

Product Focus

At Home



Two decades of inspiring designs

Gifts Today talks to David Roznowski and Jocelyne Royou-Roznowski, co-founders of D & J Glassware, which is celebrating two decades of trading

What's your background?

I (Jocelyne) am a chartered accountant with experience of both large multi-national and small family-owned companies. My husband David worked for many years in a senior sales role for blue-chip companies, latterly in the horticultural industry.

Why did you decide to launch D & J Glassware?

We had travelled throughout Europe and seen beautiful glassware that was not available in the UK. We were particularly impressed by the design and use of colour.

So, to use that well-worn phrase, 'it seemed a good idea' to start a business importing the lovely glass we had seen. We ignored the advice of going into business in an industry where we already had experience and contacts. Instead, we started with a blank piece of paper on our kitchen table and took it from there. D & J Glassware launched in 2002.

Tell us about your range.

We specialise in handcrafted products that show flair and are of

great quality. Our offering has changed considerably over the past 20 years to reflect changes in the market and consumers' tastes.

We were the first UK company to introduce the amazing Tree of Life globes to the market. They are still extremely popular: made from recycled crystal glass, these beautiful pieces epitomise true craftsmanship.

In addition to mouth blown glassware, we introduced our fused glass collection in 2011. What started with just a few cats and owls is now an ever-growing menagerie

"We have always seen our presence as a long-term commitment, and we are proud of the relationships we have forged with our stockists over the past 20 years"

of colourful animal designs. Our stockists love the quirky nature of these items and often tell us that they make their customers smile.

Our home fragrance collections are something we enjoy, as they combine great quality glass with heavenly British-made fragrances; to date we offer 17 different scents.

And we are very excited to have launched a fabulous range of home textiles, inspired by our glass animals. These are also British-made products - even down to the ethically sourced feather cushion pads.

What's the inspiration for your products?

We have learned over the years to follow our instincts and do our own thing rather than follow trends although, of course, we have to keep abreast of what our customers want from us.

While we have no formal design training, we both have very active imaginations and put these to use in developing our designs. Often, we get inspiration on long walks in the beautiful Norfolk countryside and along the coastline, which we are lucky to have on our doorstep. Rough sketches are then refined, modified and developed into the designs you see in our collections.

What sets you apart from your competitors?

Our passion for what we do, our attention to detail, our friendly approach and, of course, our unique designs. Everyone who works in the giftware industry has their own strengths, and customers have their own favourites. We have always seen our presence as a long-term commitment, and we are proud of the relationships we have forged with our stockists over the past 20 years.

How are you finding the current trading climate in the UK?

The past couple of years have been tough for everyone's wellbeing. After 20 years in the industry, our established routines have all been challenged and many have had to be adapted. Nobody really likes change, but we are learning to take each day as it comes. Old ways such as short lead times have gone, at least temporarily, and we have to accept it.

We think that the next year or so will continue to be challenging and we have all got to be realistic and support each other. Fortunately, that's something the giftware industry does rather well.

Twenty years is a great achievement. How will you celebrate?

Final preparations have to be made, but there will definitely be a glass or two of bubbly... and cake!

What can we expect next from your company?

More exciting new designs and developments into new product areas.

Call: 01953 450280

Email: dandj.glassware@btinternet.com

Visit: www.dandjglassware.co.uk