

Carnival glass epergnes

Epergnes have always fascinated me. No matter what material they are made from, there is always something majestic about them. You won't be surprised to see the glass ones particularly attract my attention.

Epergnes had their age of glory from the 18th to the beginning of the 21st century. It is in the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie that it takes its place, in the decor of sumptuous tables. Epergne is probably the derivation of French "épargner" meaning "to save", precisely, because the epergne was "saving" in two ways. First of all, as she held a place in the center of the table within reach of each of the guests, fruits, nuts, condiments, flower ornaments, she "spared" steps. Second, as everyone helped themselves at will, unused fruits, nuts and sweets remained in the trays instead of ending up on the individual plates, thus avoiding throwing them away.

An epergne generally has a large central "bowl" or basket. From this center "bowl" radiate branches supporting small baskets, dishes or candle holders. There can be two to seven branches. Epergnes were traditionally made from silver, but since the mid-19th century glass was also used. Today, it is the delight of collectors as a precious decorative object that can only be found in antique shops. At the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, glass manufacturers produced



decorative objects that often rested on metallic supports. These objects supported one or more flutes. Even if they did not present a large bowl as a support, the designation epergne served to identify them.

The epergne in the carnival glass world

There were very few numbers of epergnes produced in carnival. The Victorian era was over and the fashion for this type of object was possibly over. Despite this fact, very beautiful patterns were found and are very appreciated by collectors. Only 6 patterns were produced by American companies, all the others have a European origin. Some of these patterns are known in very few numbers. All photos are part of my collection unless otherwise stated. We provide an internet link (we are now here) or a reference that will allow you to admire these other overseas wonders.



Wide Panel, Northwood



This masterful epergne is the emblem of the AVCQ. Its base, made up of a large bowl varying around 11" in diameter with a scalloped edge, forms in its center the support base for the 4 flutes. Three are curved outwards and one, majestic, forms a central arrow. The height total is 16"1/2. The Wide Panel pattern is present on the bowl as well as the flutes. Its production spans between 1909 and 1914. Green is the first color used. The most expensive to acquire are pastel colors and lime green.

It is undoubtedly the most imposing and the most desirable of the epergnes in carnival. Over 55% of these beauties have light to heavy damage. Owning a perfect one is a privilege. This phenomenon of breakage is often present at the level of the connection of the flutes and the

base. It is up to you to judge the importance and the monetary punishment that should be applied. We must be indulgent for these wonders of more than 110 years. This breakage phenomenon is the same for all carnival glass epergnes.

HOC – 12 ans d'encan		
Vert (green)	41	38%
Orangé (marigold)	36	33%
Blanc (white)	14	13%
Améthyste (amethyst)	10	9%
Bleu glacier (ice bleu)	3	3%
Vert glacier (ice green)	3	3%
Vert lime (lime green)	1	1%

Wishbone, Northwood

The Wishbone pattern is one of Northwood's most popular designs. The aesthetics of this motif present in the bowl and on the flute allows this set to be, in my opinion, with these 9" in height, the prettiest epergne in the carnival glass world. The foot of the 8" bowl with 8 undulations is in dome footed and the outside pattern of the bowl is Basket Wave. The interior pattern is Wishbone and the flute is decorated with an arrangement of the same pattern with a smooth edge in a triangular shape.

HOC - 12 ans de relevé d'encan		
Améthyste	35	45%
Orangé	16	21%
Vert	14	18%
Blanc	6	8%
Bleu glacier	4	5%
Vert lime	2	2%
Vert glacier	1	1%

Nearly 30% of the pieces sold have a defect. A few epergnes of this design are offered at auction each year, but mainly amethyst, marigold and green. All other colors are rarely available.



