

# explore LI

## A passion for Pyrex

WHY LI  
COLLECTORS  
CAN'T GET  
ENOUGH OF  
THE VINTAGE  
GLASSWARE

B4



# Pyrex heats up

Where fans can find rare pieces worth big bucks

BY JOE DZIEMIANOWICZ

Special to Newsday

**W**hen Alyssa Durante turned 30 last March, a gift from her boyfriend bowled her over. The treasured present —

a pink Pyrex casserole dish decorated with daisies — is just like one seen in the TV series “The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel.”

For Durante, an avid Pyrex collector since 2016, checking this vintage piece off her most-wanted list was a dream come true. “Best 30th birthday gift,” she says.

At her home in Shoreham, Durante, a community residence support specialist, uses bowls to hold keys, onions and M&Ms. Nesting bowl sets are showcased on hutches and in display cabinets. “I’m always looking for the next piece,” she says.

She’s in good company, according to experts around Long Island. Introduced in 1915 by Corning Glass Works, Pyrex bowls and dishes are synonymous with kooky colors and patterns. Pyrex passion — particularly for pieces from the 1950s, ‘60s and ‘70s — is molten hot.

## RARE PYREX FINDS

It’s a lifestyle trend stoked by nostalgia, social media and the thrill of the hunt and discovery as collectors prowl vintage stores and estate sales, plus online sources including eBay, Etsy, Facebook Marketplace and beyond.

“I see young collectors in their 20s and 30s and others all the way up to their 60s buying Pyrex,” says Thea Morales, 46, who owns the multi-ven-

**A rare Pyrex bowl in the butterprint pattern that Louis Prizzi bought at a flea market for \$8 was resold for \$2,100.**



Alyssa Trott's fave Pyrex piece is a late '50s pink scroll casserole dish with its cradle.

dor antiques store Rosie's Vintage in Huntington. “We have people that come to our store just to add to their collection of Pyrex.”

Stand-up comedian Midge Maisel's Pink Daisy Pyrex set in the period show “definitely spiked interest,” says Morales. “People loved seeing what dishes she had in her kitchen.”

Six decades later, thanks to scarcity and the laws of supply and demand, Pyrex pieces and sets can fetch anywhere from \$20 to \$500 and even higher.

Ask Louis Prizzi, 35, an “occasional” Pyrex collector and toy aficionado who lives in Holbrook.

Before the pandemic, he picked up a small blue Pyrex bowl featuring a farming couple — the pattern is called butterprint — at a now-defunct flea market.

“It fell into my lap for \$8. It was super cute,” he says. “I took a picture of it and posted it on a Facebook group page.” Members of the site, Mid Century Modern Kitsch, he adds, “started flipping out.”

Prizzi had stumbled upon a limited edition “holy grail” piece. He resold the rare bowl on eBay weeks later for \$2,100. “I paid some bills with that,” he says, adding that it stoked his excitement about the glassware.

A big part of the Pyrex appeal is “whimsy. The pieces are fun and quirky,” says Prizzi, who sells items at the Deep End of the Sandbox vintage shop in Ronkonkoma. “That’s why it’s hot, hot, hot. The minute it pops up at a garage sale, estate sale or a thrift store, it’s gone.”

## PYREX APPEAL

For millennials, TikTok, Facebook and Instagram are prime sources for fueling the fad, says Morales. “You can see other people’s collections and how Pyrex dishes can be used to decorate.”

At Antique Attics in Lake Grove, co-owner Sabbath Troisi, 41, has seen a similar uptick in demand for Pyrex. Glassware in cheery colors, such as pink, turquoise, orange, and cute patterns like flowers, farmers, dots and stripes are what’s hot. Glassware bowls, refrigerator storage containers (“fridges”) and other dishes run from \$15 to \$375.





Thea Morales shows off the vintage Pyrex items for sale at Rosie's Vintage in Huntington.



MORGAN CAMPBELL

This zodiac Pyrex is part of Alyssa Durante's collection.



RICK KOPSTEIN

Some of the collectible Pyrex bowls at Rosie's Vintage in Huntington.



Alyssa Durante with a piece from her Pyrex collection at her home in Shoreham. More of her finds are on display behind her.

MORGAN CAMPBELL



Alyssa Trott, looking like she stepped out of an "I Love Lucy" episode, bakes with her gooseberry pattern Pyrex.

ALYSSA TROTT



RICK KOPSTEIN

This Pyrex butter dish can be found at Rosie's Vintage in Huntington.

"Interest has definitely heated up," says Troisi, who credits the brand's mix of function and beauty. "They went from the stove to the table and looked like pieces of art." Three years into building her personal Pyrex collection, his wife, Gina Loiacono, 41, just got two new cabinets to hold her displays. "I'm obsessed," she says.

Alyssa Trott, 38, a photography assistant who lives in Port Jefferson Station, has collected and sold Pyrex for almost a decade. She noticed a surge in interest in 2020. As people cocooned at home during COVID-19, they looked for creative ways to feather their

nests. Solution: vintage nesting bowls.

"I have a streamlined collection," says Trott, who has cut back on sales since having a baby in December. "I don't have closets filled with Pyrex like some people. I definitely focus on pink Pyrex, but I love it all." Like other collectors, she keeps two categories of dishes — ones to use, ones to show off.

Her favorite piece is a late 1950s pink scroll casserole dish with its original cradle. Among her most valuable pieces is a forest green zodiac casserole dish worth around \$180. (The 1961 price: \$795.) Her workhorse piece, she says, is an early

'80s colonial mist floral patterned bowl. "We use it for popcorn."

Trott's top tip for beginning collectors is to visit thrift stores. "There's always Pyrex, even if it's not necessarily a rare piece." Durante's top tip? "Start with what you think is pretty. That's what I did," she says. "I did more research as I went along."

As Durante's 31st birthday approaches next month, could there be another Pyrex thriller? "Oh, I hope so," she says. "I've been dropping hints."

### LI places that sell Pyrex

**Rosie's Vintage**; 187 Park Ave., Huntington, 631-549-9100, rosiesvintagestore.com

**Antique Attics**; 2789 Middle Country Rd., Lake Grove, 631-588-0005, antiqueattics.com

**Deep End of the Sandbox**; 650 Portion Rd., Ronkonkoma, 631-676-3130, deependofthesandbox.com

■ As you shop for Pyrex, a great resource is a pattern library at the **Corning Museum of Glass**, home.cmog.org

**ON THE COVER** More of Alyssa Durante's Pyrex collection at her home in Shoreham. She's hoping for more pieces for 31st birthday in March.