

**NORTHCOTE POTTERY SUPPLIES  
TECHNICAL TIPS AND PRODUCT INFORMATION #40**

## **ONCE-FIRING DECORATING/FINISHING OPTIONS**

- Using different coloured clay bodies fired to vitrification so the clay doesn't appear dry and powdery/dusty once fired (i.e. fire terracotta & white earthenware clays to 1150-1200°C, or stoneware, raku and porcelain clays to 1280°C)
- Use the above clays to create marbled clay effects
- Create NEW coloured clay bodies by kneading oxides/stains into a white clay body (base clay). Keep in mind that adding a lot of colourant will usually LOWER the firing temperature of any clay.
- Use coloured clay bodies to create NERIAGE & MILLAFIORE effects. *See Tech Tips & Product Info Sheet #10 Neriage*
- Use liquid underglaze colours for decoration on clay then fire the clay to its vitrification point (see point number 1).
- Use coloured decorating slips & sgraffito on raw clay bodies fired to vitrification *See Tech Tips & Product Info Sheet #7 Coloured Decorating Slip*
- Use French Dimensions (raised/stiffened earthenware glaze in applicator bottles) to create lines and dots on raw clay then once fire to 1100°C maximum
- Carve into raw clay when it's leather hard with a lino/sgraffito tool. Once the clay is totally dry, paint on a wet copper carbonate mix gently with a dabbing action, concentrating on the recesses. Once the copper carbonate is dry, take the clay item outside and carefully dust off the excess copper carbonate until the desired amount is left. (MAKE SURE YOU USE A PARTICLE MASK) Once fire the clay item to the appropriate temperature for the clay. The copper carbonate will give sepia brown to gunmetal/black once fired. The final appearance will be somewhat like an etching effect with lines stained dark in a clay coloured ground.
- Onto raw dry clay, paint an oxide (i.e. red/yellow/black iron oxide) and water mix to create patterns in the manner of primitive New Guinea tribal pottery etc. Keep the oxide mixture at an Indian ink consistency (opaque but thin). Fire the clay to at least 1100°C (NB over application of oxide will mean that it does not flux enough during firing, and can dust off after firing).
- **IMPORTANT!** MOST ONCE-FIRING IS AT A HIGHER TEMPERATURE THAN STANDARD BISQUE OR EARTHENWARE (i.e. above 1100°C) AND THEREFORE ALL WORK MUST BE PACKED LIKE A GLAZE FIRING (i.e. forms not touching) RATHER THAN LIKE A BISQUE FIRING IN WHICH PIECES CAN TOUCH.
- **SOME CLAY FORMS WILL BE MORE INCLINED TO DISTORT IF THEY ARE VERY IRREGULAR AND UNBALANCED IN SHAPE (i.e. figures with arms held out etc) BECAUSE A HIGHER FIRING TEMPERATURE CAUSES THE CLAY TO START TO VITRIFY AND BECOME PYRO-PLASTIC.**

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