

## **Decal Application and Firing Instructions- Updated 2020**

**Please note:** The use of decals is best suited for glossy white or off white surfaces. Sometimes the decals colors can come up as weepy or muted over certain types of colored and homemade/shop glazes. The compromised colour is actually a result of a chemical reaction between the glazes on your pieces and the china paint. This doesn't mean that you can't use decals on stoneware, but rather it is a matter of trial and error with each glaze you use save for probably clear glaze on a white body. Ergo, it is always advised to do a test firing first. ALSO, the lamination used on the sheets contains a small amount of flux so there is a slight raised line (both tactile than visual) that can appear around the decal image...thus the need to cut as close to the image as possible. Also to note: If the decals are applied and fired to matt surfaces the fired decal area will appear **glossy**!

Apply the decals on your pieces at least 12 hours to dry before firing or if you need to put them in the kiln right away, let them preheat for an hour or so before letting the cycle go.

- Your wares needs to be clean so no greasy fingerprints or dust. A good soapy bath, Isopropyl alcohol or Windex will do the trick.
- \*\*\*Cut out the image(s) as close as possible to the actual and place them in warm water (a little warmer than lukewarm) for about 1 minute. Please note that there is a slight raised edge to the decal that is barely visible but is slightly tactile so the closer you can cut the better.
- You will begin to feel the printed image start to slide off the white backing paper...feels kind of slimey. This means the decal is ready to apply to the surface.
- As you position the decal on your work, you have a little time to slide it exactly where you want it.
- Once you have set it in place, take a rubber rib or folded paper towel and **gently** squeegee out the water and air bubbles. Any water or air bubbles trapped between the decal and the ceramic surface will stay in place and you will be left with a bare spot in that place. The big drawback with any decal is its unwillingness to conform to textured surfaces. Just be careful with the rib/paper towel application. Note: If you have a heavy hand, I find the use of paper towel to be best.
- If you have a rounded surface, try heating the piece up a little before applying the decals. I often place my wares in a bucket of warm water first as this cuts down the difference in temperatures between a warm decal and a cold pot.

### **Firing & Temperature Recommendations:**

- These decals like lots of oxygen and so it is important to NOT stack the kiln too tight.
  - Try not to place your decal pieces too close to the kiln's elements as those areas are hotter and the reds and yellows of your decals can burn out!
  - Please remember to vent your decal firing throughout the entire firing to burn all the glue & toxins off. Again, the kiln likes lots of oxygen!
  - \*\*\*After placing wares in your kiln you will be firing your wares to approximately **Cone 017-018**. DO NOT exceed this temperature or the colors will start to burn out and you will be left with blues and blacks. Note: Temperatures can fluctuate full cones depending on what type of kiln you have so check the Cone Table on your computerized kiln or manual that accompanies your old school kiln. And please take the time to test a decal before firing a whole kiln load!
- Firing: Set on a fast cycle and hold for **10 minutes** at the end. Also, I prop the lid open until about 500F and then lower to allow for the plastic burn off. I also leave the top peep hole out for the entire firing.