

Ivory Pears

Steuben Glass Works

Corning, New York



Ht. 6, 4 3/4, 3 3/4 inches

Ivory Pear Table
 Decoration with Leaf
 Ornament

Shape #7474

*Private Collection of Alan
 and Susan Shovers*

At first blush, sitting here at my desk, I thought, a glass pear, how difficult could that be? How difficult indeed? Couldn't I, or any one of us sit with pencil and paper and draw the perfect pear or its companion fall fruit, the apple?

Historically, many of the world's greatest glass houses have attempted to interpret the simple beauty of nature's bounty into glass. Many have tried, from the early Venetians who so inspired Mr. Carder's thinking to his successors at Steuben. So why have none created such a loving and strikingly beautiful representation as Mr. Carder's? Why is such a seemingly simple task, so difficult to execute?

Perhaps the answer lies in the notion that the simpler the task, the more difficult it becomes.

In truth these fruits can be drawn in as many ways as our imaginations can conceptualize. That is why glass fruits can be found today in such a profusion of shapes. Yet here stand three perfect pears, glistening in the light, flawless in their conception, exquisite in their execution and meeting our perceptions of the perfect, ripe harvest, but why these? Why are these so much more appealing and timeless than all the others. Mr. Carder was able to perceive that one flawless pear. Starting from its graceful stem and gently arching leaf we are captured by the folds and twists of the leaf. Its size alone

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expresses its importance to the overall beauty of this pear. The pear itself flows gently from its graceful neck to its pregnant body. We can almost imagine its juices bursting forth and dribbling down our chin as we savor its lusciousness.

Yet, if the truth be told, this looks nothing like a pear. It is not a pear at all, it is art. Art in its purest form, a representation of what it pretends to be. With all the colors and techniques that Mr. Carder brought to Steuben' s glass, these pears could have been sculpted from Bristol Yellow or Selenium Ruby glass. They could have been lovingly formed out of Cintra in a profusion of colors as they were in the applied fruits from his earlier Venetian period, but that was a different era, a different time. This was the roaring twenties, the first really modern era and these fruits had to make a statement for milady' s modern table.

Mr. Carder chose to interpret his pears in two very modern colors, two of his most opaque colors. These pears would not rely on transmitted light to show the glasses brilliance and to let the light play through their hollow surfaces. These pears would rely on reflected light and colors as simple as custard and ebony, ivory and mirror black. Surely, this was the genius and sheer artistic expression

that have set Frederick Carder' s Steuben glass apart from all the rest, forevermore. Lastly he designed these amazingly simple and timeless table decorations in three different sizes so close together as to appear natural and yet so different as to immediately set each apart. It is the perfect grouping. It is an artistic tour de force.

*Neil Kohut ,
Carder Steuben collector and art glass
dealer*



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