

Naturalistic Ornaments, Icicles and Houses



Written by: Kevin Milaeger
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Some of the most popular ornaments for Christmas trees are “nature” type ornaments. This includes things like pine cones, berries, fruit, nuts, flowers, mushrooms and the like. Before the advent of glass ornaments, these items, in their natural form, were used to decorate trees. When glass ornaments were introduced, these familiar items were naturally some of the first glass ornament forms. Many of them are still being made today. As a collector, part of the challenge is to find a favorite form, say, a pine cone, and then try to find as many versions and colors of it as possible. I don’t know how many different types of glass pine cones I have at home, but probably more than fifty, and some of them are in many different colors. I suggest you find a form that appeals to you, and then search for variations. Today we have a number of different pine cones, berries, and mushrooms for you to choose from.



European pine cones



**Pines cones top row
American, second row
European, bottom row
Japanese**



**Baskets of flowers, fruit,
and a ladybug**



**European berries, and
one American (upper
left)**

Icicles were another early form of decoration. Tree decorators realized early on the value of vertical accent, so icicles became very popular. We're currently offering blown glass icicles, but we have seen many in solid glass, plastic, and metal. The smallest icicles we have are about 3" long, and the longest is about 8". Once you have added many of these to your tree, you'll see what people mean by saying that your tree is "dripping" with ornaments. (That's a good thing.) Some icicles have a very simple, smooth shape, without the swirl pattern in the glass. To add interest, manufacturers looked for other ways to accent their ornaments. They used swirling color, for example. Also, glitter and other paint patterns like stripes and dots. European manufacturers made their twisted icicles in many solid colors and often multi-colored. Again, it's fun to see how many different forms you can find.



Nuts, mushrooms, and other nature ornaments



American and European icicles



European icicles and snakes

We also enjoy collecting the many different glass houses, churches and other buildings. We think of them as architectural ornaments. Right now we're fortunate to have a windmill. We don't see them too often. These were often fitted with paperboard fins that replicated those on real windmills, but those are long gone on the one windmill we currently have. You'll have to use your imagination. I think manufacturers realized the paperboard fins were not a good solution to the problem, so later windmill ornaments have very small fins right in the mold. We don't currently have any churches, but we do have many different styles of homes. These often have a turkey up against the house. I figure that must be a symbol of plenty, or prosperity.



Mostly European icicles



European houses

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