

Marbling Hints and Tips

- I have loved using turpentine, mineral spirits and denatured alcohol...but because turp has a strong odor and some are allergic to it, I will demo with lamp oil.
- My favorite colors for green marbling are grey green (sometimes I lighten it with white) for 1st fire...grey green darkened with black green or darkest green for 2nd fire...and black for the 3rd fire.
- Yellow red and black are also a favorite...very granite stone looking. And black over LBG is very beautiful, and can be a fix for a bad gold application.
- I fire hot (cone 016 or 015) and usually get a nice shine...but if necessary, I will use a very light coat of Magnolia glaze if needed on the last fire to make it really shine. This is still available at thegoodstuff.com
- I usually use mineral oil as my painting medium. You can practice getting different results by painting very dry versus painting wet and loose...or painting using an open medium versus a closed medium. You can also practice using several colors on each marbling session (kind of a patchwork effect). Blowing through a cocktail straw onto your piece will give you a lot of flowing movement, and then splattering on mineral spirits and/or denatured alcohol will give you added variety and textures. I splatter with an old toothbrush dipped into the mineral spirits or alcohol.
- On 2nd and 3rd marbling fires, I will wipe out or paint in some veining. I wipe out with a wipe out tool (sometimes the shakier you are, the better), or paint in with a liner brush either very precisely or loose and shaky. Sometimes I will blow through a straw on the veining to make it look more interesting.
- I will dry pieces in the oven before firing to make sure there will be no surprise "runs" later in the kiln. This is especially important for any vertical surfaces. I preheat the oven to 350 - 400 degrees and put the piece in the hot oven for approximately 10 to 20 minutes...you want it to look matt, and not still wet. I turn on the exhaust fan to remove any fumes while in the oven and while cooling down afterwards. Your piece may look discolored from the burned oils, but don't worry...this all burns away in the kiln. If you find that you do have some bad runs or splatters etc...this can still all be removed from your piece and it can be redone.
- I often like to make a narrow inner band of the lightest color next to the marbling...it reminds me of double matting on a picture. This can be done after the marbling is all completed. And I usually embellish this with my "enamel" dots or scrolling.
- When marking a plate/box for a marbled border, I like to use scotch tape (matt is easier to see on your china) for an inside curve or straight lines, often tearing the width in half to make it easier to manipulate around the inside of a curve. I like the colored electrical tape for outer curves where you need the stretch of the tape, and I will often cut the width narrower using my rotary cutter and cutting mat.

The black wipe out flower examples were inspired by a youtube demonstration done by Etsuko Hanajima. This can be found by going to Youtube, search for Ipat Museum, search for Etsuko Hanajima presents "Wipe-out painting with mettallic screen". In her demo, the black paint is mixed with her painting medium of 1 part mineral oil to 1 part balsam of copaiba and is smoothly painted on with a brush and padded with a sponge. Then the flowers are sketched with a wipe out tool, and wiped out with a brush. She fired at 016. For the second fire, she taped off the plate for the border, and mixed silver metallic with her painting medium, and again brushed on with a brush and padded with a sponge, and fired to 016. In her demo she has many different color combinations to see.