

# Atlanta in 3D — Designers

— Albert Sieg

As a longtime glass ornament collector and a first time attendee at the January 2008 Atlanta gift show, I was literally blown away — and that is putting it mildly. Holiday displays were concentrated on four floors of one 20-story building and scattered in several locations in two others. In addition to visual overload, it was a physical challenge for my legs and feet, covering acres of displays and events over four days.

All the major glass ornament companies were represented with lavishly decorated showrooms where you could spend hours absorbing the beautiful displays. I had permission to photograph the displays and I used a 3D (stereo) camera. I must say that the camera attracted lots of attention and I owe photos to many people!

I found that I was most attracted to the smaller rooms or booths where most of the newer and startup exhibitors were found. Most were located in the temporary areas. I found more creative glass and a willingness to experiment among these exhibitors. Many of them have been in the business for less than five years and, for some, it was their first show. Though small, they were impressive, such as David Strand Designs, Thomas Glenn, Artistry of Poland, Motherhouse Studio and several others.

I was really impressed by the greatly expanded food themes. Everywhere I went, I saw new approaches to this theme. Tim



Put on your paper glasses and take a stroll through the Larry Fraga Designs showroom.

Merck of Old World Christmas told me that a few years ago, fruits and vegetables were their biggest seller. Now however, while they are still doing well, the fresh approaches to food theme attracted me, as well as retail buyers shopping for their stores.

Some food-themed glass ornaments looked so real I was almost tempted to take a bite! Designers have thought of it all — chocolate candy, cakes, ice cream cones, pop corn, cheeses of all kinds, burgers, hot dogs, French fries, pizza and peanut

# Premiere 2008 Collections



Inge-glas hit a grand-slam with the debut of its *Café Espresso* Collection.

The Ornaments to Remember showroom served wine and cheese to reflect their new product introductions. And, no one does sushi better!

These sweet treats really *do* look good enough to eat!



butter and jelly sandwiches! Not to be outdone, Asian delicacies were represented, too, including many kinds of sushi. Getting hungry?

Amid the tempting array, I was especially impressed with Inge-glas' new collection, *Café Espresso*. The display certainly attracted lots of attention from retail buyers, as well. The collection includes an assortment of coffees and snack cakes. Select a cup of *Cappuccino*, *Chai Pur*, *Latte Macchiato*, *Ice Coffee* or *Hot Chocolate*.

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Of course, the ubiquitous coffee bean was everywhere.

Tempting examples of cakes, such as tiramisu, truffle treats, pralines, assorted cupcakes, chocolate drizzled croissants and chocolate dipped strawberries, looked good enough to eat. By this point, I was ready for some *real* coffee and a snack. And, guess what? The gracious Inge-glas staff provided that too! I spent lots of time there. While I was photographing some of these ornaments, I noticed a number of buyers ordering them. I think they will be winners! I can easily see trees filled with goodies to eat accompanied by a smaller tree with Café Espresso ornaments for the after dinner session — can't you?

The three of us representing *Celebrate365* [Sharon Johnson, Connie Porcher, Al Sieg] looked through showroom after showroom, large and small. We examined thousands

of ornaments searching for innovative and unique designs. "We viewed some amazing use of glitter at Joy to the World," commented Connie Porcher, *Celebrate365* publisher. "We visited the showroom over and over. In the end though, all three of us were absolutely blown away when we viewed David Strand's *Partridge in a Pear Tree*."

We agreed that the winner of the most innovative ornament for 2008 was David Strand's *Partridge in a Pear Tree* — the first in a planned series of the Twelve Days of Christmas. I'm sure it will be on most people's wish list. I know it is on mine.

That's the real fun at this type of show — not only seeing the existing lines but getting a glimpse of the future of glass ornaments. For an avid collector, this makes it all worthwhile. I'm sure that the exhibitors and buyers alike felt much the same way.



### Café Espresso Collection Best New Theme

At left:  
Bite of Calories  
4 assorted flavors  
3", \$12.95 each



No Calories  
3 assorted flavors  
3.25", \$12.95 each



Left: Truffle Treat  
3 assorted flavors  
3.25", \$12.95 each

Left & on cake plate:  
Cupcake of Mine  
3 assorted flavors  
3", \$12.95 each

Chocolate Drizzle (croissant)  
4.75", \$16.95

### Inge-glas of Germany

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Clockwise from top:  
Orange Confection  
3 assorted flavors  
3.75", \$16.95 each

Latte Macchiato  
4", \$14.95

Dipped Banana  
3 assorted  
4.5", \$14.95

Tradition with a contemporary twist — Inge-glas is steeped in centuries of German glass blowing tradition. The designers, mold makers and painters have shown that they are very much citizens of the 21st century. They have flawlessly executed the visually enticing *Café Espresso Collection* of beverages, tea cakes and sweet treats. Kudos to Inge-glas for the best new theme collection in Atlanta!