

Eisch Glaskultur—A Family Tradition

by Michael Wangbickler

Eisch Glaskultur has been named Glass Producer of the Year for the eleventh year in a row by the German Retailers Association Fachkreis Hausrat. Founded in 1946 by Valentin Eisch, Eisch Glaskultur has grown into one of the world's finest and most important glass manufacturers. Today, the company is run by Julia Eichinger-Eisch and Eberhard Eisch, third-generation members of the Eisch family, along with Alan Zalayet, Partner and President of Exports for Eisch, and Managing Director of Eisch USA. Zalayet believes that this award will make the company work even harder in 2009 to win the award for the twelfth year.

Eberhard Eisch was on hand to receive the award personally at the "Ambiente" fair in Frankfurt, Germany, on February 14, 2009. This prestigious honor recognizes Eisch Glaskultur for its leadership in the industry, its development of innovative products, its design and marketing expertise, and its fair and equitable pricing policies. "We are honored once again to receive this national award," stated Eberhard. "In a country that leads the world in glass quality and innovation, we are constantly working to make our company better, and it is heartwarming to know that our efforts have been recognized yet again by the German retail industry."



Cooling Decanter

The Birth of the Company

The glassworking tradition of the Eisch family dates back to the seventeenth century. Until 1946, Valentin Eisch, the founder of the Eisch Glass factory, worked as a master engraver at a crystal glass factory. To provide a better life for his six children, Valentin, together with his wife Therese, started his own refining company. Then-existing factories in the Bavarian forest resented the competition and tried to prevent its success by blocking raw glass deliveries to the Eisch factory, so the family was forced to establish its own glass production. In the youngest and smallest glass factory in Bavaria at that time, the first glass was melted in December 1952. The close cooperation and solidarity of the Eisch family was an important determinant of the success of the factory.

For Eisch, glass is more than just a simple article for daily use. Glass combines fantasy, nature, art, and culture. Eisch uses many skills and techniques to craft glass that can serve as a decorative companion to the beauty of life. The painters at Eisch infuse the glass with the beauty of nature. Engravers employ their traditional handcraft techniques to imprint modern decorations onto the glass. All glass decoration is done by hand at Eisch, and the company has received many awards for its work.

Erwin Eisch, one of the owners of the company, is a highly respected, internationally known glass artist and, together with Harvey Littleton, is a founder of the International Studio Glass Movement, which uses glass as a material for creating art. Based on Erwin Eisch's freely blown glass, the "Poetry in Glass" series of unique items was created in 1977.

Innovations in Glass

With the extensive background and rich experience of handcraft tradition, Eisch today is exploring new and innovative techniques in glassworks for the benefit of the wine lover. A new Eisch product is the No Drip Decanter. Inspired by the way a lotus leaf sheds water, the "No Drip Effect" decanter has a specially treated rim. After pouring, a bead of wine teases you by balancing on the decanter's lip, steadfastly refusing to fall on the tablecloth. It doesn't fall, nor does it drip down the edge of the decanter.

The latest innovation at Eisch is "Breathable Glass" which is produced in lead-free crystal glass that undergoes a special oxygenizing treatment to give the glass its unique properties. Wine poured into a "Breathable" Eisch glass will show signs of aeration after just two to four minutes, with equivalent results for the same wine had it been decanted and aerated for one to two hours. Time consuming decanting is no longer necessary, since in "Breathable Glass" the wine reaches its optimum aroma and bouquet shortly after it is poured.

Many wine experts around the world have tested the Breathable Glasses. The first to do so was Ronn Wiegand, a professional wine taster, wine judge, critic and author, with more than thirty years of experience. Ronn acknowledges that he was skeptical at first that Breathable Glass could soften wine and enhance its characteristics in only a few minutes, but he found that it does, indeed, do just that. He writes: "Remarkable! Congratulations on a real contribution to the enjoyment of wine." Gordon Burns, owner of the famous ETS Wine Laboratories, located in California's Napa Valley, also tested these glasses and said: "I have to tell you I am impressed!"

Discovering Breathable Glass

The first public demonstration of Breathable Glass was at the Culinary Institute of America in California, which highly values Eisch wine glasses and uses them for wine studies, wine education, and special events. At the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary Celebration of the Robert M. Parker Wine Advocate, Eisch was the exclusive glass sponsor, and most of the tastings were done in Eisch Breathable Glasses.

Eisch has received praise and many endorsements for Breathable Glasses from around the world. It was chosen as the Product of the Year in Canada in 2007, the Hong Kong Wine Club in Beijing endorsed the remarkable effect of the glasses, and the European wine magazine VINUM reported enthusiastically on their own testing of the product. It has been found to work well with many other beverages as well. Spirits, especially those that have been wood aged such as cognac, Scotch whisky, Armagnac, or Calvados, are enhanced when served in Breathable Glasses, as are fruit juices with pronounced acidity such as orange, pineapple, and lemon juice.

Breathable Glass does not require any special care and permanently maintains its unique properties. It can be handled as you would any other high-quality, lead-free crystal glass. You can tell whether or not a glass is breathable by checking for the "Breathable Glass" label at the bowl of the Eisch glass or, if the label has been removed, by the sandblasted wave under the Eisch logo at the bottom. Eisch products can be found at Bed, Bath & Beyond, Macy's department stores, and other fine retailers throughout the United States.

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For more information about Eisch Glaskultur please visit the website at www.eisch.de.

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Assortment of Champagne and Wine Glasses



Decanters



Jugs



Wine Accessories



Breathable Glass