

EFCOLOR ENAMEL KILN

This month we get to put the Efcolor enamel kiln and a fantastic little enamelling kit, from the lovely people at Metal Clay Ltd, through its paces. By Clair Wolfe

THE PRODUCT

The Efcolor Kiln set is a brilliant tool kit that only needs tea lights to run on. It has been designed to produce enough heat to melt the Efcolor enamel powders. It also seems that some clever polymer clay artists have used it to cook their clay, although I haven't trialed it for this.

WHAT DOES IT DO?

This clever little kiln saves the need to heat your whole kitchen oven for only a few little pieces. It is designed to save both time and electricity and is also perfect if you have a kitchen oven with a built-in fan, which can blow away the enamel powder.

WHAT IS INCLUDED?

The kit arrives boxed, keep this to store the kiln in when not in use, as it will keep everything together and also has the instructions on the sides. The kit contains a two-part kiln, three tea lights, one firing

plate, one firing stand (for double-sided firing), tweezers, two U-shaped bars (to hold your piece whilst sifting the powder on) and finally a colour booklet with further instructions as well as a host of inspirational ideas.

HOW GOOD ARE THE INSTRUCTIONS?

The basic instructions are on the sides of the box, these are perfect to get you started. The booklet has more advanced instructions plus extra ideas. The Metal Clay website has an instructional video too.

WHAT ELSE WILL YOU NEED?

A suitable heatproof working surface, a piece of thin card or paper (this will allow you to return excess powder to its pot), and a soft cloth or brush for cleaning up the tools and work surface. You will also need enamel powders and something to enamel onto. The lovely people at Metal Clay sent me a great little kit for this purpose: the Efcolor Butterfly Jewellery Set.

HOW EASY IS IT TO USE?

The whole kit is very straightforward and easy to use. With a bit of practice I found dispensing the powder to be easy enough, the only tricky bit was moving the powdered blank onto the firing plate without spilling a little. I did manage to knock the blank and shower enamel powder everywhere at one point! Although I found I couldn't clean it off, it had no further effect on my firings.

CAN IT BE ADDED TO?

The kiln set is complete and nothing else is needed. You will need to buy enamel powders and blanks on which to fire. The tool set provided in the kit is available to buy on its own, a second set would be useful to fire another enamelled blank without having to wait for the first firing plate to cool.

OVERALL SCORE

Why did I not already have one of these? This really is such a clever kit. I was really impressed with my first attempts at enamelling and quite surprised at how easy it is to do. I am bursting with ideas and can't wait to add a whole host of coloured powders to my collection. It is really exciting to discover a kit with such huge possibilities. The only downside to the kiln is the depth of the lid; I found it wasn't high enough when using the firing stand. Having done a little research I have discovered there is a way to remedy this with a foil container.

SCORE

★★★★★★★★☆☆

COST

Kiln: £16.95
Butterfly kit: £7.95

RESOURCES

www.metalclay.co.uk

ABOVE: Finished result



1. Kiln



2. Tools



3. Kit



4. Enamels and sieve lids



5. Box instructions



6. Leaflet instructions



7. Adding enamel to the back



8. Lighting candles



9. Using tools



10. Adding lid



11. Returning excess to pot



12. Fired result, smooth shiny surface



13. Adding embellishments



14. Reverse results