



# Going potty about pottery

Discover the history behind some of our nation's famous Stoke-on-Trent pottery names

**M**ore and more of us are discovering the joy of creating with clay. Whether inspired by *The Great Pottery Throwdown* or our famous ceramic heritage, pottery classes are in high demand nationally. But the area best known for

ceramics is the Staffordshire city of Stoke-on-Trent, which has been producing pottery since the early 17th century. This unique city, formed from six towns, is collectively known as the Potteries. We find out about four of the best-loved makers, each with a distinctive style.

## Wedgwood



Famed for its iconic blue and white jasperware, Wedgwood remains one of the most recognisable names in British ceramics. Its founder, Josiah Wedgwood I, started the company in 1759, having trained as a potter in his family's business. Avid experimenting with colour and finish led him to create much

sought-after creamware. When Queen Charlotte ordered a creamware tea set in 1765, Wedgwood named himself 'Potter to Her Majesty', and began stamping 'Wedgwood' on his work as a marketing tool. The name is still prestigious today, fulfilling Josiah's dream to become 'Vase Maker General to the Universe'.  
**\* Discover more at [worldofwedgwood.com](http://worldofwedgwood.com)**

## MOORCROFT

Moorcroft fine art pottery, loved by Queen Elizabeth II, was first produced in 1897 by William Moorcroft while working for

James MacIntyre & Company. His nature-inspired motifs proved popular, and his name began to overshadow the

company's other work, so in 1912 he was asked to leave. By 1913, Moorcroft had his own factory in Burslem, from which his distinctive flambé glazed new art pottery, featuring floral and landscaped motifs set against richly coloured backgrounds, grew ever more popular. Designs made at the factory today continue to be popular, but those early-20th-century art deco patterns remain the most highly prized among collectors.  
**\* Book a factory tour at [moorcroft.com](http://moorcroft.com)**



Look out for Potfest events around the UK for ceramic enthusiasts, collectors and members of the general public.  
**\* Find out more at [potfest.co.uk](http://potfest.co.uk)**

## Crazy for Clarice



Clarice Cliff, who was born in a modest terraced house in Tunstall in 1899, became one of the most sought-after ceramic design artists in the world, her name synonymous with art deco. Aged 13, Cliff worked as a gilder, adding



gold lines to pottery. She went on to study art and sculpture at Burslem School, and her first brightly coloured 'Bizarre' collection, with geometric designs, was an instant success. By the late 1920s she was using unusual shapes to showcase her designs, such as triangular handled teacups and conical sugar shakers. Bringing striking modern art to functional kitchen items made Cliff an icon of British pottery.



## EMMA BRIDGEWATER

In 1984 Emma Bridgewater wished to buy a cup and saucer that expressed 'I love you. I miss you' as a gift for her mother. After searching in vain, she realised that to fill her mother's dresser with the colourful pottery she envisioned, she would need to design it herself. A friend sent her to Stoke-on-Trent, where today the Emma Bridgewater Factory produces 1.9 million pieces of cream earthenware every year, including more than 70,000 personalised items. The brand's sponge-printed designs, from polka dots to hearts and lettering, grace kitchen tables up and down the country.

**\*Decorate your own plate at [emmabridgewater.co.uk](http://emmabridgewater.co.uk)**



## Sold!

In recent years, Potteries Auctions ([potteriesauctions.com](http://potteriesauctions.com)) has seen pottery sell at world record prices. Is it time to check the base of your ceramics?



Measuring only 6.6cm high, this Clarice Cliff Blue Chintz design Bizarre vase sold for £1,200.



£3,400

This Wedgwood Flame Fairyland lustre footed bowl sold for £3,400.



£35,500

This prototype of Royal Doulton's Bunnykins tableau sold for an incredible £35,500!



£3,000

A prestige Moorcroft pottery vase in the Jerusalem pattern fetched £3,000.



£8,000

A Beswick mare and foal went for £8,000.



£14,000

A pair of Minton pâte-sur-pâte vases and covers sold for £14,000.

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