

Horse Hair

Western-Style Raku Technique

Strands of horse hair are laid across a burnished surface on a piece of heated pottery. The strands sear onto the pot's surface, revealing wandering linear smoke designs and carbon trails that remain as decoration after the pottery cools.

Other materials may involve sugar being sprinkled on the hot surface, leaving spotted smoke marks. Newspaper scraps may also be burned inside of the pot, leaving a blackened, smoked interior from the carbon. The pot is then placed in a container of water for cooling purposes, and wax is applied to enhance the carbon effects.

This type of firing is intended for artistic pieces and is not considered food safe nor watertight.



Crackle Glaze

Raku Carbon Technique

Raku glazes are often fractured, which are referred to as "Crazing."

To achieve this crackled look, the piece is heated to a specific temperature and when pulled out of the kiln, the difference in the outside air temperature causes crackling to occur. The pot is then placed in a metal barrel, filled with newspaper, covered, and allowed to smoke. The blackened cracks in the glaze are the result. The pot is then placed into a container of water, which immediately cools it, stopping the chemical reactions of the glaze and permanently affixing the colors.

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Sagger

Raku Reduction Firing Technique

Salts, metal oxides, wire, foil, sawdust, and organic materials from nature such as leaves, moss, feathers, etc. are added to the surface of the pottery before firing. These materials ignite or fume during firing, leaving the pot buried in layers of fine ash.

Dramatic markings with colors ranging from distinctive black and white markings to flashes of golds, greens, and red tones produce surprising outcomes. The potter never knows what the final surface will look like due to the random nature of this technique.

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Smoked

Western-Style Raku Technique

Pottery is heated to an approximate temperature of 1800 degrees and removed from the kiln with a pair of tongs. Pottery is then placed into small metal garbage cans with shredded newspaper, which produces thick black smoke. The carbon is wicked into the porous clay body, blackening the clay.

When the pottery has cooled, they are removed from the smoking chamber and doused with water. The soot covered pots are gently scrubbed clean to expose the blackened surface, and wax is applied to enhance the carbon effects.

The word Raku means “joy” or “happiness.”

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