

Basic Detail Report



Title Soup Tureen and Tray

Date late 18th-early 19th century

Primary Maker Unknown

Medium Molded Chinese export porcelain with underglaze cobalt blue decoration and overglaze gilding

Description Oval Chinese export porcelain soup tureen and tray with hand-painted underglaze cobalt blue decoration showing a Chinese landscape; the soup tureen and tray are a type of Chinese export porcelain known as Nankingware. The landscape, found on the tray, lid, and tureen, shows several islands with a river running through the scene. The islands have Chinese structures and trees, and there is a bridge connecting two islands in the foreground. Small figures can be found on the bridge and on a boat on the river. Tureen (.a): The Chinese landscape can be found on both sides of the tureen,

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surrounded by a solid blue border. A series of borders decorate the foot of the tureen. The first is a line of gilding where the foot begins at the body of the tureen, then a field of white, a thin line of blue, and another field of white. This is followed by the "Nanking" border, which is a pattern of short lines alternating between a thin line with a dot at either end and a thin line with an arrowhead at one end, and another line of gilding. Following the "Nanking" border is a blue border consisting of a band of blue, with darker lines creating a diamond pattern inside. At three points this border is interrupted by an area of white containing a wavy line and various figures and geometric patterns (perhaps inspired by the Eight Taoist Immortals and their symbols). The bottom of the foot is decorated with a band of gilding, as is the rim of the tureen. Finally, the tureen has two handles consisting of two strands of pulled porcelain that have been twisted together and applied to the body. Where each strand meets the tureen, there is a molded and applied floral decoration. Each handle has gilded decoration. The gilding at the foot of the tureen and on the handles has been worn in several places. Lid (.b): The Chinese landscape can be found on the top of the lid, surrounded by a series of borders. The first is a line of gilding, then a line of blue, a field of white, a thin line of blue, and then the "Nanking" border, which is a pattern of short lines alternating between a thin line with a dot at either end and a thin line with an arrowhead at one end. The "Nanking" border is surrounded by a line of gilding, a blue border consisting of a band of blue with darker lines creating a diamond pattern inside, and gilding at the rim of the lid. The center of the tureen has a large applied and gilded finial in an organic shape. The finial is

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undercut, suggesting that it was formed from two separate pieces. Surrounding the base of the finial, the maker has hand painted a solid field of underglaze cobalt blue. The gilding at the edge of the lid has been worn in several places.

Tray (.c): The Chinese landscape is found in the center of the tray, surrounded by a series of several borders. The first is a line of blue, followed by a line of gilding then a blue border consisting of a band of blue with darker lines creating a diamond pattern inside. At three points this border is interrupted by an area of white containing a wavy line and various figures and geometric patterns (perhaps inspired by the Eight Taoist Immortals and their symbols). Then follows a field of white and the "Nanking" border. The "Nanking" border is surrounded by a line of gilding, then a blue border consisting of a band of blue with darker lines creating a diamond pattern inside, followed by a line of applied gilding at the outer rim. This gilding has been worn in several places.

Dimensions Component (height including lid x width x depth of tureen): 11 x 14 1/2 x 9 1/2 in. (27.9 x 36.8 x 24.1cm) Component (height x width x depth of tray): 2 1/4 x 14 3/4 x 12 1/8 in. (5.7 x 37.5 x 30.8cm)