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# Kitchenware News

## & Housewares Review

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### Zafferano America Debuts Dinnerware Collection

BY A.J. FLICK

As with most things in life, timing was everything when it came to the idea of award-winning lighting and glassware distributor Zafferano America creating a tableware line.

Two years after selling the luxury Italian lifestyle brand he owned and led,

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## ZAFFERANO

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Arte Italice, and in the year that Arte Italice merged with Crown Linen Designs, Chris Collins decided to take a stroll through Shoppe Object in 2022.

"I wanted to see what was going on and came upon Zafferano's booth," Collins recalled. "It was a showstopper."

Collins was dazzled by the color displays and designs of the company's trademark lamps and glassware.

"I reached out to Federico in Italy, who told me he was considering dabbling in dinnerware," Collins said.

Federico is Federico de Majo, owner of Zafferano SRL of Treviso, Italy, and whose four decades of designing lighting and glasswork impressed Collins so much. Zafferano America strives to create not only functional and decorative products, but those that "bring dreams and emotions to life, creating unique interiors that stir emotions with their eye-catching decorative effects of light and color," according to the company's history.

It seemed a match made in tabletop heaven and Collins was tapped to take charge of Zafferano's emerging tableware line.

"It's been quite a project!" said Collins, whose enthusiasm carries through the phone. "I've done this in the past, and it's equally exciting to do it again with Zafferano."

Knowing that he had a reputation to live up to – not only Zafferano's but his own – Collins approached the project with fervor.

Right away, Collins was trusted with taking to market the design history that de Majo lovingly curated over the years that carried over to tableware.

Zafferano had recently bought a state-of-the-art ceramic factory in Gallese, Italy, to produce the dinnerware collections.

"The factory has tremendous capacity," he said, "better than any I've worked with."

Collins said having the perfect facility with the abundance of experienced, talented artisans proved to be a winning combination.

"One of the main artisans just moved in and took over operations in the factory," he said. "So the relationship was there. He came on in October and didn't miss a beat. He was working hand-in-hand with the designer."



All of the collections hold true to de Mayo's design aesthetic yet they fit contemporary consumers' needs well as they are safe to use in the oven, microwave and dishwasher as well as being chip resistant.

Keep in mind that Collins came on board with Zafferano in September as vice president of sales and marketing. Zafferano's tableware division made its debut at Atlanta Market in January.

"Launching a new dinnerware division," Collins mused, "I don't know exactly what the timeframe would be, but we did it in two months!"

Zafferano launched five collections, all designed and made in Italy, in Atlanta:

- Reablu: A blue-gray glazed stoneware with a finish both stylish and rustic, Reablu shows off its true Italian heritage.

- Perle: Both inspired by and complements Zafferano America's ever-popular and award-winning Perle colored glassware, Perle dinnerware is a clean-looking stackable collection available in four bold colors that evoke a subtle playfulness.

- Stone: A fiery and brightly glazed stoneware collection with a charming rim of hand-painted design with a unique reactive glaze, Stone delivers emotions that reflect both Italy's deep history and modern design sense.

- Spirale: A bold and solid-colored dinnerware collection designed to not only complement but build out the existing Zafferano America lines with chargers, mugs, small bowls and other complimentary pieces.

- Graffito: Offered in a beautiful pure white and a trend-forward vibrant Zafferano green, Graffito is truly one-of-a-kind. With sculpted accents on the rims and with signature designs on the underbelly of the dinnerware, the line is reflective of the skillfulness of the local Italian Artisans who expertly craft each piece.

"The dinnerware completes the Zafferano story," Collins said.

"We want to make sure the dinnerware is in lockstep with

the Zafferano brand, so the dinnerware has to be the highest quality with the highest design, a unique design that tells a unique story different than any other brand," he said.

And, while it's a little like asking parents which child is their favorite, Collins admits he does lean toward Graffito, which caught a lot of other eyes in Atlanta.

"Graffito, with its scratch accents, did extremely well in Atlanta," he said.

The line is produced with a reactive glaze that makes every piece distinctive.

"The scratches on the underbelly are unique to each piece," Collins added. "And the colors are unique as well, starting with the white and basic green, what I call the Zafferano green, they're electric and beautiful."

"What makes it so natural to launch a dinner line, it's all about the color story," Collins said. "When you introduce dinnerware to it, it's such a beautiful table, such a beautiful story."

Another consideration in creating the lines was to make them within the reach of the wholesale and consumer markets.

"We want to fit in the marketplace," Collins said. "I knew this, coming from Arte Italice. You want to be right smack in the sweet spot, so it's an affordable luxury. You're not at the top of the pyramid, but you're not at the bottom."

At retail, for instance, Graffito sells for \$35 for a salad plate, \$25 for a cereal bowl.

"And that's for quality, Italian stoneware that's completely oven safe, safe for the oven and dishwasher and chip resistant," he said.

The lines will be available for shipping in early spring.

Collins talks fast in his excitement for having brought a tabletop collection to fruition for Zafferano. It's hard to keep up with taking notes, he's talking so fast. But his excitement for what has been done is nothing like his anticipation of what's to come.

"The idea that we own our own ceramic factory – its capabilities are endless," he said. "It can allow us to create unique designs, unique processes and colors that are second to none."

"Owning your own factory is an advantage that trumps all other challenges," Collins said. "One of the challenges of any dinnerware line is finding factories that produce collections the way you want to produce them. We own the factory, so we've achieved that. And that's among the best situations that you can be in."

Shepherding the tabletop collection for Zafferano is a personal and professional achievement for Collins.

"It's been the perfect opportunity for me," he said. "In three months, we've achieved an extraordinary amount of progress." **KN**

