

PREPARING AND CARING FOR YOUR VESSEL

You should not hesitate to cook food in these pots since this is their intended function. If you choose to use your pot for cooking for serving, you can extend the life of your cook pot by following these few, simple guidelines, the first of which is preparation and seasoning.

- Fill the pot just below the rim with water.
- Place the vessel on a stove-top ring (electric or gas).
- Turn the eye to medium high.
- Allow the water to come to a rolling boil.
- Pour out the water and any loose clay or mica particles adhering to the surface.
- Refill the pot with hot water and add several tablespoons of animal or vegetable fat.
- Bring the contents to a rolling boil and allow the water to boil down to the bottom of the pot.
- Alternatively, coat the entire vessel interior and exterior with animal or vegetable fat and bake at 375 degrees for 40 minutes (avoid coating the vessel exterior bottom).

Seasoning will change the color of the pot, but not dramatically. The color will become richer and more textured with use. The exterior bottom will become bleached or scorched over time, further adding to the overall character. Seasoning increases the life of the pot, makes cleaning easier, and enriches the flavor of food cooked within it. Use only warm water and a plastic scrub brush or sponge to clean your pot. Soap will remove the seasoning. **Avoid allowing water to sit in your vessel (or your vessel to sit in water) for any extended period of time.** Wooden or plastic spoons are kinder than metal to the interior surface. Fruit, cookies, bread, chips, and other food items will stain the inside of bowls. Use a doily or a napkin beneath the food if this bothers you.

Remember that it takes the same amount of time to boil water, whether or not the stove top eye is turned to high or medium high. Cooking on medium high will extend the life of the pot. Covering the vessel significantly decreases the amount of time it takes to boil water. Once the water begins boiling, it will be rapid, intense, and long lasting. The upper portions of the pot will not get hot like metal since mica is a heat insulator rather than conductor. The rim can be touched and the vessel can even be carried by the rim or by the handles in most cases. Micaceous clay vessels are much safer to use than metal pots because they distribute heat more efficiently.