

SODA FIRING

Tips & Techniques

What is Soda Firing?

- Soda Firing is an atmospheric firing technique where soda (sodium bicarbonate & sodium carbonate) is introduced into the kiln near it's top temperature.
- The soda vaporizes and is carried throughout the kiln by the draft, interacting with pieces as it goes.



STUART GAIR

Do I glaze pieces for the soda kiln?

- **The soda is basically the glaze!** Leaving the outside of a piece unglazed can result in flashing colors of oranges, yellow and red tones to browns, golds and tans. The soda reacts with the alumina, silica and iron in the clay and/or slips.
- Glazing the outside can leave undesirable results. Since the soda is a glaze, it adds another layer of glaze on top of the glaze you applied to the piece. When the glazes react, they can often yield extremely runny results which can ruin your pot, the kiln shelf, or both!
- Soda leaves a very subtle effect to glazes, so skip the risk of bad glaze runs, and put pots you would like to glaze all over in the reduction kiln.
- Glazing the inside of a piece with a liner is a good idea as the flame may not travel inside the vessel
- Remember **INSIDE GLAZE BEST, SODA FOR THE REST !**



MATT LONG



EMILY MURPHY

What forms should I make for the soda kiln?

- You should **not** plan to make plates, or anything flat or horizontal as these tend to be tricky for loading and firing.
- Pieces 9 inches and under are ideal. Cylindrical forms do well in the soda kiln (cups, bowls, jars and vases).

What is wadding and why do you need to use wads?

- Wads are high alumina pads which are used to prop each piece up in the kiln. Since everything in the kiln gets coated with the soda (creating a glaze finish) it's important to have wads so pieces do not get permanently stuck to the shelves
- * Lidded containers must have a wide flange to accommodate wads to prop the lid up during the firing. Wax with alumina is not enough. If the flange is too small, your lid can fall onto or into your piece becoming permanently stuck!
- Since everything is wadded, there must be ample room for the wads on the feet of your pots (and the flange of a lidded piece as mentioned above). **No dainty feet here!**



LOUIS REILLY

Flashing slips!

We have 3 slips specifically available for the soda kiln:

- Helmar
- Tile 6
- Titanium

Buckets of these slips are in the main wheelroom and can be used on the exterior of your pots, either dipping or brushing. Apply to **leatherhard** pieces before bisquing. You want a thin application - watch for drips or thicker spots that will show. Do not apply to rims - slip may flake off.



Flashing slips- Characteristics:

Tile 6 (6) - orange color, can be drier

Helmar (H) - tan color, speckly

Titanium (T) - orange color, satiny

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE TIPS & TECHNIQUES LISTED, FEEL FREE TO CONTACT OUR TECH OR OFFICE STAFF!