Emmett & White
ANTIQUES & INTERIORS

Chinese Export Imari Barber's Bowl, Circa 1760

£65

Emmett & White Ltd
Cross House, Waterloo Square, Alfriston, East Sussex BN26 5UD
01323 870 595 • info@emmettandwhite.com • emmettandwhite.com

REF: 5778

Height: 8 cm (3.1")

Diameter: 27 cm (10.6")

Description

A Fine Chinese Export Porcelain Imari Barber's Bloodletting Bowl, Restored, Circa 1760

A rare and highly decorative Chinese export porcelain barber's bowl, painted in a vibrant Imari palette and dating to circa 1760. Made for the European market, this distinctive form was designed for use by a barber-surgeon during shaving and bloodletting-the notch at the rim allowing the bowl to rest comfortably against the neck or shoulder.

The bowl is richly decorated in underglaze blue, iron red, and gilt, the classic colours of the Chinese Imari tradition. Its carefully composed ornament and luminous porcelain ground give the piece a strong decorative presence, while the unusual medical and domestic function makes it an especially evocative survival from the 18th century.

Before the professional separation of barbers and surgeons, barber-surgeons carried out a range of treatments in addition to grooming, including bloodletting, which was then widely regarded as a therapeutic procedure. Such bowls were therefore practical implements, but this finely painted export example also reflects the taste for colourful East Asian porcelain among affluent European households.

Now restored, the bowl remains a wonderfully characterful display piece, combining historic function with the enduring appeal of 18th-century Chinese porcelain. It would make an unusual addition to a collection of Chinese export ceramics, medical antiques, or objects relating to the history of the barber-surgeon.

Emmett & White Ltd
Cross House, Waterloo Square, Alfriston, East Sussex BN26 5UD
01323 870 595 • info@emmettandwhite.com • emmettandwhite.com