

SA1220559

Chinese Canton enamel gaiwan tea set, Qing dynasty, c. 1850–1860

Price

GBP 550

| USD \$744 | EUR 644

Item Reference: SA1220559**Date of manufacture: 19th Century**

Dimensions

Height = 7 cm (2.8")

Width = 11.4 cm (4.5")

Depth = 8.2 cm (3.2")

Description

A fine Chinese Canton enamel gaiwan set dating to c. 1850–1860 during the Qing dynasty. Comprising a deep saucer, tea cup and matching lid, it represents one of the most enduring forms of traditional Chinese tea culture. In Chinese philosophy, the three elements of the gaiwan carry symbolic meaning. The saucer represents the Earth, the lid represents Heaven and the cup represents Man. Together they embody harmony between the three and reflect the cultural importance of tea in daily life. Decorated in painted enamels on copper, the set displays a vibrant green ground enriched with scrolling black foliage, pink and blue flowers, and shaped landscape cartouches. The scenes incorporate Taihu scholar rocks, bamboo, pavilions and garden architecture, all executed with the lively hand-painted character associated with mid-19th-century Canton enamels. Original exposed copper mounts remain in place, while the underside of the cup is finished with a cobalt-blue enamel band highlighted with gilding. The set remains in excellent antique condition, particularly when compared with many surviving examples of mid-19th-century Canton enamels. The enamel retains the slight orange-peel t...

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Seller Details

Ritas Bazaar

Hertfordshire United Kingdom

Tel: 07434 626011

International Tel: +44 7434 626011

