**Provencal Glazed Earthenware from Vallauris**

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**Other Names**

Glazed common coarse earthenware from Vallauris

**Technical Definition**

The glazed coarse earthenware from Vallauris is a ceramic made from kaolinitic refractory clay, resistant to thermal shock, fat, and very plastic with an excellent expansion coefficient. It is usually recovered with a colorless transparent glaze, or colored with a white or colored slip after the end of the 18th century (Fig. 61).

**Paste**

Heterogeneous, more or less a pink color, hard (5-7 on Mohs scale), grainy to the touch with a number of subrounded inclusions of quartz, mica, kaolin, manganese, and iron, ranging from 1-3 mm (Fig. 62). From usage, the earthenware often takes on a gray color at the base from contact with the coals.

**Glaze**

The colorless or colored transparent lead glaze is found on the interior and/or the exterior of vessels and was applied by dipping or sprinkling, in a haphazard way.

The glaze allows the earthenware body to show through and is often speckled by the inclusions found within it. The color also varies by the addition of metallic oxides: copper (green), manganese (brown) or iron (brown or yellowish orange). The presence of a white, orange or red slip layer added between the earthenware and the glaze created a more uniform surface by the end of the 18th century. For those slipped vessels dating to the end of the 18th and the 19th c., it is useful, therefore, to specify them with the term “Slipped and Glazed Provencal Earthenware from Vallauris,” if identification is possible. Some rare pieces for special uses lacked any surface treatment, such as chestnut roasters, country ovens or heaters, or architectural ceramics (bricks, roof tiles (tuiles) and floor/wall tiles (carreaux). In this case, the term “unglazed earthenware” is preferred.

**Decoration**

Many types of decoration, more technical than aesthetic, are are found on these utilitarian objects: applied pinched cords for reinforcing the base or the body, finger impressions at the top of the handle, grooves on the handle made on a wheel, one or two incised lines indicating where a handle should attach or to emphasize the rim, as well as rare rouletted bands. From the second half of the 19th c., cooking wares were clearly marked and stamped with the name of one of several manufacturers in Vallauris. Around 1880, this ware was decorated with a new style consisting of marbled slips over white engobe with blue from cobalt oxide, brown from iron oxide, and green from copper oxide.

**Forms**

The repertoire consists of utilitarian forms: cooking pot (marmite), lid, frying pan, a bowl called “cassole,” jug, and a vessel known since the Middle Ages in southern France as a “toupin,” a pot with a handle or tail for heating liquids in front of coals. The repertoire expanded over the 19th c. with various forms including: lidded daubière (cooking pot with globular body and constricted neck), coffee pot, plate, canning jar, country oven, and heater; architectural ceramics are represented by the production of refractory bricks, roof tiles (tuiles) and so called “malon” wall/floor tiles.

**Production Methods**

All of the vessels were made on the potter’s wheel, from balls of clay. For marmites and frying pans, throwing was done upside-down, by raising and and closing the wall in order to produce a rounded base. The finishing, the trimming and the rim shaping was done with a potter’s rib; the handles and tails were thrown, applied after the first partial drying. The slip and decorating was done when the vessels were leather-hard. Afterwards the slipped and decorated vessels were covered in glaze by dipping or sprinkling. The glaze is made of silica (Antibes sand) and lead sulfide (*alquifoux*, a word of Arabic origin), ground fine in a human-, animal-, water- or electric-powered (at end of the 19th c.) mill. Bricks and tiles were shaped in wooden or iron molds. Firing was done by stacking and loading items on separated shelves in saggars. A simple oxidizing firing atmosphere was achieved, reaching temperatures of approximately 800-850 degrees Celsius.

**Provenance**

These products are easily recognized as cooking forms blackened by use, as well as the earthenware texture and the glaze. It comes from eastern Provence: Biot and Vallauris (Alpes-Maritimes) (Fig.64).

**Dating**

The potting industry of Biot-Vallauris is known to have existed since the end of the 15th century, after the repopulation of villages by Italian colonists from Liguria. The texts report kilns in Vallauris between 1520-1530, and in the 16th c. the transport of “oules” and “pignates,” i.e., marmites, originating from these two centers. A pottery dump site was identified in Biot, near the rampart. During the 17th c. and especially in the 18th c., Vallauris became the undisputed center of cooking wares with a number of workshops spreading over medium and long distances. The distribution of wares was largely conducted through Marseille and peaked from the 19th c. to the beginning of the 20th c. The archaeological contexts of Provence, Languedoc, Italy and the Mediterranean basin bear witness to this trade over the long term, as do the underwater discoveries of cargo along the Provençal coast or thrown out in the Quarantine port in Marseille. The cooking wares found in Canada, Guyana, Louisiana and the French Caribbean reflect imports from the 18th century. Common “terrailles” (i.e., pottery cookware) shipments from Marseille included ceramics from Vallauris, Biot, and the Huveaune valley. The reference collections at Place-Royale, le Palais de l'Intendant and Îlot Hunt à Quebec, in Quebec, at Fort Beauséjour (New Brunswick) and at Louisbourg (Nova Scotia), include some, notably between 1700 and 1760.

**References**

Amouric et Serra 2013; Amouric et Vallauri 2007; Amouric, Richez et Vallauri 1999; Amouric, Vallauri et Vayssettes 2009; Barton 1981a; Dionne, Duchaine et Lapointe S.d.; Gauvin 1995; Gusset 1978a; Gusset 1990; Lueger et Olivier 1984; Moussette 1981; Petrucci 1991; Petrucci 1999; Sullivan 1986; Traill 1978