Emmett & White
ANTIQUES & INTERIORS

Regency Chinoiserie Toleware Tea Display Pedestal, Circa 1820

£650

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REF: 1193

Height: 42 cm (16.5")

Width: 32 cm (12.6")

Description

A Regency toleware lacquered chinoiserie decorated counter top tea display pedestal. This would have been used in a high class grocer to display their very best tea. This gorgeous piece is decorated with oriental scenes of figures on a balcony and has a stepped conforming plinth base. Circa **Regency Chinoiserie Toleware Tea Display Pedestal, Circa 1820**

A rare and highly decorative Regency toleware tea display pedestal, dating to circa 1820. Made to stand prominently on the counter of an upmarket grocer or tea merchant, this elegant piece would have displayed the shop's finest tea, combining practical merchandising with the lavish decorative appeal expected in a fashionable early 19th-century retail interior.

The pedestal is lacquered and richly decorated in the chinoiserie taste, with an oriental scene of figures gathered on a balcony set against a dark ground. The hand-painted decoration is full of period charm, drawing on the European fascination with imagined Asian landscapes, architecture, and costume that remained so popular throughout the Regency period. Its decorative surface would have made an immediate impression upon customers, transforming the presentation of tea into an occasion of theatre and luxury.

The top is raised on a stepped, conforming plinth base, giving the piece a strong architectural profile and ensuring that whatever was displayed upon it would have been given prominence. Whether supporting an elaborately labelled tea caddy, a canister, or a particularly prized blend, the pedestal would have played an important role in the visual language of the high-class grocer.

Tea was among the most valued and desirable goods of the period, and retailers employed attractive, purpose-made fittings to communicate quality and refinement. This handsome pedestal is therefore not only an unusual piece of Regency decorative art, but also a fascinating survival from the history of British retail and the ritual of tea drinking.

Today, it would make a striking display stand for a tea caddy, bowl, small sculpture, or decorative object. It would sit beautifully in a kitchen, dining room, library, shop interior, or collection of Regency toleware and chinoiserie.

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