

Vintage Indent Ornaments from the USA and Europe, and an Outlier from Columbia!



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“Indent” Christmas ornaments are among the favorites of collectors. Also called “reflectors,” they usually have a simple globe shape, or else a teardrop shape, although I find this a misleading term since the ornament is pointed at both ends. Simple shapes, yes, but what makes these ornaments special is the indent itself, which is often elaborately decorated. The effect of the indent is to create depth and gain reflective surface. The indentations often have ridges which add even more reflection. The indents vary in size, and a few are incredibly deep, so deep they seem to almost touch the other side of the ornament. We see this on European ornaments only. I’ve never seen really deep indents on American ornaments. When I hang extra deep indents on my tree, I make sure there is a light bulb near the front of the indent, so it’s depth and dazzle are fully appreciated.



Large European Indents



Medium European Indents (A)



Medium European Indents (B)



Medium European Indents (C)

American indents are distinctly different from those made in Europe. The first clue that an ornament is American made is the ornament “pike”—the top on which the cap sits. It is usually much wider than those from Europe. This is because it is made with a machine rather than individually made by glass artisans. The cap itself is different, too. Many American caps have a scalloped edge. Also, many caps identify the country of origin with an imprint. Most

American ornaments use much thicker glass, so they weigh more. They are still light weight, but if you focus on the weight when you handle them, you will soon realize the difference. American ornaments, being machine made, generally have much simpler shapes. The paint patterns are also different. I don't recall ever seeing a striped ornament from Europe, but they are very common in America. There are many great indent ornaments from both sides of the Atlantic.



Round American Indents



**American "Bumpy"
Indents**

One ornament type in this blog is especially noteworthy, the so called "bumpy" ornament. The surface of the glass has numerous tiny bumps. These were produced in both Europe and America, but the ones featured in today's photo are all American. These are especially sought after by collectors. So popular, in fact, that current manufacturers are reproducing them. The new ones are nice, but they use thinner glass than the old ones, and the new colors are more intense.



Large American Indents



Medium American Indents



Assorted American Indents

For my own collection, I don't like to exclude ornaments from any country. I like them all, some more than others perhaps, but every country that has produced glass ornaments is represented on my tree. I advise collectors not to restrict themselves. Among the ornaments in these photos, there is one that was made in Columbia—I invite you to guess which one!

Please email me (kevin@milaegers.com) with your questions and comments!