

Homer Laughlin debuts new color

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By STEPHEN HUBA - Hancock County Reporter (shuba@reviewonline.com) , The Review

NEWELL - It's still officially winter, but the Homer Laughlin China Co. is predicting blue skies ahead for its new Fiesta dinnerware color, Lapis.

Homer Laughlin announced the new color, named for the intense blue lapis gemstone, at the International Home and Housewares Show in Chicago, which concluded on Tuesday.

"Fiesta enthusiasts will be excited to see this vibrant color join the Fiesta color family," said Rich Brinkman, vice president of sales and marketing, comparing it to the limited-edition Sapphire color of 1996 and 1997.

Article Photos



Homer Laughlin showed off its newest color, Lapis, at a convention in Chicago this week. (Submitted Photo)

"However, Lapis is a richer, more intense hue and coordinates beautifully with the current Fiesta spectrum," Brinkman said.

Already, the word from Fiesta fans and collectors in East Liverpool and beyond is: Wow.

"I think it's a great color. I like how vibrant it is," said Sarah Webster Vodrey, director of the Museum of Ceramics in East Liverpool. "I look forward to owning it myself."

Vodrey said she, too, noticed the resemblance to Sapphire and is glad there's now a color that comes close. "I love clear, bright, intense colors like this," she said.

A Lapis plate is on display at the Fiesta retail outlet in Newell, but the color won't be available for sale until late June. Pre-sales start on May 15.

"I think it's going to be a nice addition to their color palette," said Sandra Bond, of North Platte, Neb., president of the Homer Laughlin China Collectors Association. "It's really pretty to look at."

Bond said new Fiesta colors are well-kept secrets and are highly anticipated by collectors.

"Everybody looks forward to the new color every year. It's like a highlight of their year," said David Schaefer, of New Orleans, editor of The Dish, the association's quarterly magazine.

Bond said Lapis will take its place with other Fiesta jewel colors, some of which have been discontinued, including Evergreen and Juniper.

The current Fiesta color spectrum is: White, Black, Shamrock, Cobalt, Lapis, Peacock, Turquoise, Paprika, Lemongrass, Ivory, Sunflower, Tangerine, Flamingo, Scarlet and Plum, according to a Homer Laughlin news release announcing the new color.

"Homer Laughlin is good at keeping colors within the palette," Bond said, "something that will blend right in with the rest of them. ... I think everybody's quite happy with it."

Designed by Frederick Hurten Rhead and introduced to much acclaim in 1936, Fiesta was discontinued in 1973 and reintroduced in 1986.

East Liverpool native Lee Rubin, of Dahlonega, Ga., said the new color has been generating a positive buzz on his "Plate Turners of the World, Unite!" Facebook group.

"It's a great color. I like the intensity of it," Rubin said. "We'll be on the lookout for it in the seconds room when we go to the outlet."

All standard Fiesta dinnerware pieces will be available in Lapis, including four- and five-piece sets and a variety of plates, platters, bowls, cups, vases and serving pieces.

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