Fishnet, Dugan

This pretty little epergne produced by Dugan from the beginning of its production in 1910 is found only in opaline peach and amethyst colors. The very thin cupola base conceals the receptacle to support the flute. The interior and exterior of the bowl are plain and offer a ten ruffles edge or a very pronounced 3 and 1. The exterior of the flute bears a fishing net pattern which justifies the name of the pattern. The edge of the flute must be identical to that of the bowl. If this is not the case, it is an assembly outside the company. Regardless of the color, the two types of edges are found in approximately equal numbers. In terms of colors, opaline peach is three times more accessible.

While not rare, its availability is similar to Northwood's Wishbone thrift. It is good to remember that they were produced in the Dugan period with an exceptional quality of iridescence.



Strawberry, Dugan

As with all other epergnes, it is difficult to find one in perfect condition. Of the 17 sold in the last 12 years, only 7 were perfect. Its 10" height makes it possibly more fragile than the Wishbone and the Fishnet. The cupola base bowl has 10 ruffles and a diameter of 10". The exterior is plain and the interior features a wreath of foliage with clusters of strawberries.

What sets it apart is its unique flute which offers a decoration that is very different from its base. On the lower part it is decorated with columns of raised dowels showing a similarity to the Formal vase. The upper part with crossed diamond pattern finishes with a flared and tight creped edge.

According to the book *Dugan & Diamond* by Carl O. Burns, it is the advertisements in 1916 which show this epergne in opalescent glass, but with a Dahlia Twist flute which certifies the identity of the producer. The opalescent version came long after the carnival glass version and it is believed that the flute mold used in the carnival version was destroyed in the fire in 1912.



Vintage, Fenton

This small epergne is the only one produced by Fenton. It is offered in 2 versions:

- The small
Its height is 4"3/4. The scalloped-edged bowl features four clusters of fruit.
- The big
With a height of 6", it presents 5 clusters of fruit. The flutes are not interchangeable between the two formats.

They were produced in four colors for the small, amethyst, green, blue and marigold. This last color seems a little less available. The large one is much very difficult to find particularly in marigold, blue and amethyst and relatively rare in green.



Dahlia Twist – Unidentified (Diamond, Northwood?)



The first question that comes to mind is "Who produced this pattern?". It will probably be difficult to determine with certainty. For my part, I think that Northwood is a plausible hypothesis considering the close relations of some important executives involved in each of these companies. It should also be remembered that in 1909, Northwood purchased several molds from Jefferson, who produced the Dahlia Twist vase in opalescent, for example Fine Cut & Roses, Vintage Grape, Blossom, Palm and Meander. It is believed that the mold Dahlia Twist could have been part of the group. It is also well known that Northwood produced carnival glass from some of these purchased molds...

Diamond would also be a candidate since in 1916 he advertised the Strawberry epergne base with the opaline glass Dahlia Twist as a flute. He certainly would have been able to bristle a fair amount of it. The mystery remains for me to clear up. Small reflection of a Northwood – Dugan collaboration could possibly be explored.

Regardless, this currently unique epergne is really pretty on its metal base.

Overseas Savings

Coming from Europe, superb spiky epergnes have taken their place in the collectors' choice.

Beaded Peacock Tail
Chunky
Curved Star

Goddess of Athena
Northern Light
Star Panel

Sunspray

You can find information on these sumptuous epergnes on some well-known sites and enjoy.

<https://www.hookedoncarnival.com/>

<https://www.carnivalglassworldwide.com/>

<https://www.ddoty.com/>

Among the many reference books and sites consulted, I particularly want to note these.

- Books written by Carl O. Burns specifically for Northwood, Dugan&Diamond and by William Heacock on Fenton have provided their share of information.
- The book The Elegant Epergne by Bunny and Charles Koppelman which presents their collection, although there is no question of carnival glass epergne, takes us back in time and better understand the history of epergne.
- Finally, the article by H el ene Mass e published in the newspaper # 126 (spring 2013) Epergne (Chronique francization).

By the way, ChatGPT wasn't much help. Oh no!...

Jacques Dugas April 202

