



Once again, welcome to Michael Carr Designs!

We are humbled and blessed to have you as our friends and loyal customers year after year. We never take you for granted and are continually grateful for you. We strive to make your experience with us very pleasant and profitable.

We are so pleased to introduce our 2019-2020 line to you. Each year, I am concerned about where the next inspirations will be coming from and how can we continually come up with more exciting designs and colors. We are so blessed that they continue to come! This year, I believe we have the best offering we have ever had. I know I say that each year, but I truly believe this every time I say it. We have added many offerings from the smallest indoor, to our overwhelming popular "Economy Line" (15-16in and down), to the hottest line we have, the Volcanic category, to our most decorated glazes in small, medium, large and XL sizes.

As I say each year, my goal is to create practically a new line each year for those that feel like they need to change looks from year to year. I never want you to feel you need to go somewhere else just to have a "new" look. It's on me to make this happen and I think we have done that again this year.

That being said, we have also kept all the bestselling items from last year as many of our designs are timeless. So, you have the choice to take some or ALL of the ideas for enhancements to your locations.

#### **Where can you shop our pieces?**

We will be exhibiting in multiple venues again this year. We will start the year off with our 10th Annual Pottery Showcase. I believe this will be the best pottery showcase in the country. We will be displaying more than 6 container loads of the newest and best garden planters in the industry in our personal 20,000sq ft climate-controlled showroom located in Atlanta, Georgia. Each piece will be different and unique from the other. It has always been my belief that this is a fashion business and it is so much better for a customer to be able to see and touch our pieces. We have a beautiful catalog, but we can't photoshop or touch up photos to make them look better than the actual piece! We want to provide you a comfortable environment where you can see and touch our complete line in person. We invite you to visit with us to see the difference in Michael Carr Designs and everyone else. Our 2019-2020 Michael Carr Designs Showcase will be held July 8-15 at 3065 Chastain Meadows Parkway, Building 200, Marietta, GA. Please give us a call to set up an appointment or go to our website at [www.michaelcarrdesigns.com](http://www.michaelcarrdesigns.com) and click on our registration link.

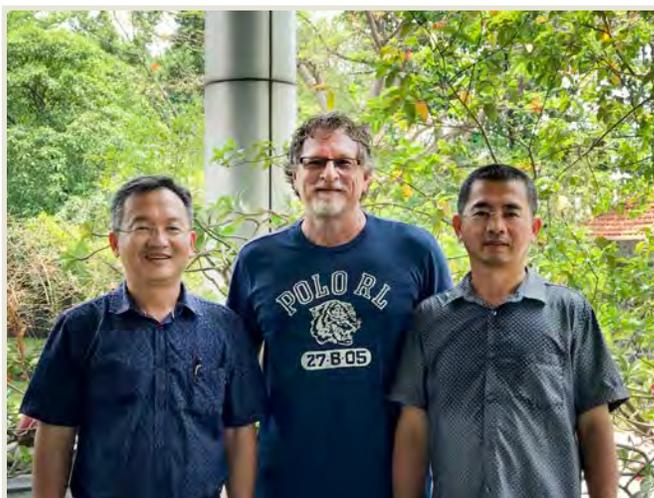
Once again, thank you for your partnership and I wish you a great year!

*Michael*

Michael Carr

[michaelcarrpottery@gmail.com](mailto:michaelcarrpottery@gmail.com)

**Michael  
Carr Designs**<sup>®</sup>





## Talented Workmanship & Unique Glazes

One of the things that makes our line of garden pottery special is that each piece is hand-made. Each piece starts with a talented craftsman taking clay and pushing it into a mold by hand. After an initial drying, they remove it with their hands and tirelessly work to smooth each seam and each design element out to give it the sleek shape that you see in each finished product. It is dried once again and liquid glazes are applied to the pots by hand. The pots are then moved to the kiln where it is set up to fire.

