



Let's Meet Debi Cogwell

*Palm Tree Queen and Her Tiny Treasures...
From Yummy Fancies to Whimsical Characters*

By Karen J. Leonardo

When I think of this month's theme, Small Beads - Big Impact, Debi Cogwell immediately comes to mind. Her beads graced the pages of eBay for many years "back in the good ol'days" when lampwork beads were all made by artists. I have always wondered how she got the name Palm Tree Queen, otherwise known as PTQ. Her friends gave her the nickname because she has a place in her heart for palm trees...she rescues

them...seriously. She owns over 250 palm trees that grow in her back yard, some of which were roadside rejects. Forget the cats and dogs; her love is green leafy palms and soothing bark...any variety. It doesn't matter. Now that you know how she got her name, the rest is all about the beads. Now let's meet Debi Cogwell...a.k.a. The Palm Tree Queen!

It all began about 13 years ago when Deb saw artisan-made glass beads at a show. She is an artist at heart and knew she would just fall in love with lampwork. She purchased the needed materials and was off running. She read and studied everything she could about lampwork on the Internet and in books. Her basic go-to books in the beginning were: Cindy Jenkins' Making Glass Beads and James Kervin's More Than You Ever Wanted to Know about Glass Beadmaking.

She has been inspired by Sharon Peters and her whimsical and colorful style. As you can see, Deb's beads are very whimsical, too. Her work is very fun and creative, from her realistic-looking chocolates and desserts to her cute holiday beads. They always put a smile on your face or a rumble in your belly. And after I've looked at her beads I seem to have an odd craving for chocolate.



Deb explains, "Sculpted art beads were my fascination ever since I saw some small lampwork fish beads at a bead show. In the beginning I started out making a lot of penguin beads. You can do all sorts of stuff to them! They are very versatile little guys and they dress up well for all the holidays from holding Easter eggs and Valentine candy to being dressed up as Santa. They are still one of my very favorite beads to create, plus when you open the kiln there are these cute faces looking at you! How fun is that?"

"I had always admired and drooled over fancy bakery goodies, (chocolates, cakes, pies, donuts), so of course I had to experiment making those and they looked so cool that I have not stopped! I love to dream up designs for them and try to make them look as real and yummy as I can. When I make little dessert beads, my hubby wants to wish them real so he can pop them into his mouth one by one. I bake in my kiln instead of a real oven."



Deb shapes her tiny treasures with a variety of tools. She says, "The dental tools are so small and so versatile. They have various tips on them with which to poke, crease, and shape. I use them at just about every torch session.

"I also love my barbeque masher and imprint tools. I am a tool junkie and you will find many tools and glass presses in my studio. I mostly shape my dessert beads by hand, but I do love to use tools to imprint designs on beads. I love to use Karen Leonardo's imprint tools to imprint on my chocolate beads. I also use the imprint tools on my other beads, I especially love the skull imprint one, and it is my absolute favorite!!!"



Deb gets her ideas for making beads from many sources and she carries paper and pen to jot down her bead thoughts. She always has her phone handy to take shots of things that inspire her. Boxes of torn out pages from magazines and catalogs are categorized for inspiration. She says, "When I'm out of bead steam I just look in these boxes and in no time I am back to business with the Muse in tow."



Deb creates her tiny treasures in forms of cupcakes, pie or cake slices, chocolates, penguins, palm trees, cacti, witches, starfish, aliens, skulls...etc. The list is a mile long. Since she makes a variety of characters she can dress them up anyway she wants, which makes the possibilities endless. She feels like a little girl as she dresses her beads just as she dressed her Barbie dolls. As you view her beads let them put a smile on your face and make you remember what made you happy as a kid...or even as an adult.



To see more of Deb's work:

Website: <http://www.palmtreequeen.com>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/palmtreequeenlampworks>

You can also find her on www.Lampworketc.com: username palmtreequeen