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Red Wing Dinnerware & the Hotel or Restaurant Line

The information presented here has been gleaned from vintage Red Wing brochures, catalogs, price lists and internal documents as well as trade journals and magazines. In this discussion, a "pattern" is a dinnerware set in a particular shape with a unique handpainted design or color scheme. A "line" is a group of patterns that share the same shapes but have different handpainted designs or colors. Some of the introduction and exit dates presented have not been verified because of gaps in available documentation. When uncertain, an estimated date is provided. The end point of a pattern can be difficult to ascertain. In the 1940s and 1950s a discontinued pattern no longer appeared on price lists; in the 1960s patterns that were no longer in production remained on price lists as "limited stock" with only a few pieces listed. Here a pattern is considered to be discontinued when a full range of items was no longer available and orders were limited to remaining stock.

Each pattern has been assigned an Availability rating and a Collector Interest rating as described below. Availability represents an average for the pattern in question, however the scarcity of certain pieces within the pattern may differ. Collector Interest refers to the pattern in general, but there may be specific pieces in any pattern that are of greater interest to specialty collectors (teapots, pitchers, salt & peppers, etc). Please keep in mind these ratings are the authors' observations; your experience may vary.

Availability

- 1 – Rare
- 2 – Very scarce
- 3 – Hard to find
- 4 – Average
- 5 – Readily available

Collector Interest

- 1 – Highly sought, demand exceeds supply
- 2 – Primarily of interest to specialty collectors
- 3 – Above average
- 4 – Average
- 5 – Below average

HOTEL or RESTAURANT Line

Hotel or Restaurant China, Empire Shape

Availability: 4 Interest: 5 Years: 1960s

While many collectors refer to this as Hotel & Restaurant, the name used on an undated brochure is "Hotel or Restaurant China". This line was produced exclusively for the restaurant trade. It does not appear on standard dealer price lists because it was not available to the public. And because it did not appear on price lists, it is difficult to put a start or end date on the production of this line. Some sources state that production began in 1964. Most likely production continued until the close of the Potteries in 1967. Additional information about these patterns can be found in the August 2010 *RWCS Newsletter*.

Hotel or Restaurant pieces in the Empire Shape had a vertical ribbed design on the exterior or around the rim. Pieces were heavy and sturdy, designed to withstand rough and repeated use. Because the line was made to serve customers in a restaurant, the list of items made for Hotel or Restaurant differed considerably from standard household dinnerware patterns. Items available included plates (5 sizes), platters (3 sizes), coffee cups in 2 styles (bell or tall), individual teapot, pot pie bowl, bouillon cup with no handle, tea cup with no handle, individual ashtray, creamer, open sugar, sauceboat, soup bowl (2 sizes), cereal/salad bowl, sauce/fruit bowl, oval bakers (3 sizes) and a lobster-shaped lobster dish.

All pieces were available off the shelf in either white or beige fleck. For an additional charge, a trim line could be added; available colors included blue, green, red, yellow and possibly others. Besides the two standard colors, the lobster dish was also available in orange. Some references include this lobster dish with the CeramaStone line, probably because of the orange color. But that is incorrect; it belonged to Hotel or Restaurant.



White Empire Shape dinner plate (above) and bowl (below).



White Empire Shape creamer and beige fleck teapot (above) and orange lobster dish (below).



Above: Empire Shape plates with various trim colors. Below: Empire Shape sauceboat and sugar dish in beige fleck.



Above: Empire Shape cup & saucer, dinner plate, bowl and bread plate in beige fleck with green trim.



Left: Empire Shape "bell style" cup & saucer in beige fleck and green trim. Right: Empire Shape "tall style" cup & saucer in beige fleck.





Hotel or Restaurant China, Regal Shape

Availability: 1 Interest: 4

Years: 1960s

A newly discovered Hotel or Restaurant brochure lists two different shapes. This brochure most likely was published shortly before the closing of the Potteries. One side of the brochure featured the familiar ribbed Hotel or Restaurant dinnerware, which was described as the Empire Shape. The other side showed the New Regal Shape. Like Empire, Regal dinnerware feels heavy and was promoted as chip resistant. Regal had a smooth surface and was available in white or beige fleck glaze. The brochure does not mention custom orders or colored trim. The brochure listed only a



Regal Shape bowl and cup & saucer.

few Regal pieces: Plates in three sizes, Bowls in two sizes, Bouillon Cup and Cup & Saucer. This explains several previously undocumented pieces that have been found in recent years. Regal was likely produced for only a brief period before the Potteries closed in 1967. Examples that are marked have an upright green wing with a block "Red Wing" across the middle.

HOTEL or RESTAURANT Custom Orders

Red Wing also accepted custom orders. These orders featured Hotel or Restaurant China (Empire Shape) decorated with a unique design made exclusively for that customer. Four such designs are known to exist.



Sveden House Availability: 3 Interest: 4 Years: 1960s

Red Wing books refer to this pattern as "Sweden House", but the correct name is "Sveden House". A more detailed article about the history of Sveden House will be published in an upcoming issue. Sveden House was a chain of smorgasbord (buffet) restaurants with a Scandinavian theme. Sveden House plates had a Scandinavian-looking house above an abstract floral design. The artwork was done in two shades of blue against a white background, with a blue trim line around the rim. Because Sveden House was a self-serve buffet style restaurant, only a few basic pieces were needed. Dinner plates and matching 6½" plates were custom-ordered, but the blue-trimmed cups and saucers were stock items and thus not specific to Sveden House.



Diamond Jim

Availability: 2 Interest: 1

Years: 1960s

Diamond Jim's was a nightclub located in Mendota Heights, Minn. – a suburb of the Twin Cities just south of the Mississippi River. There may also have been at least one location in California, according to a Red Wing collector who recalls working at a Diamond Jim's there many years ago. The artwork on Diamond Jim plates featured an antique automobile. A different auto appeared on each of the five plate sizes. The auto was dark pink and black against a white background. The entire rim of each plate (not just a trim line) was dark pink. Cups and saucers and possibly other pieces had the same dark pink rims. The antique auto motif has great



Diamond Jim cup & saucer.

appeal to collectors, and the limited scope of production makes Diamond Jim plates difficult to find and highly sought.



Thunderbird Availability: 1 Interest: 2 Years: 1960s

The Thunderbird Motel was located in Bloomington, Minn. near the old Metropolitan Stadium, which is now the site of the Mall of America. A small number of Hotel or Restaurant dinner plates decorated with a totem pole design in black and rust on a white background have been found. These plates had glaze codes on the back rather than the standard Red Wing ink stamp. It is believed these are test or sample plates made for the Thunderbird Motel. Apparently no order was placed and the design didn't go into production.



Sheraton? Interest: 2

Availability: 1 Years: 1960s

Four Hotel or Restaurant dinner plates with an "S" in the design are known to exist. It is speculated these were made as samples for the Sheraton hotel chain. The design featured a large "S" below three flowers and several leaves. The design on each plate was applied as a single color. The artwork on two



of the plates was greenish-gold; the other two plates had pink artwork. The background color for one plate in each color was white, the other was beige fleck. Like the Thunderbird sample plates, these plates had glaze codes on the back. The samples apparently did not result in an order.