



History of Czech Glass Beads

Archeological findings of glass beads confirm knowledge of early glass making in the 9th century in the Great Moravian Empire.



Glass factories were producing glass products in the 13th century, with almost clear glass quality.

The biggest boom in the industry was in the 17th century during Emperor Rudolf II, when the country was the centre of glass artists, and at this time Czech crystal was also discovered.

In the 18th century, Czech glass was known worldwide, and because of its perfect clarity and luster it successfully competed with Venetian glass. The knowledge of glass melting was a secret, which was passed from father to eldest son ensuring the key tradition for future development.

New machines were made to produce vast variety of beads in the 19th century, 1000's of beads were created, but molds were difficult to manufacture.

The First World War nearly collapsed the Czech glass industry, but by 1928 Czechs were the largest bead exporter in the world.

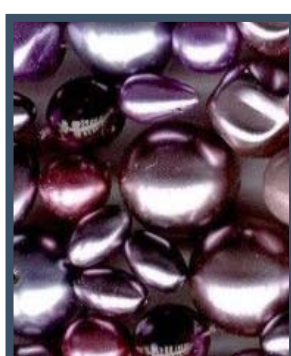
Another disruption was the Second World War, followed by the communist regime in Czechoslovakia which nationalized the entire glass industry, sending the glass bead industry into major decline.

1989 was the year of the "Velvet Revolution" when the communist government was removed and the Czech bead industry became privatized once again.

Famous Czech Glass Beads



Fire-Polished



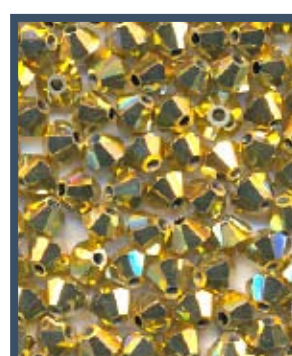
Imitation-Pearls



Pressed



Seed-Beads



Machine Cut

Lampwork Czech Glass Beads



There are no limits with lampwork beads (tradition dating back to the 14th century), as it is up to the artist's imagination.

Each bead is unique due to the technique used, as they are a fully handmade product, it is impossible to make them identical.

To create these amazing beads, a gas fueled torch is used to melt clear or coloured glass rods. Once in the melted stage, the glass is wound onto a metal rod previously dipped in clay (for easy removal of the finished bead from the rod once cooled).

Glass is then shaped with tools and further decorated, some lampwork beads are decorated with silver or 24 carat gold foil.

