

Vintage Avon Christmas Bottles

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Back in the 1960s, Avon reps sold cosmetics door to door, and the “Avon Lady” was a cultural icon. At the time, Avon was known as much – or more – for its fancy containers as for its cosmetic products. Every kid I knew was fascinated by these beautifully detailed and often witty glass and ceramic bottles, shaped like animals, people, cars and trains, and everyday items from thermos bottles to school desks to potbellied stoves.



For a brief time back when I was an undergraduate, I had an Avon Lady of my own, and though I didn’t have much money, I bought a couple of those irresistible novelty containers.



For a time, these vintage bottles were highly collectible, routinely fetching prices upwards of \$25 (with some highly rare ones reaching into the \$100s). Then, as now, cars, trains, animals, and Christmas themes tended to be most sought-after. Nowadays only the rarest ones garner high prices, and the more common bottles can be had for \$2 or less. (I’ve even bought some for as little as 25 cents each).

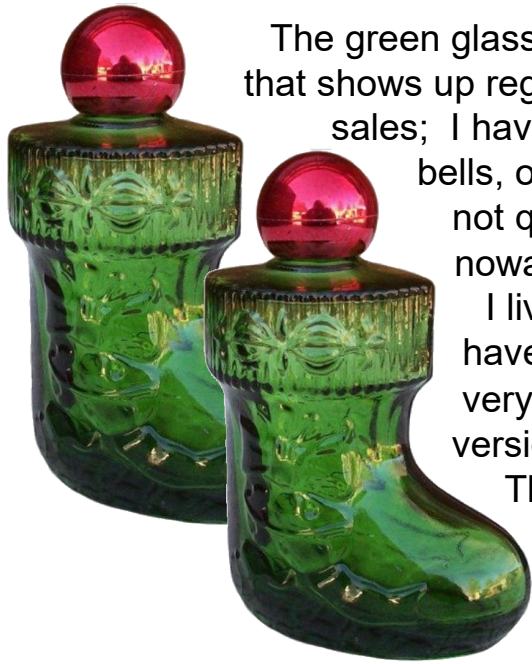
I’m not really a collector of these curiosities, and I certainly don’t own any really rare ones, but I have a few, including a cluster of Christmas-themed ones that I like to display over the holidays.

In addition to my little deer, above, I have two of these pretty Christmas candles. Avon must have produced a lot of them: they are still quite common in thrift and antique stores.



Large round baubles like this one also came in green, gold, and blue, with either metallic or plain glass finish. (This one is quite a bit larger in scale than most of the other Christmas bottles.)





The green glass Christmas stocking is another that shows up regularly at thrift stores and garage sales; I have two. The pretty metallic bells, on the other hand, are not quite so easy to find nowadays, at least where I live. Most of the bells have this metallic finish – very pretty -- but I did see a version on line that was plain red glass.

This bottle is one of the few I bought directly from my own Avon lady all those years ago.



Though I believe Avon may have made others, I have two different snowmen bottles: one made of opaque white glass and a smaller one of clear glass (I understand that this small one also came in a white glass version as well). Both have scarves made of ribbon or braid. The snowmen are both still fairly easy to find.



I have two different Avon Christmas trees, though I know they produced at least one other. Both of these are green glass.



I like the brown glass on this Ginger, though I'm not sure why it's trimmed out in pink. Apparently Avon also made a matching little Gingerbread Cottage, but sadly, I don't (yet) have that one.



I have it on good authority that Santa plans to slip this pretty blue angel into my stocking this year.



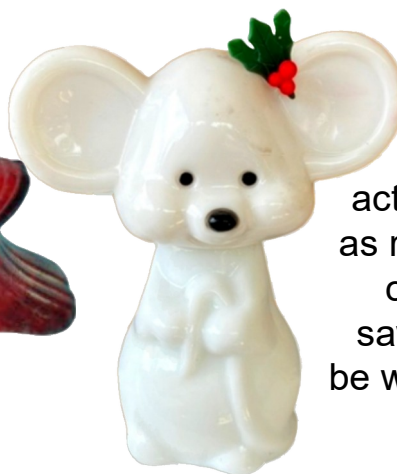
Technically a piggy isn't a Christmas-themed ornament, but in my family, piggies show up for Christmas and almost every other holiday. I believe Avon issued several pig-themed bottles, but I have only the one.



In addition to the little gingerbread cottage already mentioned, there are still a few more of these containers that I'm watching for. For instance, I'd like to add this adorable Santa to the group. So far, though, I haven't had any luck locating him. I'll keep looking, though.



I'd also love to find this beautiful cardinal, made of ruby red glass. Wouldn't he look very festive for Christmas? I've never seen one in person, so my guess is he's a little more rare.



The little mouse is actually listed officially as rare, by at least one collector whose list I saw on line. That may be why I've yet to come across him in my travels.



The little white chickadee apparently also shows up with a red Santa hat. That's the one I'd take if I got a chance, though at the moment I'd be happy enough with either version.

With a few exceptions, these vintage Avon bottles aren't worth much money, but after all these years, they still have the power to charm. I especially like the pretty Christmas-themed ones for the festive touch of nostalgia they bring.