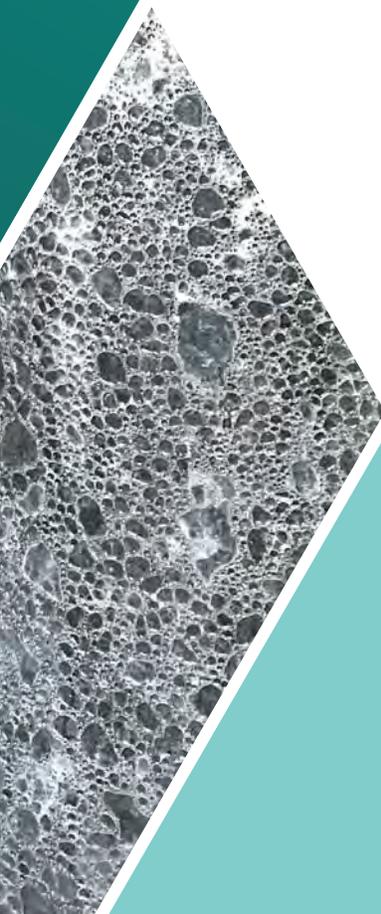
Inside the rustic old world wood burning kilns, heat will circulate throughout the pieces inside. The heat inside varies slightly from spot to spot. The heat combined with the unique glazes are what creates the colors and runs of the glazes. These slight variations in temperature are what give each piece its own unique finish. This is how customers get that one of a kind look with each piece.

We are also using more and more cutting edge kiln technologies. We do this in order to achieve more consistency in colors and can actually create new colors now achievable with varying temperatures in wood burning kilns. Using the best scenarios in each type of kiln we can achieve the best quality and styling.



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# Caring for your Pottery - Freeze & Frost Resistant



Select pieces within our collection are designed to be freeze and frost resistant. Look for the icon denoting planters that can tolerate colder temperatures. But I feel there needs to be a better explanation as to what terms such as frost resistant or freeze resistant mean. You see these terms on almost all outdoor pots from almost all vendors. But in order to better educate your customers, I want to go into more depth with this. Our pots are some of the best in the world at holding up in harsh climates. However, each category has different ranges. The first thing to note is that “frost” or “freeze” is technically 32 degrees. And practically, every outdoor pot can withstand that. So, basically, any vendor could apply these terms to their outdoor planters.

The first thing to note is that pots that are frost or freeze resistant are referring to the pot itself. Not the soil or plant or anything inside the pot. When someone plants up a pot with soil and moisture is in the soil, you then have the potential of a lot of expansion going on inside the pot in freezing temperatures. When water expands it is a very powerful force. With nowhere to go, this expansion could create enough pressure to cause the best pieces in the world to crack. I always use the example of rocks high on mountains. They crack when water gets in cracks and crevices and freezes and thaws over time. So, it's imperative to educate customers on ways to protect a planted pot that will be exposed to extreme temperature. Some suggestions would be to lift it up off the ground (pot feet, etc.) to allow moisture to drain from the pot over the winter, cover the pots to keep moisture from building up in winter, put materials in the soil that might absorb the expansion pressure, such as empty water bottles, bubble wrap, etc.

Freezing damage to the pots themselves, which are not planted, is normally due to moisture getting inside the pores of the material that the product is made from. The smaller the pores the less likely any moisture can accumulate inside the material that makes the pot itself. The hotter and longer a planter has been fired, the smaller the pores of the piece are. For example, I started out in this business making Mexican clay pots. At that time, the Mexican clay was cooked at 900 degrees for 8 hours. In contrast, our Vietnamese Clay is fired as high as 2300 degrees for several days! I consider our Vietnamese the best cooked planters in the world at holding up in extreme weather.

Terracotta can withstand 32 degrees, however, if it goes much lower and the pieces are on the ground where they will begin to absorb moisture through the bottom, they are much more susceptible to flaking and peeling on the exterior due to the moisture now inside the pores of the piece expanding and contracting.

Cement pots are not fired, so in order to make these pieces more frost resistant, other methods are used to close up the pores and reduce moisture soaking into the pieces. One is to use the best cement materials. Another is to use methods to shake and stir the pieces so that there are not pockets in the material that allow moisture to get in.

With terracotta and cement, I recommend getting these pieces off the ground to not allow them to sit in moisture over time. I personally use pot feet but I'm sure there are other methods as well.

Then we have our Vietnamese natural clay and our special applied glazes. As stated before, they are cooked at extremely high temperatures for extended periods of time, making them, in my opinion, the best in the world at holding up in harsh weather.

All pieces are great and hopefully, will be enjoyed for many years, but I believe it's important to educate your customers on how to care for each.

