugar - Length at rim, 3 7/16" (not including handles); width at rim 2 5/16"; height, 2 1/2"; base, 3" x 1 3/4".

Cream - Length at rim, 4 3/8" (to tip of spout, not including handle); width at rim 2 3/8"; height, 2 1/2"; base, 3" x 1 3/4".

Are you space-deprived? Let's swap space-saving hints at heisey@embarqmail.com.