



Latest and Greatest

March/April 2012

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Such an exciting start to the year! A mild winter in Georgia was a dream for SMC, as we kept production and shipping running nonstop—without having to stop and worry about freezing products. And boy, did we need that extra time! 2012 has already seen record clay and glaze production levels for SMC, as demand for our fantastic products is unprecedented. So far this year, SMC has pugged 5 times as much clay as ever before—and it's running out the door as soon as we make it. But no worries, we've increased production hours each workday, the team is running seven days a week, and we're adding additional staff to meet demand. Plus, with SMC you know for certain that you're never getting old clay! As long as you're hot for our products we're hot to make them and get them to you as efficiently as possible. But sometimes quality takes a little extra time, a little extra patience—but we're always working to deliver that quality as quickly as we can. And in all the SMC production craziness, we've still found time to launch some exciting new products. Many more fabulous things are in the works, and on the way very soon, so stay tuned...

Wish to see more pictures from the 2012 ALCC, as well as new and exciting SMC sample pics from the store and our customers? Become an SMC fan on [facebook](#)

NEW CONE 6 GLAZES!

SMC has two additional fantastic glaze colors for you! The first, **#441 Root Beer**, is a sheer, rich brown that is fantastic on light, buff and red clays. It's translucent color will easily settle into texture and highlight carving, stamping and other surface design. It's quickly become a big hit for face jugs, steins and platters. #441 works extremely well with our RIO Wash, as well as many other SMC glazes, for extra detail highlights. So far we really love it layered with 403 Blue Sage, 472 Ruby Slippers and 421 Champagne Toast.

Our other new color has taken off by storm! SMC's top-selling glaze at the 2012 ALCC in Birmingham, **#440 Violet, You're Turning Violet!** is a gorgeous, rich violet color that breaks to a lighter indigo. While the unique Violet!

has a somewhat opaque color, its fabulous finish will break and accent surface texture and designs beautifully. Violet! is a deep, dark purple on darker clays, but will still break over texture. It layers wonderfully with 490 Mardi Gras, 421 Champagne Toast and 465 Peridot. *Both new glazes, like SMC's entire cone 6 line, are food safe when used properly.*



Hey! Check out that clay!

SMC was thrilled that Shimpo Ceramics booth featured SMC 251 Raku clay for all of their throwing/pugging demonstrations at the 2012 Alabama Clay Conference. Here, Shimpo's amazingly skilled Yosuke Koizumi demonstrates how easily the 251 Raku can

create and hold oversized shapes with ease. Many of the thrown pieces were sent back through the Shimpo pug mill, and the 251 Raku held up to being thrown and pugged again and again. Think this 50 lb. bowl is impressive? He created two giant pieces, as well as many smaller ones, during the show.



Water, Water, Everywhere- But How Much Should Be in My Glaze?

Sometimes you open a glaze and it's as thin as water. Sometimes, thick as pudding would be a more accurate description. And often, glazes are somewhere in between-closer to the consistency of latex paint or buttermilk. While, some fire beautifully, some run off your pots, pit, or don't want to stick to the clay well in the first place. So, what's the deal with water? How thick should glazes really be? The answer isn't simple, because it depends on the glaze. Some glazes, because of their composition, will apply very thick and uneven yet fire beautifully-while others only need a sheer coat to perform at their best. There are many variables that effect how thick your glaze applies and, ultimately, how it performs for you.

- ◆ **Brush selection.** Natural brushes with full, longer bristles can hold 2-3 times the glaze as artificial brushes- or those with shorter, or more sparse, bristles. A dry brush will hold, and deposit, a heavier glaze load than a damp brush-and a soaking wet brush is only going to cause moisture problems with the bisque.
- ◆ **Drying time.** When you apply glaze coats too soon (before prior coats are dry and set), or fire too soon after glazing-you will often see more running than expected. On the inside of the piece, bubbling or "craters" in the pooled area may result. On the outside, you may ruin a kiln shelf and/or your piece.
- ◆ **Bisque temperature.** Clays that have been bisqued at lower temperatures (cone 05, 06) will absorb far more glaze than clays bisque-fired at cone 04. Therefore, glazes applied to them should be thinner in consistency (SMC glazes can be thinned with a slight amount of warm water). If you try to put thicker glaze on clay that is more thirsty, it will typically dry too quickly, and crack/flake off of the piece. Rinsing your pieces first will also keep the clay from being as thirsty, and allow the glaze to apply in a more even, appropriate coat.
- ◆ **Firing method.** Glazes can perform very differently if they are fired or cooled too quickly or slowly, and if there are any holds during the program.
- ◆ **Clay body.** Again, clay selection is key. Glaze manufacturers like SMC cannot test our products across all brands of clay. We can test and guarantee our products and how they perform on our clays, but you may get unexpected application or firing results on other brands of clay. Also, even if you stay in the SMC line, clay color can drastically impact the final color of glazes. There are many pictures on our website and Facebook page, as well as samples in our showroom, of our glazes on a variety of SMC bodies.
- ◆ **Glaze composition.** Obviously, as a consumer, you do not know the precise formulation of commercial glazes. When in doubt about appropriate glaze consistency, definitely ask the manufacturer for their advice. But as a general rule-glazes that appear very dark brownish-red contain Iron, which will cause them to run more than many other glazes if applied too thick.

As a manufacturer, SMC can only make our glazes one way. We make them wet in a consistency that is ideal for cone 04 bisque-fired clay. We prefer to sell our glazes wet, because we know how important proper blending is to many colors-and how an insufficient mixing can drastically impact the look of your finished product. If mixing our dry glazes, SMC recommends a buttermilk-like consistency, except for blue glazes which should be slightly thinner. We do offer our glazes dry, but keep in mind-when sold dry, we can only guarantee that the correct chemicals are in the bag. We cannot guarantee their fired performance, even though we test-fire it first. When we test it here, again, we are mixing the glaze for **four hours minimum**, to our ideal consistency. We test every batch of each SMC glaze on 327 Great White Stoneware with the same firing program.

In general: Rinse your bisqueware 5-10 minutes before you glaze, applying two brushed coats (or one dip, about the thickness of a matchbook cover), and let your piece dry overnight before firing. Fire to cone 6, use a **slow** setting and **no hold** (the top peephole plug **out**, all others in). Cool the kiln to room temperature, with all the peephole plugs **in**.

Steals & Deals! Enjoy great savings-use these fantastic coupons toward your next SMC order! *Some restrictions apply:*

*Only one coupon may be used per order/per visit. *SMC coupons must be presented at time of order/purchase. *Coupons cannot be combined with any other discounts or specials. *Coupons may only be used if order is paid for in full at time of purchase.

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Extra price break! Buy between 700-975 lbs. of SMC premium clay and receive **2¢ off the 500 lb. discount price** (Hybrid clay does not apply. Clay must be purchased on one invoice).

Coupon is good for purchases of in-stock merchandise only. No rainchecks. See rules and restrictions. Good through 4/30/12.

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Buy 5 one-gallon buckets of SMC glaze or slip and get the 5th for free! (Free gallon must be of equal or lesser value, and gallons must be purchased on the same invoice)

Coupon is good for purchases of in-stock merchandise only. No rainchecks. See rules and restrictions. Good through 4/30/12.

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Buy 4 pints of SMC glaze, wash or slip and get the 5th for free! (Free glaze must be of equal or lesser value, and pints must be purchased on the same invoice)

Coupon is good for purchases of in-stock merchandise only. No rainchecks. See rules and restrictions. Good through 4/30/12.